

Volume 56
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Potomac Valley Skiers, Inc.
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President's Message:

The spring is flying by and ski season seems like a long time ago. I am very busy with my two crazy puppies who are methodically eating through everything they see – rugs, chairs, telephone cords, wall paint – when they are not attacking each other. The older one has had some training and may ultimately become civilized. It's anyone's guess regarding the little one – he is very sweet, but has a high-pitched bark which he generously employs and goes on attack mode when he sees another dog outside. My house is covered by dog toys and bits of paper shredded by the dogs. It's a challenge just to dodge the various items that pose a potential for a bad fall.

Bob and I, along with Kathy and Barry Lake, attended the Ski Show in May at the Tysons Marriott. There were far fewer vendors this year, but there was a representative from Snowmass, who told us about some upcoming improvements. The major improvement for next year is the replacement of the current Coney Glade chair with a high-speed chair starting near the Snowmass Mall and ending at the site of the current chair. Kathy and Barry are now accepting deposits for the trip, although they do not yet have the final price.

There was also a representative from Taos, a ski area that I find particularly interesting, in part because of the unique culture and architecture of New Mexico. A number of years ago, PVS ran a trip to Taos, starting with a few days in Santa Fe. At that time, Taos was still owned by the family of Ernie Blake, the founder of the ski area, and we had a wonderful dinner at the home of the resort's manager and met Ernie Blake's son-in-law. One highlight of the Taos ski experience is their week-long ski lesson program, with lessons each morning and an opportunity to practice in the afternoon. Although the mountain is steep, it does have sufficient skiable intermediate terrain. The Columbia Ski Club is running a trip to Taos this year at the beginning of February, staying at the Snakedance Condos, which are right at the base of the mountain. I am hoping that there will be space available on this trip, as I would like to experience Taos one more time.

Both we and the Lakes were successful in the drawing at the Ski Show– the Lakes won several days at Whitefish. Montana and I won a 2-day Epic pass. A number of years ago, we won a trip to Whitefish. The town of Whitefish has some charm, with plenty of good restaurants and many art galleries – take a look at the wolf painting in our stairwell. We stayed in town – part of the package that we won – and took the half-hour local bus ride up to the mountain. While there is limited lodging at the mountain, there are hotels that have their own shuttle buses.

Summerfest



Sunday, June 9th

at 1:00 PM

at Jill Nelson's,
Chevy Chase, MD

directions on pg 2.



It appears that there is no interest in the Park City trip. Although a number of PVS members did express early interest, no one responded to my recent email about the trip. Perhaps the fact that the trip is not ski in/ski out is a deterrent. If you are still interested in going to Park City next year, please let me know and I can connect you with another club that has rooms available.

I look forward to seeing many PVS members at our Summerfest event. *Cara Jablon*



SUMMER FEST

Sunday, June 9, 1:00 PM



At the Home of Jill Nelson

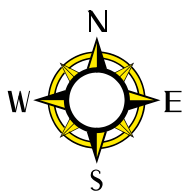
Come for lunch and learn all about the ski trips PVS is offering for the 2025 season.

PVS asks that members and guests bring an appetizer, salad or dessert. Like all PVS events, there will be wine, beer, and soft drinks too.

We ask those who plan to attend what you intend to bring. **to RSVP to Cara Jablon by Tuesday, June 3.**

It is important to know approximately how many will attend so that we can assure that we have the appropriate amount and variety of food. If you miss the RSVP deadline, then we still welcome you

Please RSVP by Tuesday, June 3rd with Cara; rcjablon@aol.com or 202-333-5332.



Directions:

7715 Rocton Ave., Chevy Chase, MD – 301-656-3339 ---

The house is off East-West Highway, between Conn. Ave and Rock Creek Park.

From Washington, DC: drive north on Connecticut Ave., pass Chevy Chase Circle – turn right on East-West Highway (MD 410) to 4th right on Rocton – go 2 blocks up hill, bear right, and white house is about 4th on the left.

From the Washington beltway: exit at Connecticut Ave. south, towards Washington DC, turn left on East-West Highway (after fire house on left), 4th right on Rocton, as above.

SKI TALK
by
Kathy Lake



Washington, DC Ski Travel Show

On Friday evening May 3rd the DC Ski Show was held at the Marriott Hotel in Tyson's Corners which Barry and I attended, as well as, Cara and Bob Jablon. There were numerous tour operators and vendors from various ski resorts including Aspen Snowmass, Smugglers Notch, Interlaken, Sun Peaks, Taos, Ski Group.net and Sports America Tours. We talked with the Aspen Snowmass representatives who confirmed that the new and expanded Coney Glade lift would be up and running by the start of the ski season. We also spoke with the owner of the Snakedance condos in Taos, reps from the Whitefish Ski area and tour operators of the Sports America Tours. They were all promoting their upcoming ski trips.

After making our way around the room, the four of us meandered over to the hotel restaurant for dinner and talked skiing. Then back to the show for dessert before the prize drawings were announced. We had a couple winners: Cara won a 2-day Epic pass, Barry won 2 nights lodging & 2-day lift tickets at Whitefish Ski resort in Montana. Bob and I weren't quite as lucky. Bob received an Interlaken t-shirt, and I got a ski pass pouch from the Mountain Travel Symposium. All-in-all, it was an enjoyable and informative evening.

BRSC Spring Meeting

The BRSC meeting was held on Saturday, May 18th at the Mountain Branch Golf Course in Joppa, MD, just outside of Baltimore. Tom Tycz, Barry and I were there to represent PVS. We heard reports of the 2024 ski trips and discussed future trip destinations. For the past trips, Lake Tahoe had plenty of snow which made some flight arrivals a bit challenging while Kitzbuhl could have used a little more. But based upon the reports it seemed like folks enjoyed each of the trips.

Here's a summary of the upcoming trips:

2025

Western Carnival: Park City, UT – February 2-8, 2025

Eurofest: Chamonix, France – February 28 – March 9, 2025

Winterfest: Killington, VT – March 2-7, 2025

There is still space available on these trips. Let us know if you are interested.

2026 and Beyond

For 2026 Banff was selected as the Western Carnival trip during the first full week of February. This trip would include skiing at 3 mountains; Sunshine, Lake Louise and Mount Norquay with the option for a day trip to Kicking Horse.

Winterfest will either be at Jay Peak, VT or Sugarloaf Mountain, ME.

There was a lot of discussion concerning the Eurofest destination, whether in Europe or to do it in Japan. Polling of the clubs present indicated that their club members would be more likely to do a European trip over a Japan trip. A number of different locals were brought up, but no decision was reached. The tour operators will research location and pricing options such as Madona di Campiglio, Italy or possibilities in Spain.

Future destinations for 2027 and beyond were Breckinridge for Western Carnival. Eurofest thoughts were Zermatt, Switzerland; Cervinia, Italy; Tynnes, France and Les Arcs, France. All food for thought!

Alpine X

We also had a presentation from a representative of Alpine X which is developing an indoor ski facility called Fairfax Peak in Lorton, VA (built on the Lorton landfill no less!). It is scheduled to open in the Fall of 2025. Plans are for it to be open 24/7/365. There will be a 360-degree vertical with a chair lift to the top and various ski runs for everyone – beginners to racers. Yes, there will be real snow with indoor temperatures at 25 degrees. The anticipated cost is \$30 for 2 hours. Equipment and clothing will be available to rent. It sounds like a very interesting phenomenon. Perhaps a good place for a few warm up runs before a ski trip! Or for a PVS meeting?

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Summer is Coming



Snowmass, Colorado 2025

Save the Date!

January 8-15

We are already planning to go back to Snowmass next year! Once again, we will be staying at our favorite Snowmass Mountain Chalet which offers a convenient ski in, ski out location. As in recent years it will be a “**Land Only**” package which will include lodging and a 5 day senior lift pass. Pricing and other details to follow.

- *Snowmass offers direct access to 3,100 acres of skiing, just outside the door.*
- *The skiing terrain totals more than 5,000 acres, with interchangeable lift tickets and free bus service to Aspen Mountain, Aspen Highlands & Buttermilk ski areas.*

We hope to have pricing soon! If you are interested in going on the trip, please send a deposit of \$250. Make check payable Kathy Lake and mail to:

Kathy Lake
11677 Fox Glen Dr.
Oakton, VA 22124

Keep in mind that if you have to cancel for any reason, the deposit is fully refundable prior to October 1st.

For questions contact us at KathyLakehomes@yahoo.com

Kathy & Barry Lake
Trip Leaders



Events



PVS - BYOB (Bring Your Own Book) Group

Our May book discussion was helmed by Mary Ellena Ward and Zoom-hosted by Bonnie Sweeney. Sometimes it takes a PVS village! Many thanks to them both for volunteering. Below are Mary Ellena's thoughtful notes on the books discussed. Consider joining us next time and **see the info at the bottom for how to join in on Thursday, June 13th from 4 to 5 pm on Zoom.**

Books we shared in May:

Bonnie: Olga Dies Dreaming by Xochitl Gonzales.

Recommended by a friend. Olga is a wedding planner for the power brokers who are gentrifying Brooklyn, and her brother is in the House of Representatives. He is being blackmailed by these same power brokers. Gives a flavor for the Latin area of Brooklyn and the Puerto Ricans who came to NYC, but Bonnie found it hard to identify with the action. Very crude language overused. Part of the book is focused on the devastation of Puerto Rico by hurricane Maria, and those episodes kept her going. **2-3 stars.**

Rosemary: Homecoming by Kate Morton.

Set in London & Australia. A young woman, Jess, returns to Australia from London to be with her dying grandmother who raised her. She's staying in her grandmother's house alone. While exploring, she found a book that describes a shocking crime of mother & children killed, never resolved. Jess is estranged from own mother, but she finds that the murder is about her own family. Interesting twists & turns as it bounces between the present (2017) and 1959 when the crime happened. Love and secrets. Compelling once you get into it. Well-written. **4.5 stars.**

Karen K: The Hunter by Tana French.

A follow-on to The Searcher. An American cop has relocated to Ireland. This is a continuation of his story and a continuation of the mystery. A teenage girl from a poor family whose older brother was murdered in the first story is supposed to be the primary figure, but Karen feels the author doesn't handle her well. The girl makes friends with the cop, but the relationship is awkward. Her father, who abandoned the family years ago, returns to the village with a con man in tow to rip off the locals. A page-turner, but not compelling. You learn more about the scum-bag dad than anyone else. **2 stars.**

Marianne: Somehow: Thoughts on Love by Anne Lamott.

Not finished yet (reading a lot of sympathy cards). First page epigraph by Rumi reminding us that good and bad times come at you. Each teaches something. Lamott writes about her parents' poor relationship and how it affected her and her brother. Goes into a lot of the challenges of her own life. Love is exciting, wonderful, sad, so many things, but comes back to you ... "Be goodness with skin on." So far would give it **4 stars**. Good for her time in life.

Jan

Didn't read anything all month! Need to pick up something for the drive to Richmond for the weekend. New experience today: mowed the back yard. All the neighborhood kids have aged and moved on. Hoping the kid across the street will do it this summer.

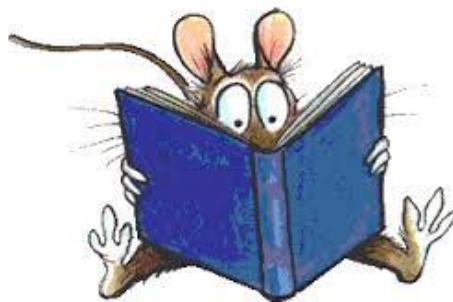
Mary Ellena: Black Elk Speaks. Being the Life of a Holy Man of the Oglala Souix. By John G. Neihardt.

The book is based on interviews that Neihardt had with Black Elk at the end of his long and eventful life.

Black Elk had a vision, the "great" vision he calls it, when he was nine years old, at the time his people were being forced off their ancestral lands by the US government. Treaties were being made and broken. The people were being forced onto smaller and smaller "reservations" as gold was discovered and more settlers appeared. His great vision was that he would heal his people and their nation.

Although a child, he was present at the battle of Little Big Horn and describes that experience from the native perspective. He was not present at the massacre of Wounded Knee but arrived in time to help some of the fleeing people to escape. He did become a healer and cured much sickness among his people but was unable to heal the nation as promised in his vision. **4.5 stars**.

The next BYOB Zoom call will be held on Thursday, June 13th from 4 to 5 pm. Let Nancy McKinley at nancymckin@gmail.com know if you'd like to stop by and check us out and she'll put you on the list to get the Zoom link. No commitment!



Special Event !!!

Join us at PVS' 32nd (*not* annual)

STEAK AND SWIM



At the HINES'
Saturday August 17, 2024 - - 3pm
Rain or Shine



This is PVS' oldest annual club event, except that it's not quite annual!
Celebrate summer in the Blue Ridge foothills in Delaplane, VA.
Enjoy good food, camaraderie, open space, and maybe even a dip in the pool!

Limited to 25. Reserve Now!
Deadline to sign up or cancel is August 10th.

BRING: Your own bathing suit and towel and either an **appetizer or dessert**.

INCLUDED: steaks, baked potatoes, salads, fixings, beverages and (hopefully) sunshine!!

Cost: \$20 per person.

To sign up or for directions phone Kerry or Marianne at 540 364-4810, or email
mchines@erols.com and tell us what you'll bring. Also, let us know if you need directions.



In Memory of Clare Soponis



Clare Soponis, a Potomac Valley ski club member from Washington, D. C., and former Capital Golden Skiers member, passed away at home on Tuesday, April 30, 2024, a few days after her 91st birthday.

Clare was born in Minersville, Pennsylvania and was the oldest of six siblings. She had a varied career in public relations, international trade, equal employment opportunity, Congressional experience (administrative assistant to Congressman Roman Pucinski of Illinois), at the White House with the Lyndon Johnson administration, Federal/State relations (New England Regional Commission) and trade policy (US Department of Commerce).

Clare traveled extensively but especially enjoyed her trips to Lithuania where she found family members and made many friends.

Upon retirement, Clare enjoyed her many classes at OLLI for learning in retirement, joined her sister Marianne at ski club meetings, attended family outings, started each day reading the Washington Post and planning the day. She will be remembered for her open-minded and friendly ways. She was positive and welcoming, even during trying times.

There will be a private family memorial service sometime in the future.



Members' Corner

Viewing the Eclipse in Vermont

by Jill Nelson

Like many PVS members, I have traveled to Vermont over the years for skiing. But last April I joined thousands in going to Burlington to view the total solar eclipse, something I had never seen before. Warm weather had pretty much ended this year's fairly dismal ski season, and we enjoyed early spring-like weather – and happily no rain. My excursion was encouraged by being able to stay with my son, Fred, who lives near Burlington and has a ready guest room for grandma Jill. So I let him and his family know months before that I planned to come, and booked flights well in advance, as fairly the small planes that make the regular run from Washington to Burlington filled up quickly.



I also purchased special eclipse viewing glasses as Christmas presents for all. And my brother, Jon Wechsler, who lives in Rhinebeck, NY and has been a PVS member and Snowmass skier with us, decided to drive up and join us. Fortunately the road trip north was easy and not congested. And because he spent the night with us, he avoided massive traffic jams the evening after the eclipse and had a smooth trip home the next day.

The main uncertainty was the weather. Clouds and possibly rain were predicted, but we were lucky and had only a few thin high clouds that day. That was not the case everywhere along the eclipse pathway, where thunderstorms blocked the view.

I had watched partial eclipses several times over the decades, most recently here in Washington about five years ago. But I have to admit that I was disappointed then, as the skies did get a little grayer, but no more than experienced with a heavy storm. You could see the moon creeping across the sun, but it never did get very dark.

This time was very different. Fred and his family, including my two granddaughters, live in Shelburne, south of Burlington, on a street with a wide cul-de-sac that was open for viewing. The neighbors set up chairs & refreshment tables, and we all put on



our glasses to start tracking the moon as it moved in front of the sun. For about 15 minutes it seemed similar to the partial eclipse I had seen before – a little darker, but not that different.



Then, at the point of totality, it all changed. It became quite dark. Fred was keeping track of the time and announced that we could take off our glasses. At that point we could look right at the sun because it was covered completely by the round black circle of the moon, except for scattered sun flares streaking out along the rim. And a dark, shadowy circle appeared on the ground all around us.

