



The Skier

Newsletter of the Winston-Salem Ski and Outing Club

Club Meeting

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Where: American Legion Hall, Miller Street



When: Thursday, April 14th
@ 7pm

What: Come and learn about wild flowers and what can be seen on

Rock Castle Gorge Hike

Join us on **Sunday, April 17th** for our somewhat annual pilgrimage to Rock Castle Gorge for a long hike in search of wild flowers. We usually see lots of Trillium, Bloodroot, Jack in the Pulpit, ramps, Solomon Seal and many more specimens in their natural habitat. The hike is appx 8 miles long, with a short steep section in the beginning, a rolling section, then down into the gorge and an easy flat walk out along the banks of the creek.



Meet in the Sam's parking lot off University Parkway at 8:00. We will be near the gas pumps. Wear hiking gear, bring rain gear, food and water. This is a great hike and will take all day. Trip Leader: Tree Bright, 945-6945.



President's Point:

Ah, spring! The flowers are blooming, the birds are chirping, the snow is falling. What?!? Isn't that typical for North Carolina weather though? Just when you think you've got the season figured out, Mother Nature throws us a curveball. Not so with WSSOC! As we do every April, the membership will be electing new Board members. Join us on Thursday, April 21st, as we vote on this slate of nominees: Ken Lumsden, Myriam Griffin, Roxanne DeJanes, and Jayne Warbinton. Being a volunteer club means depending on the membership to help carry the load. Thanks so much to these folks for agreeing to be on the Board!

Sam

**17th Annual Bike, Wine, Hike, & Dine Weekend
(Formally known as Bike and Hike Weekend)
June 17, 18 and 19, 2011**

**Bike the Virginia Creeper Trail
Wine at the Abingdon Winery
Hike at Grayson Highlands State Park
Dine @ Shatley Springs**

Look for full details in next months skier

Donate to UNC School of the Arts School of Filmmaking

WSSOC has been approached by Bryan Haynes, Production Coordinator at UNCSCA's School of Filmmaking. With budget cuts occurring at all state supported schools, UNCSCA is also feeling the squeeze. Mr. Haynes would like to invite members to donate items to be used in film productions, with all donations receiving a "Gift-In-Kind" receipt for tax purposes. You can contact him about arranging a donation at 336-734-2835 or email haynesbr@unca.edu. They will even come pick your items up for you!

If anyone has the following items, please consider donating: WW2 items (replicas are acceptable); weapons (guns must be non-firing); stuffed/mounted animals; large sculptures; 1950's era formica table and chairs; wooden canoe paddles; sports memorabilia; furniture; clothing; "vintage" appliances; a wooden propeller; a phone booth. Be creative . . . there's likely plenty of other things they can use. A little bit of charitable spring cleaning is never a bad idea!

Thanks for this consideration!

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CALENDAR

April 2011

Date	Day	Time	Event	Meeting Place	Leader
3	Sun	11:00a m	Mountain Bike Ride (weather permitting)	Overmountain Victory Trail at Kerr Scott Reservoir, Wilkes- boro, NC	Ken Lumsden
6	Wed	7:00pm	Board Meeting	Bib's Downtown, 5th street	Sam Pearce
9	Sat	9:00am	Day Hike. Woods Mountain Trail (Milepost 344 near Mt Mitchell, Blue Ridge Parkway)	aHarris Teeter parking lot across from Tanglewood Park	Tree Bright, Ken & Pat Lumsden
17	Sun	8:00am	Day hike to Rock Castle Gorge	Sam's Parking Lot, University Pkwy, near gas station	Tree Bright
21	Thurs	7:00pm	Club Meeting	American Legion, Post 55	Sam Pearce
29	Fri	6:00pm	Last Friday Social	6th and Vine, 6th street, Down- town WS	John Davis
28-1	Thurs-Sun		CSC Convention	Kingston plantation, Myrtle Beach	Ken Lumsden
30	Sat	11:00a m	Merle Fest	N. Wilkesboro	John Davis

May 2011

Date	Day	Time	Event	Meeting Place	Leader
4	Wed	7:00pm	Board Meeting	Bib's Downtown, 5th street	Sam Pearce
19	Thurs	7:00pm	Club Meeting	Tanglewood park	Sam Pearce
20	Fri	TBA	DASH Game	Ball Park	Leanne Brendle
21	Sat	9:00am	New River Trail ride	Sam's Parking Lot, University Pkwy, near gas station	Tree Bright
27	Fri	6:00pm	Last Friday Social	Bob's Big Gas, Reynolda Rd & Northwest Blvd	John Davis

June 2011

Date	Day	Time	Event	Meeting Place	Leader
1	Wed	7:00pm	Board Meeting	Bib's Downtown, 5th street	Sam Pearce
16	Thurs	7:00pm	Club Meeting	Tanglewood park	Sam Pearce
18-19	Sat & Sun		Bike & Hike		Kathy Smith
24	Fri	6:00pm	Last Friday Social	TBD	

Find Us on Facebook



As a club, we've fully entered the technological age. This is a new adventure, so bear with us as we figure everything out. Facebook may offer us additional opportunities to get information out to members on short notice. Our official page has the club logo on the top.

Day Hikes

Dayhike on Woods Mountain Trail Saturday, April 9, 2011

This was a great trail for wildflowers when we last hiked it in May a few years ago. It is one of the few places we've seen Yellow Lady's Slippers. A trail this rich in May likely is richer in April, so we're going to check it out. Meet in the parking lot of the Harris Teeter across from Tanglewood Park at 9 AM for 9:15 AM departure. We'll drive to the trailhead via I-40 to Marion, then take US221, US70 and NC80 to the Blue Ridge Parkway (near milepost 344). Trip Leader: Tree Bright.

Bike Rides

New River Challenge

This year I am challenging everyone who rides to ride from one end of the New River Trail to the other. I have planned a series of rides to accomplish this. We start in May riding from Allisonia to Pulaski and end with a fall ride from Galax to Fries. Look for full details in the next newsletter.

Tree



Singletrack and Greenway Mountain Bike Rides

W-SSOC anticipates using its "Meet Up" web service in addition to direct email to announce short-notice singletrack and greenway mountain biking rides (mostly to Salem Lake (Salem Creek Greenway), Tanglewood Park (easier singletrack) and Hobby Park (harder singletrack), occasionally elsewhere). If you want to be kept informed of the latest plans, you can do one or both of the following: 1) send email with subject line "Add to W-SSOC Mountain Biking Email List" to Ken Lumsden, ken@wssoc.org; or 2) go to www.meetup.com and scroll down to "Winston-Salem Ski and Outing Club" and click on the club name to continue your registration.

Weekly Bike Rides on the Salem Creek Greenway and Around Salem Lake Wednesday Evenings in April

This ride is usually a casual ride at 9-12 mph on the Salem Creek Greenway to Salem Lake with one lap around the lake for a total of about 14 miles round trip. If "fitness riders" or "road riders in training" show up, we sometimes have a sub-group who will want to ride faster (13-18 mph, typically) and maybe ride two laps around the lake. Whatever your cup of tea, come on out and ride! Meet at the parking lot by the tennis courts on Salem Avenue near the Southern Roundabout on Main/Liberty St, south of Old Salem by 5:45 PM for departure soon thereafter. Trip Leader: Pat Lumsden.

Ski Vacations

W-SSOC Jackson Hole'12

The 2012 W-SSOC Ski Vacation will be to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, February 4-11, 2012. Lodging will be at the 49er Hotel & Suites in the town of Jackson Hole where the hotel provides continuous bus service to the ski area (about 10 mi. one-way) and continental breakfast "with eggs" daily. Pricing will be based on double occupancy (maybe also with optional single, triple and quad occupancy). We are holding 10 basic hotel rooms with 2 queen beds + refrigerator and 10 suite rooms with 2 queen beds + refrigerator + couch + microwave. Airline pricing is not yet available. We expect to announce the full package price in May 2011. Package will include four days of skiing at Jackson Hole and a one-day excursion, with bus, to Grand Targhee, WY. Optional 5th day of skiing at Jackson Hole will be available. Other optional excursions will include snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and the horse-drawn sled tour among the elk (!) at the National Elk Refuge.

Many have inquired about snowmobiling into Yellowstone National Park or Grand Teton National Park as part of this trip. Some of the world's best snowmobiling is available—great powder, spectacular terrain and opportunities to see wildlife. Several W-SSOC members have snowmobiled into Yellowstone National Park from Flagg Ranch (southern entrance, nearest Jackson Hole) and from West Yellowstone. In both cases, we went all the way to the Old Faithful Geyser and saw it erupt. These excursions are not for the feint of heart or body. Both are demanding rides due to the distance. Here's the mileage on the Flagg Ranch excursion: 58 mile shuttle bus from town of Jackson Hole to Flagg Ranch then on snowmobile the rest of the way: 2 mi to Yellowstone entrance + 22 miles to West Thumb + 17 miles to Old Faithful = 41 miles one-way x 2 to return = 82 miles round trip. I (Ken L) have done the trip from Flagg Ranch and the trip from W. Yellowstone in my younger days and would definitely choose something closer in this time. Or, consider the snowcoach tours.

If you want to be kept informed on the latest-breaking news for this trip, please send an email with subject line "Add to W-SSOC Jackson Hole'12 Email List" to Ken Lumsden, ken@wssoc.org.

Crescent Ski Trip to Ogden, Utah By Peggie High

Saturday, March 12, 2011 - Arrived in Ogden, UT at 10:15 p.m., and the time changes tonight.

Sunday, March 13 –First I called the front desk to ask what time it was. Evidently I wasn't the only confused hotel guest—they said it was the most asked question that morning!

Got the 9:00 a.m. bus to Powder Mountain after a 2500-calorie buffet breakfast at the Marriott. The sun was shining with temp in the low 40's. We met up with our Mountain Tour Guide and headed out in 3 different directions with 16-20 in each group. Our group, including W-SSOC's Linda and Doug Ueland, was the advanced intermediate. When they all headed toward the Poma lift, I hooked up with Spartanburg Ski Club's Carol and Mark McCall and we skied every groomed blue there was—several times. Ski conditions were crunchy on the slopes off the Poma lift, but were really good where we were. We got the 4:30 bus back to Ogden and ate at the Sonora Grill, a wonderful Mexican restaurant.

Monday, March 14 – Had another gargantuan breakfast with Doug and Linda—made to order waffles (chocolate chip pecan), omelet to order, bacon, fruit, etc. On the bus at 8:00 to Snowbasin. The sky was very overcast and before we got our Mountain Tour Guide, it had already started raining, which turned to snow, and then back to rain. Visibility was a huge challenge--we could barely see our guide. By the time we went in at 12:30 for our barbeque lunch at the top, we all looked like drowned rats. BUT during lunch it REALLY started snowing again and we had about 6" of powder. Linda, Doug, several others and I found a wonderful run under the Porcupine Lift and floated down a couple of times. I was tired from skiing in slush all morning, so went in. They found a beautiful spot in the trees with no tracks and skied a while longer. Linda and Doug

Continues on Next Page

said it was "an awesome afternoon."

Tuesday, March 14 – Bagels and lox for breakfast—Mmmmmmm! All 69 of us were on 2 buses for The Canyons. The first brand new lift we used is the only one in the world with heated seats and hoods that come down to protect you from wind, blizzards, rain and the sun! NICE!! Met up with our Mountain Tour Guides and split up into 3 groups again. We did some very crunchy runs followed by a dark blue that was mashed potatoes—from one extreme to the other. We stayed mostly on blues and covered most of the mountain, sloggng our way through very heavy, wet snow. Are we having fun yet? The afternoon was much of the same, with the snow getting slushier and slushier as the temp went into the 50's. BUT we all agreed it was better than the rain yesterday.

Wednesday, March 15 –Forecast: Sunny, high 40's. The W-SSOC clan took the day off, after more waffles and omelets. Those diehard spring skiers reported that they had wind gusts up to 80 mph at both Powder and Snowbasin and froze their you-know-whats off! Both resorts shut down at 2:00 and everybody came home.

Thursday, March 16 – Forecast: rain/snow mix most of the day. The 3 musketeers were on the 8:00 bus to Snowbasin. We arrived at 8:35, the sun brightly shining, only to hear them announce that the gondolas were frozen and there would be a delay. The 9:00 bus arrived at 9:35 and we were still drinking hot chocolate and coffee "on the house" in the beautiful lobby because of the "indefinite delay". The 10:00 bus arrived at 10:35 and at 10:45 they started loading at the gondola and we were at the top and heading down Porcupine Face at 11:00. There were several inches of fresh snow, and conditions were the best they've been all week. The sun was still brightly shining. Woohoo! We skied our little britches off! The 10:30 "fun" race took place at 1:00 (sun brightly shining) and Doug and Linda finished the course with all its little "surprises." Yours truly DQed in the gulley, as did the first 4 racers. I was surprised to see Carol McCall, who had fallen at the same gate I did, on the ground right in front of me. It was a blind spot on the course and nobody could see what was happening. (She thought she had hurt her hip, and thankfully it was a pulled muscle, but she was really hurting.) When the 2 of us didn't cross the finish line they stopped sending racers down. My time didn't count BUT I got a \$25 prize for being the oldest participant. Carol went to the clinic and I skied until 4:00 (sun still brightly shining) and took the 4:30 bus back. Which really didn't give us much time to get ready for the dinner/dance at the Union Station at 6:00 p.m.

Since a lot of people were on the 4:30 bus, cocktail time started about 6:30 and a fantastic dinner buffet was served at 7:30. The exciting band started at 8:00. There were racing prizes, door prizes and regular prizes given out after the band's first break at 9:00. Most people left then. BUT it was a fun evening.

Friday, March 18 – Forecast: sunny, high 52 degrees. They added French Toast this morning with cinnamon and sugar. Went very well with the omelets and chocolate chip pecan waffles. We boarded the 8:00 a.m. bus to Powder Mountain with overcast skies. Snow conditions were fantastic. The wind started blowing, the sun hid. I said "no thank you" to the Poma again and found lots of groomed blues and several groomed blacks with Margaret Crum and Gail Anderson from the Asheville Ski Club. Linda and Doug were playing in the powder somewhere. By noon there were strong wind gusts and the temp was 30 degrees. Yesterday and today were by far the best ski conditions of the week and no one wanted to stop skiing. But suitcases and ski bags were beckoning so we headed back on the 3:00 bus. Wind chill was probably in the teens when we left and the sun was not seen all day.

And that's the end of the story.

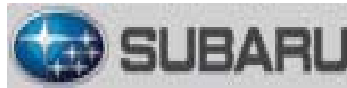
P.S. Never believe the weather forecast!

Ken's Pictures from a previous Rock Castle Gorge Hike



Dennis McNeil

993 3936



SUBARU VIP PROGRAM FOR LEASE OR PURCHASE OPEN TO W-SSOC MEMBERS

Subaru is a proud sponsor of the Crescent Ski Council (CSC) Racing program and includes the VIP Discount Program for all CSC members (you don't need to be a member of your club's racing team to participate). Qualifying members of a CSC club can purchase or lease a new Subaru at 2% below dealer cost and receive credit for any incentives which are currently being offered. To qualify, you must have been a member of the Winston-Salem Ski & Outing Club (or other Authorized club of CSC) for at least six (6) months.

If interested, please notify Ken Lumsden (W-SSOC Racing Team Director) at <ken@wssoc.org> of your desire to participate and provide your contact information (full name, phone number, mailing address, email address) and the name of the Subaru dealership from which you will make your purchase. Ken will forward your contact information and Subaru will mail the VIP information to you. Upon receipt of the VIP packet, you can go to the selected dealer to pick out the Subaru that you want. The dealer will pull the invoice and let the purchaser know if there are any current incentives. Please take advantage of this wonderful benefit the Crescent Racing has secured for all CSC clubs.

My First Ski Season By Myriam Griffin

So I was asked to write an article for our newsletter regarding my first ski-trip out west, actually, my first ski-trip ever! And my heart leaped for joy at the request. Immediately I thought of the personal contentment it would be to share my little story with whoever may want to read. After all, for me, this has been a major life adventure; an exciting experience which redefines the pleasure one can experience as a human being inhabiting this planet.

Now most of you would probably think that I would regard the start of my trip on Saturday, February, 5th 2011, which was the day that our groups set out on their respective airports and begun their journey to Lake Tahoe, CA. But no, I regard the beginning of my ski-trip to have been Saturday, December 11th, 2010... the day that I had my first ski lesson. You see, this day has more significance than anything that follows, because without the events that occurred on this day, I do not believe that anything else would have happened... and if you allow me the pleasure to tell you a story, then you'll understand the significance of beginning my ski-trip months before we ever boarded a plane.

My ski lesson was originally set to begin at 9:30 a.m. sharp at the French-Swiss Ski School at Appalachian Ski Mountain. After having done much research on the area ski schools, this one was selected on three reasons: one, it was only an hour and a half drive; two, it was affordable; three, word-of-mouth recommendations painted this to be a "friendly place" in which to learn to ski. What else could one ask for?!

I happened to leave my home a little later than I would have liked on account of getting ready. Making sure that all of the necessary gear was packed and I was dressed properly for something for which I had never dressed before was more time consuming than I had calculated. So out the door I go, somewhat behind schedule, but not anything that can't be made up on the road driving a little faster than intended.

Almost reaching the mountain, my GPS begins to deliver the kind of instructions that leave one wondering if an automatic life insurance policy had somehow come along with the purchase; no, driving off the mountain was not on my plan of things to do that morning, as by GPS was loudly suggesting I do! However, being close enough to see the slopes through the neighboring homes, my misguiding GPS did not bother me, only annoy me. As I start observing the skiers on the mountain, I think to myself "I can do this! That looks so incredibly easy! Look! There are little children on the slopes! I have nothing to worry about. I'll be doing blues by the end of my 3-hour private lesson without any trouble at all. Tomorrow, I'll do the blacks!" Yes, it is true, I thought these things; I never lack in wishful thinking.

However, I still need to find my way to the slopes and the time was much too quickly approaching 9:30... and after several more turns, I was lost! I start to panic about the time. How could this possibly be happening? Then a left, a right, the GPS is once again sending me down "Suicide Drive." Frustration sets in and now I'm talking to myself in the car, the early symptoms of lady-gone-crazy. Finally, a road that looks hopeful. I turn only to notice a roundabout at the end of drive. No problem, I'll drive down this little road, make a turn with my trusty Ford front-wheel drive SUV on that "fluffy snow" down there and turn right back up. A happy feeling overcomes me as I am now confident that it is the next left that is the one that will take me to my destination.

Well, now to tell you about that "fluffy snow" down there... it was ice. Yes, ice. Now, being born in Honduras, raised in Florida, and refusing to drive during the winter while living in New Jersey, one would correctly conclude that I was very soon stuck and in a bit of trouble. The more I tried to get my car moving in the correct direction, back up this small hill, the more my tires spun and the car slowly starting sliding backwards closer still towards a little ditch that would have placed me and my vehicle right on what I believe was Orchard Run! Now, I realize that I really wanted to be on the slopes, but I was thinking of being on skis, not in my SUV!!!

I stopped the car and looked around. "How am I going to get out of this?" By now, 9:30 had come and gone. I quickly call the ski school and they reassure me that I can arrive at a later time and all will be well. I get out of my car, and look around for anyone that may be able to help me. After all, these people have to know how to get up this road, how would they get out to buy groceries? Sure enough, to my right was driveway with a parked car, and

it looked as if the residents were home. I walked towards the house, composed myself, knocked on the door and prayed that someone would be able to help. An older woman opens the door, and she gives me a completely muddled look; she was not expecting any company. I smile, then I begin “Hi, I was wondering if you could please help me. You see, my car is stuck and I can’t get back up the hill. I’ve been trying for a while, but I can’t drive my car back up the hill. I’m from Florida and I don’t know how to drive in the snow. Can you help me?” Now, thinking back, I’m pretty sure that I also rambled about my being late for my 9:30 ski lesson, and expressed the urgency of me needing to get to my destination, and added how the world was going to end. Yes, I was a nervous wreck. She smiles, invites me in and informs me that her husband would get me out... “Tom, are you dressed? There’s a young lady here that needs your help. Her car is stuck in the ice. Can you help her?” Thank goodness, Tom is dressed! And he can help!

After a careful inspection of the situation, Tom informs me that I may need to hire a tow truck to get me out of my pickle. Hearing this, my heart skips a beat and I think to myself, “how is this happening today!?” But Tom proceeds to “give it a try” and lo and behold, the car is moving FORWARD and UP the hill!!! Tom signals me to follow him up and tells me to very carefully WALK (not run) up the hill... and carefully I did walk; all I would have needed is to fall and hurt myself and miss my lesson entirely.

Before I know it, I’ve found a parking spot and I’m hurriedly getting all of my gear ready... but where are my skis? Did I not put these in my car?! Where was my head? I am going skiing and my skis are missing?! Now what must I do? “Rent skis” the voice says. At that very moment, it hit me. I was experiencing what I like to call a God-arrangement. (At this point, I would like to apologize if I am in any way making any non-believer uncomfortable, but I do believe in a higher being, that I mostly like to call God.) There was actually nothing going wrong with my day, instead, it was being perfectly rearranged... my delays seemed to be aligning everything for me to have my perfect experience. It did not matter what I tried to do, or how I tried to do it, the Universal Force was taking over the plans that my minute organizational skills had arranged and were recreating them for my highest good. I was going to be arriving for my ski lesson perfectly late... and all I could think in my mind at that very moment was “why?”

Come to find out, the reason why was Mr. Ken Lumsden, my ski instructor. You see, I had been praying for many years for the opportunity to ski. For some reason, deep in my heart, the once-dormant desire had slowly started to awaken, and the manifestation of being a “great skier” was just about to begin. I had purposefully made one of the criteria of my new relocation to live in a place where skiing was within drivable distance... in today’s cut-throat economy, I had turned down job offers because they simply did not provide me the opportunity to drive to ski! I was really serious about this; I was going to be a “great skier”.

Something to be said about Ken, is the following: when he explains something to you, anything really, he provides you with the most precise instructions possible. Every detail is explained to its fullest capacity... I could elaborate on the amount of detail that was given to me that day with respect to my skiing instruction, but I was asked to write an article and not a book... and I do believe that this project is getting lengthy already! But to give you an idea... before I was allowed to put on a ski, I got an in-depth lesson on all the parts of the ski, how to use my poles correctly, and all of the physics that goes into all that we were about to do. At some point, I thought to myself, “Enough talking! Let’s ski!!!” Yes, I am impatient to begin with, but I do have to say, it pays to listen to Ken... he knows what he’s talking about!

About half-way through my ski lesson, Ken tells me about the Winston-Salem Ski and Outing Club. None of this would have ever happened if it wasn’t for me meeting Ken that day!

So what happened after that... well, I started by learning the importance of controlling my speed... many falls and run-ins with barriers (even a tree!) occurred. I spent two weekends with Ken before I headed up to a solo learning-trip on Christmas to Snowshoe. All fear aside, I took myself there and pulled up the Ken-recorded voice from my memory bank: “Hands up! Keep those hands up and in front of you... light pressure on the front part of your boot... turn with your feet, let your body follow, control your speed... pizza... alright, keep turning, keekeep turning... COMPLETE YOUR TURN!!!” Yes, all of it in my mind and ready for usage.

I progressed to ski SilverCreek with disciplined advancement... starting with the greens, then the blues. Skiing each slope until a certain level of mastery and comfort was acquired before proceeding to the next, after which I would repeat the prior and note my progress. I took the time to study my fellow skiers for technique as I rode the lifts back up to the top of the mountain and while I took meal breaks. I followed the countable groups of small children as they did pizza all the way down the slope... of course, at a reasonable distance behind so that no one would really be able to tell what I was doing! I studied YouTube skiing videos, made the desktop picture on all my work and home computers ski-related, decorated my cubicle with trail maps, I utilized my powers of persuasion to get fellow friends to take trips to Snowshoe whenever possible only for me to "diss" them ("Sorry, I can't ski the greens with you, I've got to get to the blacks today... "Sorry, I can't go drinking tonight with you, I've got to wake up early tomorrow and hit the slopes at 9 sharp!) I even made it a point to dream of skiing! All of my energy was focused upon preparing myself to ski the blacks on my Lake Tahoe trip.

Somewhere, among the many books I have read in my recent years, I picked up the knowledge that to be something in "real life," one must be it in the mind first. That is exactly what I so diligently practiced from mid-December till early February. Now this is not to say that I was 100% ready for my Lake Tahoe trip. In fact, the closer the date got, I had to keep fighting back this secret desire that "I did not want to go anymore." Why you ask? That's the same question I asked myself... and the answer, I'm sure, was "fear." I even tried to cancel from going on the trip at the last minute. Looking back, I appreciate that the cancellation was too expensive to have been a logical option.

So now, Lake Tahoe... Again, the magnificent arrangements of the universe... when the position opened for a "single female" to join the group, clearly that was my spot. My roommates were the perfect people to get me up and running, or I should say down and skiing, on the majestic west-coast black diamonds. The Boggs and Amanda were too kind in providing more instruction, and most importantly, and endless amount of encouragement.

They all self-assigned roles to themselves, even. Mr. Boggs led the way, followed by Mike, then me, then Amanda. Each took on a job on our first day at Heavenly:

-Mr. Boggs scouted out the terrain to make certain that it was something I could ski.

-Mike was easy for me to spot, so all I had to worry about was making sure I followed him; he was my personal leader.

-Amanda's job was to help me collect my gear in case I had a "yard-sale." (Which I luckily did not experience!) She was also in charge of telling me not to stop mid-way the extremely steep black slopes... she could tell that I would freak out once I would realize where I was and what I was doing... "Just keep going! You can do it! Don't think too much!" Ha! Don't think too much!?! That's a tall order for me, but it's nice to realize that there are occasions when instinct overcomes logic.

There were times, while on the very top of a steep slope that 'voice number one' would commence with "What?! This is insane! You are crazy thinking you are going to go down that thing!" Then 'voice number two' would respond with "I am crazy! And brave! And I can do this! Because... well, that little kid that just passed me is doing it!" And away I'd go only to discover at the end of the run, when the lactic acid was burning through my legs, while I was breathing deeply exhausted from the rush of exhilaration, and my heart beat was pulsing rapidly within my chest, that I felt ALIVE!!! The feeling of completely living in the moment of skiing is the most alive I have ever felt in my life. Everything instantly transforms into surreal; the way the sunshine glistens on the snow, the way the cold air fills my lungs, the graceful coordination between my legs and arms, how one's body begins to naturally and instantaneously react to the terrain as one's skis glide a top the snow... all of it comes together to provide me with the most exhilarating experience that I can imagine, or describe.

Heavenly, is heavenly, but Northstar and Sierra ROCKED!!! They definitely had more groomed blacks and what I thought were more fun (longer) runs!

My favorite day at Heavenly was the day the rest of the group went on their boat tour... I can't recall now which day of the week this was, as I began to lose track of time sometime during our trip. The reason for such an amazing

day was the “horrible” weather! Yes, it was very cold and foggy... but skiing through it was exciting! There were few people on the mountain, so I had plenty of room in which to get daring! Skiing through the dense fog felt as if you were in the scene of a horror movie, but you weren't! The “unknown” around the corner made you utilize your senses that much more! One of my favorite parts of that day was in the afternoon, when a group of us fellow skiers skied together. It is fun to ski alone, but it is much more fun to ski with a group of obstacles, I mean, friends... as far as I was concerned, I was in an intense virtual reality game playing “keep up with”, “be faster than”, and “don't run over anybody or you're not getting invited again!” ... yes, it was a fun time indeed.

My favorite mountain was Northstar. Although I was told that Heavenly had more skiable terrain, I thought that Northstar had more trails to ski. There were also plenty of areas with trees spread enough apart for a beginner skier like myself to play “dodge the trees.” And the back-side of Northstar, oh yes, the back-side of Northstar... Burnout, Sierra Grande, Challenger, Follow Me, Lower Burnout, and Down Under... these were amazing runs... ohhhhh ... sorry, back to writing...

Now, what can I say about Sierra? This place was by far very interesting and will forever in my mind be memorable. It is my personal opinion that this was the smallest mountain visited. A full day, I think, is enough to get one's fill for Sierra. So why memorable you ask? Well, for one thing, this place had a lot of “funny smells” in the air... I think that for those of us that visited, probably know to what kind of “funny smells” I am referring... for those of you that did not, I reference an illegal substance. Secondly, there were a very talented crowd of snowboarders at Sierra. This group definitely surpassed in skill the other snowboarders of the other mountains. The Backside was host to these most inspiring daredevils... and I say “most inspiring” because they were certainly most inspiring to me!

The day we visited Sierra, was our fifth day skiing. Hence, my self-confidence was definitely peaking, and after seeing the ease and grace that the snowboarders exhibited as they gained major air off of the jumps, this inspired the little voice inside my head ... “I think I can do some small jumps now.” And so I began to do small jumps. Now something has to be said about trusting ones “gut” here... looking over what would be my last set of small jumps, I notice that I had about 6 small, same-sized jumps. However, number six was special; number six had a larger fall. Who would know this on their first run? Most certainly not me, but oh the mid-air surprise! Some time right before I went up the small sixth mound, my “gut” gave the warning “skip this one.” But why oh why would I pass on the adrenaline rush? So right through the middle I skied, and right on my bum I fell! Then as the fall progressed, I thought that I would utilize all of my falling experience and flip on my tummy, bend my knees 90 degrees, and keep both of my skis on. I succeeded. Why do I have to tell you this? Well, because the most memorable thing happened at that moment. Only that I did not realize it until later. I kept skiing down Jackrabbit, Sugar n' Spice, and down Chute towards the bus-loading zone. Then I saw it: the back of my right ski was bent in the most abnormal way; it was broken! I had broken my ski!!! How does this happen? Would someone not break their leg before breaking a ski? These were season rentals mind you. Paying for a set of skis was definitely not part of my vacation budget!

I do have to inform everyone that the broken-ski mishap did have a happy ending... Doug, from the Ski and Tennis Station took a look at his merchandise and gave a raised eyebrow... my heart began pounding... “Hmm, that's odd. Those were new skis.” ... NOOOOOOOO!!!! They were new!?! ... “We'll send them back. They're still under warranty. Can you come back in a couple of days and pick up a pair to finish up the season?” ... “Why yes Doug, I most certainly can.” YESSSSSSSSSS!!!!

So that about wraps up the “quick” story of my first ski season. I feel good to say that my initial goal of being a “great skier” is nowhere near the horizon, but I feel good knowing that this is a goal that will take me on a life-long journey in search for its illusive accomplishment... a journey that I feel I have begun this past ski season.

I am thankful for all of the components that came together to create the circumstances that needed to be in place for me to have had this experience. So when plans fall through, be glad... you just may be in the midst of a “God-arrangement.”



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Editor's Note

The WSSOC policy is to provide factual articles concerning upcoming and past outings of interest to the general membership. Due to the time necessary to publish the newsletter, it is requested that all copies be typed, neatly printed, and/or emailed (skier@wssoc.org) by the 15th of each month for publication in the next months issue. Articles WILL NOT be accepted after the 15th. The editor(s) reserve the right to refuse,

WSSOC Bylaws

Copies of the Bylaws of the Winston-Salem Ski and Outing Club are available to members by contacting the Membership VP.