



# Potomac Valley Skiers, Inc.

Washington Maryland Virginia

February 2001

Volume XXXVI Number 2

## PVS President's Message

Fellow PVSers

Our world doesn't stand still for a moment. Just when we were getting comfortable, here come new things to keep us on our toes.

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First, surely you've noticed that this month's TOOT looks somewhat, shall we say, digital... Many thanks to Marvin Hass for stepping in to take on the February Editor duties for skiing (what else?) TOOT Editor, Jessma Blockwick. Marvin has taken this opportunity to use his considerable computing skills in "technologizing" our beloved TOOT. Even the illustrated Knee logo is from the Internet! Wow!

With the world changing and PVS going into its 36th year, we certainly didn't want to be accused of being the "unexamined club." We've just undergone an inspection from head to toe by a Committee headed by Jim Slack and consisting of Marilyn Clark, Reg Heitchue, and

Penny Hanshaw. Reg reprised an analysis he did of PVS ski trips in 1987; the results sounded amazingly similar. No major changes to our way of operating have been recommended by the Committee. This stalwart group didn't shrink from delving into all of our nooks and crannies and they've pronounced us exceptionally healthy. And many, many thanks to Jim et al for such a huge undertaking. See you out there on the slopes!

*Nancy*

Nancy McKinley, President

*A copy of the Committee report mentioned above is attached to this newsletter.*

**Monthly Meeting Tuesday February 20, 2001 7:30 PM**

**Location: Home of Eugene and Wilma Sharer, 12404 Beall Spring Rd.,  
Potomac, MD 20854 Telephone: (301) 469-6135**

**(Directions to the Sharer Home on the next page)**



PVS Web Site: <http://www.homestead.com/pvskiers>

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**Directions for monthly meeting:** *From Virginia, DC, Eastern Mont. County:* Take the Beltway to the River Road west exit to Potomac. Take River Road west 3 miles to Potomac Village. Go straight through the light at Potomac Village. Continue on River Road 5 miles to Beall Spring Road. Turn right onto Beall Spring Road. Go six houses on the left side to 12404. The mailbox has the house number just before the driveway entrance. Turn left into the driveway and park on the right diagonally under the trees.

*From Gaithersburg and North:* Come across Muddy Branch Road toward Potomac. Cross Route 28 onto Dufief Mill Road. Continue on Dufief Mill past the Elementary School on the left. Dufief Mill turns into Travilah Road at the school. Continue on Travilah to River Road. Turn left onto River Road. Take the first left on River Road into Beall Spring Road and 12404 is the sixth house on the left side. Proceed as above to park.

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### Future Local Events

**Feb. 14 (Wed): Whitetail Day Skiing.** Spend Valentine's Day with something you could learn to love: skiing at White Tail: Join John Matthews for a midday session on the slopes at White Tail. Meet at the south parking lot of the Gaithersburg Holiday Inn at 9:00 am and we'll carpool for the hour and a quarter ride to the ski area. Directions to meeting place: take I-270 north to Montgomery Village Avenue, then north to the intersection with Route 355 (Frederick Avenue). The Holiday Inn is on the left. We'll meet in the parking lot next to the entrance off Route 355. Those who wish to drive directly should follow Route I-270 to Frederick, then turn west onto I-70. Exit north to Clear Spring (Exit 18) and follow the signs. NOTE: White Tail is now owned by the Ski Liberty resort and has adopted the same lift ticket fees. Thus, no more free skiing for 70+; however, those 65+ can ski for half price midweek, i.e. \$15.50 for a four-hour session; eight hours for \$18.50. Standard rates are \$31 and \$37 respectively. Questions: Call John (301-589-7612).



**Feb. 20 (Tues eve) Monthly Meeting** — See page 1

**March 20 (Tuesday): Monthly Meeting** at the Matthews' house in Silver Spring. Details in March issue.

**March 22 (Thurs): Bicycling Gourmet:** Glen Echo to Georgetown with lunch at Tony and Joe's waterfront pub at Washington Harbour. Details in March issue.

**April 7 (Sat) Wine Tasting, Dinner, and Overnight at Lake of the Woods:**

This is the 2nd annual affair following last year's format that includes dinner and overnight accommodations. This event is limited to 20 people. There are several spots remaining so reserve promptly by call Don & Pat at 540-972-9838. The cost is \$75 per person and includes wine, dinner, lodging, and simple breakfast supplies. **Since most costs are pre-expended, those who are signed up should mail a check made out to Don Cope and mail it to HC 75 Box 1780, 216 Mt Pleasant Dr, Locust Grove, VA 22508.**





**Review of Previous Events WISP Demo Day Jan. 10-12**

"Trip leader" Myron Marquardt arranged for superb weather for the 13 PVSers who made the trip to western Maryland. We had sunny skies, mostly calm winds, fresh but not freezing temperatures, and lots of that white slippery stuff underfoot. Can you imagine? WISP had essentially the same base (40"-60") as Steamboat Springs (46"-53"), Sun Valley (30"-51") and Ski Liberty (40"-46"). Who needs all that vertical, anyway?

Most of us were in the market for cheap lift tickets rather than skis, but there were some members who took advantage of the Ski Chalet Demo Day on January 11th, 2001. Serge Triau, in a surge of confidence, had sold his only pair of skis and now needed new ones before leaving for Steamboat Springs the following week. Luckily he found what he wanted before falling prey to a hit-and-run skier. After that he was also in the market for new glasses, new goggles and a first aid station. We are happy to report that he escaped serious injury. Pat Tengel also identified some new skis although they didn't have exactly her size so she was planning to buy them closer to home.



Your correspondents had not been to WISP for very many years and had fun matching memories to the new mountain layout and base facilities. At first it seemed like the only recognizable feature was the chairs from the old #1 lift that are now scattered around as benches. The new trails provide a lot more variety and spread the crowds around better so we will definitely not wait another 15 years to go back.

...Mary Ward & Jim Slack

**January Meeting Jan. 16**

The January monthly meeting was presided over by VP Ned Flaherty in the absence of Pres. Nancy McKinley. The forthcoming ski trips to Steamboat and The Canyons were reviewed by leaders Barbara Leonhardt and Ray McKinley. Snow conditions bode well for a successful trip. Future local events were announced. A number of potential ski trips for 2002 were mentioned, including the possibility of participating in the BRSC trips to the Banff/Lake Louise (staying at Chateau Lake Louise) and Chamonix, France. Members are invited to offer their opinions about their potential interest in these trips to members of the Trips Committee. Among the members appearing at this function was Charlie Gordon from Texas. However, he assured us he was not present in the Washington area that week to attend the inaugural. Finally, participants wish to express their vote of appreciation to the meeting host and hostess, Philip and Eugenia Ufholz for their hospitality and delicious refreshments. A photo of them is posted on the PVS Web Site.

**Zoo Walk and Lunch — PANDAmonium Jan. 18**

Our Zoo Walk and lunch occurred on a overcast day with occasional light rain. This day also conflicted with some inaugural activities. Nevertheless, seven adventurous PVS'ers wandered down to the Zoo to welcome our newest denizens of the area, Tien Tien and Mei Xiang. The new kids on the block wrestled with each other and munched on bamboo shoots. After visiting some of the longer term residents of the Zoo, the group adjourned to Yanni's Greek Taverna where they munched on Mediterranean style delicacies. Photos of the wrestlers and their PVS fans can be found on the PVS Web Site.



**About Our Members**

**Remembering John Newdorp** January 14, 2001 (Memorial Service). John Newdorp M.D., a member of PVS and a former President of the Ski Club of Washington, DC passed away on December 19, 2000 at the age of 90. A physician by profession, John held a number of administrative posts in organizations in the health and medical area. He was not only active in skiing and skiing associations, but also in outdoor activities and civic affairs. He ran in a number of major marathons. As a kayaker, he served as president of the Washington Canoe Club. Since 1993 he had been a volunteer for the National Park Service at the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse station. He participated in a number of PVS ski trips up to the mid-1990's. His is survived by his friend, Audrey Conner, a sister, two daughters, five grandchildren, and five great grandchildren.

A Memorial service for him was held at the Unitarian Church of Arlington on January 14 and was attended by a number of members of PVS. There were a number of moving tributes to him by Audrey Conner, his daughters Nancy Degenhart and Catherine Brosius, and granddaughter Katy Brosius. The ski community in this area will long remember John, who set a sterling example of how to live life and be of service to the community. His presence will be missed by many.

A collage of photos of John Newdorp reflecting his active life appeared on the program of his memorial service and is reproduced on the PVS Web Site. PVS members are invited to contribute their recollections of John, which will be posted on the Web Site.

**Charles Huggins** returned to the slopes (at WISP) for the first time after being sidelined for over three years with medical problems.

**Calendar**

- Feb 3 Telluride Pre-trip party at Dillons' 4:00 pm
- Feb 14 Day Skiing at Whitetail
- Feb. 20 *Monthly* meeting at the Sharer's home
- Feb. 27 ExCom at Lu Beale's
- Mar 20 *Monthly* meeting at the Matthews' home
- Mar 22 Bicycling -- Glen Echo to Georgetown
- Mar 27 ExCom at Sheldon Drews' pad.
- Apr 7 Wine Tasting at the Cope's Lakeside home
- Apr 17 *Annual* meeting at the Kline's home
- Apr 19 Bicycling -- Mt. Vernon
- Apr 29 Spring Fling - Pooks Hill Marriott
- May 15 *Monthly* meeting at the Leonhardt's home.
- May 19 *Best like who ever*
- June 19 *Monthly* meeting at Betty Lawrence home.

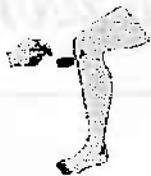
**TOOT March issue material:**  
 Jessma Blockwick., 1808 Old Meadow Rd., #213, McLean, VA 22101 by Tues March 27. If sending via e-mail, do not use attachments.  
 jblockwick@starpower.net  
 FAX for TOOT (703) 790-9778

**PVS e-mail announcements:**  
 Karen Felker karknox@erols.com

**PVS Web Site:** Marvin Hass  
 marvin.hass@erols.com

June 23 Spring Dinner

*Apr 28 ExCom*  
*May ExCom?*  
*May 20 Post Trip*



## THE KNEE

by Ray McKinley

A special Knee Sock this month goes to all aggressive skiers. It is bad enough that we have road rage, but also ski stupidity. Yuck. I'm referring to dolts (I refuse to use the term skiers) like the one who overtook Serge Triau during Wisp Demo Day. Serge was skiing down (not across) a black run. Dolt was doing about two million miles per hour, and cut across Serge's ski tips. This resulted in Serge crashing ("a true yard sale" he noted) and apparently losing consciousness for a bit. Fortunately, the results were only some new scars on his skis, some minor black and blueness and some very sore muscles. Luckily, Serge was able to protect his knees.

This is a great segue (if I do say so myself--and I do), as I had been reviewing some notes about John Newdorp. John who was a past President of United States Eastern Ski Association, was instrumental in writing USEASA's requirement for ski helmets in races. At ten miles per hour, hitting a tree can kill you. Ski helmets could have saved several lives this season-- and perhaps Serge's consciousness. John often suggested that you buy yourself a ski helmet--and wear it. He always skied with his; and they're warm!

Another safety item--for skiboarders. L. L. Bean (which is Spanish for The The *frijoles*) now offers boarders foam padded briefs! Cool.

Betty Lawrence has sold her Eastern Shore townhouse (for a tidy profit, I hope). She's looking for a new beach home near Don and Kathy Dillon in my favorite place, South Bethaknee.

Here we are at the beginning of February, 2001, the first year in ages with no *el nino*, *la nina* or *super nachos*. It has certainly provided the DC environs with an interesting winter. We even got a new (Bush league??) president. While it's probably not the greatest ski season ever, it ain't too shabby. Europe is encrusted with snow. And the fluffy white stuff is floating down light and plentifully all over the West. The Canyons just had 24" in 24

hours, and San Francisco just had a white out--or is that a light out? Right on--or out!

Perhaps you would like to try my idea for those who are afraid to stand up on skis. Kneeskis.

So as not to be misunderstood, I want to quote directly, a conversation with TOOT editor (except for this month) Jessma Blockwick:

Knee: "Please tell me, fair TOOT editor, with what do they clean the whistles on locomotives?"

Jessma: "I have no idea. Please do tell me, Knee."

Knee: "You clean them with a TOOT brush."

Condolences to Nancy Garrett. Her mother, after moving up here from Florida in November, passed away last month.

You think parking is expensive around here. At Vail, for \$50,000 and \$1,350 in yearly dues you can join the "Passport Club." This gets you a guaranteed underground parking space at the base of Chair 6. (For that price it ought to be Sofa 6.) Lest you think it a total rip off, you also get a small, maple trimmed locker. And they are now sold out!

After seeing the play, *Fosse*, most of the group went to dinner at *Les Halles*. George Hicho loved the hanger steak, and Bette Walker enjoyed the restaurant so much she has been back for lunch.

Received a nice note from our "Hilton Head," Aase Berling. Her big trip was to Turkey (although she spells it funny, something, I believe like "Dallas"), and was in a fashion show in Izmir. Aase almost had a visit from Suzanne Boisclair and Carol Drohan, but they were in Hilton Head whilst she was in Turkey. All PVSers are invited to visit.

In the French Alps, almost everything is ski oriented. In a small hotel room, even the toilet tissue dispensers are made by Rossignol--it's true. Can't you just imagine the ski-bum who finally graduated as an engineer? He lands the truly plum job, working for Rossignol. First day on the job he is told, sorry, it's the toilet paper division.

Nancy Lewis managed a few days skiing this season--including days with Dick Comerford and Huey Roberts. At the end of April, Nancy will bring Joe's ashes back to Virginia for interment.

In next month's *Knee*, an expose. Ski Liberty Patroller Jim Wingrove on "Skiing with No Snow."

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# **Report**

## **of the**

# **PVS Examination Committee**

23 January 2001

## **Executive Summary**

### **Fundamental Finding**

PVS is a social club for skiers.

PVS members enjoy hiking and biking. PVS members enjoy eating and drinking. PVS members enjoy skiing. The right mix differs from member to member.

PVS members enjoy ski trips organized by PVS. PVS members enjoy ski trips organized by other ski clubs and BRSC. PVS members enjoy ski trips organized by themselves. The right mix differs from member to member.

PVS members enjoy all-inclusive, ski-in-ski-out ski trips at posh destination resorts. PVS members enjoy adventuresome, ride-the-bus ski trips at not too rustic resorts. The right mix differs from member to member.

PVS is a social club for skiers.

### **Findings & Recommendations**

1. In PVS's 35 years of existence, PVS has changed from a membership largely in their 20s & 30s to a club with an average age of 65 or so. Most members are comfortable with this and do not believe that PVS will die out overnight. We expect that over the next few years there will be an increasing number of openings in the membership rolls. We should use this opportunity to continue to recruit active members within our age bracket.
2. A better understanding by all members of other members widely-diverse desires for ski trips (where they go, what they cost, who leads them, and their affiliation) will lead to a less contentious atmosphere around the Ski Trip Committee and its difficult job. In this regard, a number of members have expressed distress that a few, vocal PVS members have gone beyond the promotion of PVS trips, so well done by the Ski Trip Committee, and have appointed themselves "ski-trip nannies" creating an uncomfortable and embarrassing atmosphere of badgering others about which ski trips it is patriotic to go on. We ask these well-meaning members to relax; lest they create an unintended backlash within PVS and undermine the role of the Ski Trip Committee.
3. This Committee is fully aware of the very painful birth of the ski trip Guidelines. We also have great admiration for the work the Ski Trip Committee has done for several years. So with some reluctance but with firm conviction we recommend that, with the benefit of several years of experience, we now revisit those Guidelines for fine tuning on trip leader grooming, financial risk, BRSC relationship, recruiting new members versus date of opening trips to non-members, requirement for an assistant ski trip leader, and so forth.
4. The question of the mechanism by which the Vice President is selected, an issue raised by a few members, is beyond the scope of this Committee and deserves an open discussion over the

next year. Any bylaws changes, should such be desired, could be considered at the 2002 Annual Meeting.

## **The Examination**

### **Introduction**

Several members of PVS have raised questions about the health of PVS. The central concerns are:

1. Do the ski trips run by PVS meet the needs of the members and
2. Is PVS not attracting enough new, particularly younger, members to remain an active club?

To address these issues, President Nancy McKinley appointed a subcommittee of the Executive Committee "to look at trends in PVS membership and skiing" [President's Message, TOOT, October 2000] and report its findings to ExCom with any recommendations for changes in the club. This is the report of that subcommittee.

### **The Examination Committee**

1. Marilyn Clark – Membership demographics
2. Penny Hanshaw – Purpose & needs
3. Reg Heitchue – Trips
4. Jim Slack – Chair

Starting in October 2000, through notices in TOOT and announcements at meetings, the Committee has solicited the thoughts of PVS members on our Examination. We have each talked extensively with PVS members at meeting and events. Additionally, Penny Hanshaw phoned about a fifth of the club requesting their views on our purpose. We are indebted to all who shared their ideas and concerns with us. The Committee thanks Sara Huggins, Jan Marx, and Serge Triaou for the particular assistance they provided.

### **Demographics**

PVS was established in 1965 with 27 charter members. The membership grew to 100 in the early 1970s, to around 170 in the 1980s, and to almost 200 by 1990. Since then, PVS has continued at its full membership limit of 200 with an ongoing waiting list. There is no lack of applicant members and no indication that PVS is about to wither away from lack of new members.

Over the past several years, the average attendance at PVS monthly meetings (not events) has been running in the range of 40 to 50 members per meeting, with a handful of meetings attended by 60 to 80 members. In the last three years, the average number of members at the monthly meetings has held steady at about 50 members. As most of us have no doubt noted, this makes for a fairly cozy meeting. An increase in the number of PVS members would certainly lead to more members attending monthly meetings and overload the capacity of the homes of the members who graciously host our meetings. We found few members who are interested in having PVS meet in commercial establishments as we did many years ago.

When PVS was established, the members were largely in their 20 & 30s. As the members have aged, their children have largely left the area and so we have almost no second generation PVS members. Additionally, there is little evidence that folks in their 20s and 30s are joining socially-oriented ski clubs such as PVS, preferring instead the gratification of AnyMountain without the

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commitment. Potential members in their 50s tend to have children they vacation with and are not interested in the style of ski trips PVS offers. The average age of PVS members is currently 65 or so. New members tend to be of the same age and with the same interests in the social and skiing aspects of PVS as current members.

### **Members opinions on purpose & needs**

PVS members firmly believe that PVS is a club for skiers; or as the bylaws state "Good fellowship and the shared enjoyment of good skiing". There is, nonetheless, a range of opinion on the mix of fellowship and trips. A very few members believe that the primary purpose of PVS is ski trips, pure and simple, and that it the obligation of every right thinking PVS member to work to fill each and every PVS trip. A few members, particularly those who are skiing much less than they used to, place their emphasis on the social aspects of the club and have a greatly reduced interest in the ski trips. The majority of PVS members, however feel that the purpose of PVS is the community of skiers, with PVS-run ski trips an important ingredient. A number of members have observed that ski trips are available from many sources (PVS being just one of them) and without PVS they would still ski. In fact, many PVS members go on ski trips of their own design or run by others but nonetheless feel that PVS, as it now stands, is the skiing community that they want to be an ongoing part of. The great majority of the PVS members the Committee talked with want PVS to continue as it now operates and do not want changes, especially anything as drastic as changes to the bylaws.

Most PVS members consider the 200 member limit essential to the sense of community and, with rare exception, think that holding meetings in members' homes is important to the club's feeling of personal sharing and friendship. A number of members have thought about special categories of membership such as active versus inactive, but were unclear on the interaction such would have with the membership limit. Everyone agreed that a meeting attendance limit, with signup required ahead of time, would not work.

### **Trips**

PVS ski trips tend to be more expensive than trips offered by others mainly because PVS trips offer the extras members request, but also for structural reasons such as the use of travel agents, the two trip leader rule, and the smaller (compared to, say, BRSC) size of the group. Some members hark back to "the good old days" of the inexpensive trips run by Norm Engelman and others to Salt Lake City. However, the clear votes for high-end trips by members both with their dollars and the lopsided results of the recent Ski Trip Committee survey [TOOT, page 5, January 2001] argue that the trips are generally well designed in price and value. Nonetheless, in view of the comments we received and the number of members interested in current (lower-priced) BRSC trips, we urge the Ski Trip Committee to schedule an occasional "budget" PVS trip to test the market. Our continued cooperation with BRSC as a partner on trips is clearly desirable in view of the great benefits it provides PVS members.

A number of actively skiing members frequently go on ski trips organized outside of the PVS Ski Trip Committee. This has caused some concern that PVS will lose members because of this. Yet we find that many of those very same members are quite active in PVS affairs. And we find no significant defections to other clubs. At the same time, the rule that PVS trips remain closed to non-PVS members until August 1<sup>st</sup> reduces our ability to attract new skiing members and to fill our trips.

Most members feel that the Ski Trip Committee is doing a difficult job very admirably. This is not to say PVS members do not enjoy quibbling over details of the operation. There is some concern that the requirement for an assistant ski trip leader causes trips to be larger than is really necessary. (We are compelled to note that there is no explicit requirement in the Guidelines for an assistant ski

trip leader; merely references to such a creature at 1.2, 2.1a, 2.3a, & 2.6a.) Additionally, the Ski Trip Committee should do more to recruit and groom new trip leaders.

Most importantly the PVS leadership should define a measure of success for PVS's offering of ski trip. We suggest that the number of trip participant opportunities is a better measure than the number of trips filled; that is, "Trips should serve PVS, rather than PVS serving the trips". For this to be possible, a clear statement of who bears the financial risk of a withdrawn trip is essential.

(We are pleased to note that PVS members' desires for ski trips have changed little in the time since a similar analysis by Heitchue et al [TOOT, page 10, September 1987].)

**Conclusion**

In answer to the two questions we present in the Introduction, we have found that the majority of PVS members feel that

1. The ski trips available to us pretty much satisfy our needs, though some moderate adjustments would be appreciated.
2. While we, the members, are aging (and aging well, we must observe), PVS continues at full membership with a waiting list and is unlikely to die out or even cease jolly activity.

In short, we don't feel broken; so please don't try to fix us.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Clark

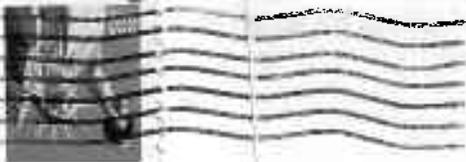
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