



The e-CHAIRLIFT CHATTER

February 2014

SSC Calendar

- February 4 ~ Monthly Membership Meeting, Gulliftys 7 pm
- February 4 ~ Pre-trip Meeting for Mount Bachelor 6 pm
- February 8 ~ Ski4Life benefits LLS, Roundtop Mountain Resort
- February 28 ~ Board Meeting, 3211 N. Front Street, Harrisburg
- March 4 ~ Monthly Membership Meeting, Gulliftys
- April 1 ~ Picture Party, Gulliftys
- April 12 ~ Awards Banquet, 50th Party, Blue Ridge Country Club

Tuesday, February 4 ~ 7 pm

MEMBERSHIP MEETING, ELECTION RESULTS & FINAL SIGNUPS

Come one, come all to Gullifty's Underground on Tuesday, February 4 for some mid-winter fellowship. We will be celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Ski Roundtop Mountain Resort and the announcement of the members of upcoming Board of Directors for SSC. Arrive early to take advantage of Gullifty's happy hour from 5-7 pm, featuring half-price drinks and great food. Our program for the evening includes a showing of a DVD which chronicles the 50 year history of Ski Roundtop from its humble beginnings to the great local ski area we have in our backyard today. A short business meeting will be held from at 7 pm along with the announcement of the election results for our 2014-15 Board of Directors. The deadline is 7:30 for your submission of paper ballots, but most members need to cast their votes no later than 5 pm on Tuesday, as the online ballot will close at that time. For directions to <http://www.gulliftys.net>.



**LEUKEMIA &
LYMPHOMA
SOCIETY®**



Ski4Life

Send Cancer Downhill ~ Saturday, February 8, 9 am - 5 pm

It would be great to see lots of SSC members at Roundtop Mountain Resort on Saturday, February 8, cheering on all the Ski4Life participants at the base of Minuteman, in the lodge, or on the lifts or trails. This final day of our annual fundraising campaign on behalf of The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society will be a day of celebrating passion, compassion and resolve. Passion for this sport we all love; compassion for others as we ski (or ride!) in honor or memory of friends or family members afflicted by blood cancers; an resolve to Send Cancer Downhill by funding the research that will, one day soon, forever eradicate blood cancers. If you're planning to come out to the mountain on February 8 and can spare half an hour to help with the event, please contact Sue Leonard at ski4life@skissc.com to volunteer. Please support SSC members Rebecca Havice and Mike Shaw with your donations at www.lla.org/cpa/ski4life and come out to cheer on all the awesome participants!

SPRING BANQUET ~ 50TH ANNIVERSARY BASH ~ SATURDAY, APRIL 12

It's SSC's



Dust off your dancing shoes, dress to impress and head to Harrisburg to join SSC in celebrating its 50th anniversary in style. Our Spring Banquet will be held at the Blue Ridge Country on April 12 from 5:30 pm until midnight. The evening begins with an open bar/happy hour with beer, wine and butlered hors d'oeuvres, followed by a buffet dinner and dancing to the great sounds of the band American Roulette. We will also be celebrating the past 50 years of the best ski club around, along with introduction of our 2015 trip leaders. Don't miss out on this once in a lifetime event! Join the celebration by sending your check right

now (payable to SSC) for \$50 per person to Becky Havice, 108 Ridgeview Drive, Lewistown, PA 17044. Reservations are due by April 2. If you have any questions, please contact Becky at lpatt@eawireless.net or 717-248-7271.

TRIP UPDATES

February 23 – 28 ~ SUGARLOAF, MAINE

Sugarloafers...are you ready to experience the largest ski area east of the Rockies, the only East Coast area with lift service above the tree line and eastern skiing so fine it resembles the best of western conditions? Countdown to all of the above!

DEPARTURE: K-Mart, 5050 Jonestown Road, Harrisburg (enter the K-Mart parking lot, park against the back of the Best Buy Building). A location place/time for a second departure will be provided. The bus will arrive at approximately 5 am to load and pack, and will leave at 6 am sharp! Baggage allowance is 1 suitcase, 1 boot bag and 1 ski bag per person.

The Sugarloaf Mountain Hotel will provide a welcome package to each participant upon arrive with local maps and information. Melody will forward additional information prior to our February 23 departure via e-mail (or phone calls for those of you who do not have e-mail) to include the week's agenda and any other pertinent communications. Any questions, please contact **Trip Leader Melody Patton** at mpatton@skissc.com or at 717-741-6055.

March 13-16 ~ SUGARBUSH, VERMONT

This is the last call for Vermont, we only have until the February 4 meeting to reserve the remaining rooms, they will have to be turned back the following day if nobody claims them. We still have a few spaces for this great getaway to Sugarbush with 111 trails covering 53 miles; 16 lifts provide access to 1215 skiable acres and 2600 vertical feet. The Sugarbush Inn amenities include ski storage, free Wi-Fi and breakfast each morning served in the Hearth Restaurant, along with free access to a nearby fitness center with indoor pool, tennis courts, Jacuzzi, sauna and massage, and continuous shuttle service to the mountain just minutes away. At just \$470 pp/do, the trip includes roundtrip motorcoach from Harrisburg, three nights lodging, daily breakfasts, and a 2-day lift ticket. We may add an optional day of skiing on Sunday for \$46 before heading home if there is enough interest. For more information, contact Monica Kurtz at the membership meeting, by email at mkurtz@skissc.com or 717-691-9237. Don't delay, this will be a fun trip you won't want to miss.

SNOW INVERSION SUFFOCATION ~ by Jay Doherty

On Saturday, January 11, 2014, Douglas Spring, a 54 year old father from California was visiting his son and they were skiing together at Whitefish Ski Resort in Montana. Both were experienced and skilled skiers. Whitefish was having a great year for snowfall. There was an 87" (or 7'3") settled base. It had snowed 7" in the hours before the lifts started operation. The wind picked up and the visibility was reduced to "whiteout" conditions with fog and blowing snow.

Just before noon they entered a tree area high on the mountain where they thought the visibility would be improved. When the son arrived at the bottom of the run he soon realized that his father was not following him. Shortly after, he got back on the lift and returned to the top and retraced their ski track. When he found his father all he could see was his skis sticking out of the snow from under a tree in a tree well. His father was dead. The ski patrol was summoned and attempted CPR to no avail. This was the 3rd SIS incident in 3 years at Whitefish.

SIS stands for Snow Immersion Suffocation. There is an average of 3.3 SIS incidents per year nationwide. 63% are skiers and 37% are snowboarders. Most all are expert or upper intermediate, young to middle aged male skiers/boarders. The leading cause of SIS is tree wells. A tree well is formed around the base of an evergreen tree. When it snows, the branches act like the shingles on a roof. The snow either sticks to the branches and does not immediately reach the ground and is blown off later or the snow is repelled out to the perimeter of the branch coverage area leaving the area under the branches and around the trunk of the tree with little snow.

As the wind blows, it packs the snow and sunshine causes a slight melt which solidifies the top of the snow surface away from the branch coverage area. At the same time the snow in the tree well remains very soft and fluffy because it is protected from the wind as it is in a depression and is protected from the sun under the branches. While there is less danger when the snow pack is shallow, the danger exponentially increases as following snow storms dump more and more snow on the area. The lower branches which are the longest can become laden with snow and eventually are pinned down in the snow creating a structure much like the roots of the tree. Tree wells can exist under virtually every evergreen tree. They can be in untracked remote areas in the outback or in well skied glades. When the windblown snow accumulates in the well it creates the trap that kills!

Getting into a tree well is easier than you may think. Getting out of a tree well is likely much harder than you think. There are several ways that you can get yourself into a tree well. The exuberating feeling and enthusiasm for the enjoyment of skiing in deep powder often overcomes the good judgment and patience required to survive. As you are knifing turns around trees and through the powder and deep snow, you might meet a broken off branch at chest or eye level, or a dead tree buried just under the surface and out of sight, a sudden steep drop, any of which can knock you down. A wind gust can break a huge glob of snow loose from the branches above and hit you in the face. You may find trees whose lower branches are high enough to ski close to or under and as you pass under the tree you break through the surface of the hidden tree well. These are only a few examples of the obstacles and conditions that can get you in deep trouble.

Many skiers do get themselves into and out of a tree well with no harm done. The misguided belief that they are "bullet proof" and that they will be able to handle any situation presented in a tree well fall is what gets them into trouble. Most all of the SIS incidents involving tree wells are a result of the victim falling into the well head first. Once in a tree well, upside down, hands trapped in ski pole straps and feet trapped in skis whose bindings do not release, loose snow falling into and around the head, nose and mouth covered with snow, suffocation can happen as fast as drowning in water. It can also result in a long, thought filled, panic attacked slow death.

Ten experienced alpine avalanche rescue team volunteers recently put themselves into a head first tree well SIS situation to research any techniques that they could use to save themselves. None of them succeeded. All had to be helped. The best advice to avoid falling into a tree well and suffering the horrible consequences is to not ski in trees. The reality is, that it is really fun to do and the threat of the danger will not, and should not deter the avid powder hound from seeking out and enjoying the thrill that is associated with "ripping it up" in the trees. There are some good ideas and rules of thumb that you should consider when deciding to ski in the trees and deep steep powder.

1. First and foremost, never ski in trees, deep powder or steep black diamond runs ALONE! Always have a buddy or buddies.
2. Know your ability and don't attempt something you are not prepared for.
3. Don't let your ego or the pleading or teasing of your friends lead you into trouble that may be over your head. Stand your ground.
4. Don't plead or tease someone who is not sure of their ability to attempt something that they have doubts about.
5. Know and understand the snow conditions and recognize the inherent dangers.
6. Never ski in trees or steep deep runs or bowls with the ski pole straps around your wrist. The poles can wind up under you, trapping your hands and making your ability to save yourself impossible. Better to lose a pole than lose your life.
7. The leader of a friend or group of friends is usually the best and most skilled skier. It is human nature for him/her to throw caution to the wind and take off ahead of the group. Allow the less skilled or weaker skier to go first. The stronger more skilled skier should follow. Allow plenty of distance between for reaction time in case of a rest stop or a fall while keeping eye contact on the skier ahead.
8. Communication is very important and there are a couple of ways to handle that.
 - A. The leader should make sure that everyone in the group knows exactly the name of the run or area of the resort that they are about to ski. They must know the name of the lift where they will meet.
 - B. If possible, everyone should carry a walkie-talkie tuned to a private channel or at least a cell phone. Usually the cell signal is not good at the bottom of the mountain and mobile phones are often useless. None-the-less, the local ski patrol number should be programmed on the speed dial of every phone in the group.
 - C. Everyone should carry a sound making signal device such as a referee's whistle or a rescue howler hanging outside their jacket so it is immediately accessible. It is of little value inside a jacket pocket.
 - D. Use the whistle! Everyone is a little embarrassed when they fall or lag behind and are reluctant to let the group know that they have a problem. Use the whistle. If the skier behind sees that someone ahead has fallen or stopped, sound the whistle, otherwise those out in front will keep going and the group or one of the group will get separated.
 - E. Have a code for communicating with a whistle such as: One single blows might mean "Where are you?" and/or "We are here." Two long blows might mean "I fell behind but I am OK and will catch up." Three blows might mean "I am down and in trouble, need help!"
 - F. At the very least agree to yell to one another.
 - G. Never ski downhill past a fallen skier and then stop below them. Now you are useless if they have a problem and need your help. Their ski may be buried in the snow above them or they need your help to get up and you are downhill and have no way get back up to them in deep steep snow. Assess their need for your help from above and then respond accordingly.
 - H. Always test the depth of the snow and how packed it is with your ski pole. If the snow is as deep as your thighs or is loose powder, don't take your skis off as you may find that you are now floundering in snow too deep to be of any help.
 - I. Always assume the worst. Setting a plan that everyone is on their own until we all meet on the trail below or at the lift is a very bad plan. Particularly if you are the one up on the hill with your head down in a tree well or with a lost ski or head injury. Don't wait until it is too late to help. After a reasonable wait at the lift or on the trail send someone immediately to the lift where the lift operators have radios to reach the Ski patrol and get a possible rescue in motion. If you have cell service do it yourself. Right Now. If the lost skier shows up, it is better to call off the search than to never start it. Know exactly the name of the trail or area where you last saw the lost skier.
 - J. If you were the lost skier, and in a tree well, hope help gets there soon.

Another way that skiers can find their way into a tree well is to fall while skiing down an open or partly open, steep, well skied and packed area with trees at the bottom. Because the body mass is at the top and the skis act as a drag, the body will try to go downhill head first often on the back with face up. Skiers who find themselves in this position tend to just ride it out. They can't see where they are sliding and they are picking up speed. The result is possibly a head first upside down slide into a tree well lurking under one of the trees at the bottom.

If you find yourself in a free fall slide, avoid tumbling or tomahawking down the slope. Spread out and try to get on your back with your feet downhill and your face up. Use your hands elbows and heels to slow down. If you make it to the trees use your feet to block the tree and grab branches to keep your head up. Don't wait to see how the slide turns out before you try to save yourself.

Finally, you might find yourself in the grip of death by snow inversion suffocation in a technique known as "Lawn Darting." In this event you are either swooping down a deep steep fresh powder run or just cruising along a less challenging run covered with deep fresh powder. For whatever reason, catch an edge, snow ditch, hidden tree, you fall face first downhill (face plant). Your bindings don't release. Your ski tips are both pointed out in opposite directions making it impossible to roll over, your arms are shorter than the depth of the snow and or your pole straps have your hands trapped. Your face has plowed the snow in front of you. You can't raise your head higher than the snow. Your nose and mouth are full of snow. You are another victim of SIS.

PROPOSED SSC BYLAW CHANGES

At the December 18 meeting, the SSC Board of Directors, by a 2/3 majority in all cases, approved and recommends that the membership adopt the following three changes to SSC's Bylaws. As required by the SSC Bylaws, these proposed changes are being presented in this newsletter for consideration by the membership at the March 4, 2014 membership meeting, when members in attendance will be asked to vote and ratify each of these proposed changes. If you have any questions, you may contact Past President Pam Neidig at pastpresident@skissc.com or 717-507-7196 or make your enquiries at next membership meeting. Assuming any of these proposed bylaw changes is ratified by a vote of 2/3 of the members at the March 2014 meeting, it will be effective immediately.

#1 Family/household membership ~ The first proposed bylaw change, if ratified by SSC membership, would expand SSC's family membership category to include household memberships, where a household is defined as one or two adults and all dependent minors under 18 years of age who reside at the same physical address.

Current Bylaws Text [Additions](#) [Deletions](#)

Article II, Sections 3-5. Membership

Section 3. The membership shall be made up of the following classes: a. family/[household](#) membership; b. [single](#) adult membership; c. junior membership; and d. life membership.

Section 4. A family/[household](#) membership is defined as ~~a husband and wife, or a single parent and all dependents, one or two adults and all dependent minors under 18 years of age who reside at the same physical address, where dependents may include including~~ foreign exchange students participating in an approved foreign exchange program under 18 years of age. A dependent and/or foreign exchange student under 18 years of age may participate in Ski Club activities. A dependent and/or a foreign exchange student who reaches the age of eighteen after February 1st of the membership year may continue to participate in activities for the remainder of the membership year. Any adult covered by a family/[household](#) membership may serve on committees. A family/[household](#) membership is entitled to only one vote and one directorship.

Section 5. [Single](#) adult membership. All adult members must be a minimum of 21 years old. Under ~~an a single~~ adult membership, the member is entitled to participate in all Ski Club activities, vote on Ski Club business, serve on committees and hold office.

Article VI, Section 7a. Election Procedures

All officers and board members shall be at least 21 years of age prior to taking office. A family/[household](#) membership is entitled to only one (1) vote and may have only one (1) officer or board member. All officers and board members shall be eligible to succeed themselves in office.

Article VIII, Section 1. Financial Matters

Annual dues rates for junior, adult and family/[household](#) memberships shall be assessed by the Board of Directors. Initiation fees may be charged for new members or old members whose membership has not been renewed. Dues shall be payable by all members for the Ski Club fiscal year of April 1 to March 31, however, dues of all officers and Board members must be paid prior to installation.

#2 Clarification of lifetime membership level

The second proposed bylaw change, if ratified by SSC membership, would align policy with practice pertaining to free lifetime SSC memberships given by the Board upon recommendation by the Awards Committee. As currently practiced, Gold Ski Award winners

are awarded free lifetime SSC membership that may include family members (spouse and dependents) as applicable. Current bylaw language is ambiguous regarding membership level (individual versus family). If bylaw change #1 is ratified by membership, members will be asked to vote on awarding free lifetime memberships at the "Family/Household" membership level.

Article II, Section 7. Life membership

Life membership may be given by the Board to individuals who have rendered extraordinary services or contributions to the Ski Club, upon recommendation of the Awards Committee. All recipients of the Gold Ski Award shall also be given life membership at the Family membership level. No dues may be assessed on life members.

#3 Board & committee meetings to allow remote voting

The third proposed Bylaw change, if ratified by SSC membership, would enable the President to allow Board members who are unable to attend a Board meeting in person to participate and vote in that meeting via teleconference or web conference. This change would also apply to Committee meetings.

Current SSC Bylaws require that Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed at all meetings of the Ski Club and the Board of Directors. As Robert's Rules were written before the invention of remote meeting-enabling technologies such as teleconferencing and web conferencing, the Club cannot take advantage of these technologies without first incorporating this change into our Bylaws.

Article III, Section 5. Membership Meetings

Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the parliamentary procedures at all meetings of the Ski Club and the Board of Directors. **Board or Committee Members will be counted as voting members of any Board or Committee meeting when they are unable to attend the meeting in person but they have received prior approval from the President or Committee Chair to attend the meeting via conference call and/or Internet meeting.**

Chairlift Chatter is published by the Susquehanna Ski & Snowboard Club (SSC). SSC is based in Harrisburg, Pa. and is a 501(c)(7) social and recreational club which encourages participation in the sports of snow skiing and snowboarding among the residents of central Pennsylvania and promotes fellowship and goodwill among participants in these sports.

President Dyan Yingst * Vice President Beth Harfmann * Treasurer Sherry Predix * Secretary Falk * Membership Chair
Monica Kurtz * Trip Coordinator Melody Patton * Social Coordinator Lovena Nickle * Directors Barb Crout, Lilly Mangan,
Wendy Pignatella, Linda Randby * Past President Pam Neidig

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