

The Liftline

Pentagon Ski Club

January/February 2009

President's Corner By Peter Porton



This is a strange time of year for your club (I write this the week before Christmas): most of our trips are sold or selling out, yet few of us have skied. The weather is getting colder, we've all bought our new skis and outfits, helmets and gloves, and all we see on TV is snow up north or west somewhere. Actually, by the time you get this, some of our trips will have departed (Jackson Hole) or may be ready to (Vail). So let the season begin!

Though most trips are sold or selling, Alyeska and Banff still have openings (see Page 3). Also, as we often say, please check with the tripleleader to see if space has opened up. People do drop out of trips and if we can fill those slots, we make two people very happy!

The status of our trips is an indication that your council made the right choice last spring to reduce our schedule. We are now back to a 12-trip schedule instead of the 15 we had last year. All current trips are going as planned, even if our European trips are half-sized compared to 2008.

Our trip to Greece next September had a lot of sign-ups. Currently, we are finalizing the contract and some of the precise details are not yet settled. We will have full information regarding this second summer vacation trip we are running in the next issue of *The Liftline*.

From now until our January meeting, we will take nominations for those of you who are interested in running for PSC Council. These are three-year terms and we will have three openings. If you are interested, contact Jim McDonough.

Finally, our best wishes go to June Doezema, who broke her leg while attending PSIA classes at Mt. Snow. She'll be in a brace for quite a while and will undergo extensive rehab. We look forward to her skiing with us again next year.



PSC Ski Coaches

By John Condia

Many of you have had the opportunity to get top-notch ski instruction from PSC West member Joe Vaccaro during club trips over the past few years. While Joe does a fantastic job, he can't be on every trip. For that reason, the club started a new program last season where members volunteer to serve as coaches and provide skiing improvement tips to members on our trips.

This program is free to our membership. Feedback on the program was very favorable for the trips that had coaches providing instruction. The goal is to be able to provide one or more coaches per trip each season. This will take some time to evolve, but we are optimistic that it can be done. The focus of the program is on intermediate and advanced skiers, but not beginners.

We will use the Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA) guidelines, so if a member takes a formal lesson at a resort, he/she would be hearing the same things that our coaches are telling them. An hour or two of coaching per day is what is recommended at this time. We would like to hear comments/suggestions from other members by email. More importantly, we would like to hear from anyone interested in becoming a coach, recognizing that some of your free skiing time would be given up to helping others. You don't have to be a great skier to participate! Training will be provided for the coaches.

To move this program past its infancy stage, the club needs your help. Anyone interested in participating as a ski coach, please send me an email at JCSkis@hotmail.com.

Trip Prices

Note: Trip prices may increase due to fuel surcharges, taxes and currency fluctuations. Your club will do its best to ameliorate additional expenses, but costs may increase. Stay in contact with your tripleleader.



Pentagon Ski Club

2008-2009 Council & Committees

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www.pentagonskiclub.org

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(number indicates year the term expires)

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The Lifeline

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The Lifeline is issued bimonthly except for the 4-month summer issue. Any articles are welcome for publication, but the editor has the right to edit for size and PSC policy.

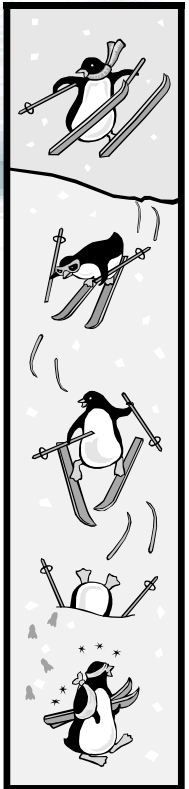
PSC MEMBERSHIP FEES

	1-YEAR	2-YEARS	3-YEARS
SINGLE	\$30	\$55	\$75
FAMILY	\$40	\$75	\$100

PSC MEETING SCHEDULE

Our meetings are held on the second or third Tuesday of the months listed below at the Officers Club at Fort Myer, VA, at 7 PM (except for the picnic at the Coast Guard Station).

- Saturday, July 19 (Picnic)
- Tuesday, September 9
- Tuesday, October 14
- Tuesday, November 18
- Tuesday, December 9
- Tuesday, January 13
- Tuesday, February 17
- Tuesday, April 21



Membership Benefits

To access the *Membership Benefits* area in the National Ski Council Federation website at www.skifederation.org (all PSCers are automatically members), use the following:

userid = skiclub; password = member

Membership Updates

Please take a moment to check the date on your newsletter label—it indicates the month your membership expires. If you need to renew or change your address, please see Cheree Peirce at our meetings, contact her at sceirce@verizon.net or send her a check (see membership fees up above).

Cheree Peirce
19701 Golden Valley Lane
Brookeville MD 20833



Bulldogs Don't Wear Lipstick, But Hockey Moms Do

By John Pratt

Want to see Governor Sara Palin's stomping grounds or Ted Steven's house in Girwood that cost him his senate seat? Here's your chance to see some of Alaska and ski at the same time. See why only the heartiest of souls "winter over" in the 49th State. The PSC is returning to The Land of the Midnight Sun.

On Sunday, March 22, 2009, we will fly Alaska Air Flight #1 from Regan National at 8:00 AM thru Seattle to Anchorage AK arriving at 2:33 PM local time (AK is 5 hours behind VA). Return is 7:30 AM from ANC, arriving at DCA at 9:46 PM (really only 4:46 PM in the time zone we've been for the last week) on Sunday, March 29. We have a four-of-six day lift pass at Alyeska. That will leave us time for all the other things there are to do in Alaska, not only for us skiers but also including a major-in-hotel spa for those Significant Others who don't ski. For \$160 more, we will go from the resort on a day-long Alaskan Cruise on Resurrection Bay. There is also snowcat or heliskiing, flightseeing, dogsleding, and snowmobiling, etc., all of which can be set up by the hotel. If you wish to ski additional days you can pre-purchase an additional day as part of the trip for \$48 or buy additional days while there. 70+ skiers can deduct the cost of the lift tickets from the price of the trip and pay only \$10 a day for lift tickets.

After about an hour's ride (40 miles) southeast from the airport, down Turnagain Arm (Alaska speak for bay) through Girdwood, AK we will arrive at the Hotel Alyeska. The hotel is a part of the Mt. Alyeska Ski Area, and is a slopeside ski-in, ski-out property, with its own aerial tram to the top of the mountain and the AAA 4-Diamond, mountain-top Seven Glaciers restaurant. You can also take the hotel chairlift back to the base lodge of the ski area. We will be in one-bedroom, one-bath hotel rooms in the



newly renovated 300+ room hotel. The hotel has a salt water pool, hot tub, spa, free wireless internet in the public areas, Northern Lights wake-up calls, five dining venues when you include the top of the mountain, and evening shuttle bus service into Girdwood if you want to explore other restaurants

The tram from our hotel takes four minutes to whisk a maximum of 60 persons from the base at 306 feet above sea level (no altitude sickness problems here) to the top at 2,334 feet with a vertical of 2,028 feet. Average annual snowfall is more than 62 feet at the summit. The season begins in Mid-November and goes through April as conditions permit. There are 1,400 total skiable acres. There are nine lifts including one high-speed detachable quad, two fixed quads, three double chairs, one of which runs from the hotel to the ski area base lodge, two pony lifts, and the aerial tram. Maximum lift capacity is 10,335 skiers per hour. Over 50% of Alyeska's runs are intermediate. Plus, there's a good chance the slopes will pretty much be all yours. Not to say that experts won't feel out of place—this is the last frontier, and pure, adrenaline-fueled Alaskan pistes are all over the mountain. The North Face, with 2,350 vertical feet, is the longest continuous double-black diamond in North America. That might be why the US Alpine National Championships will be going on while we're there. The resort also offers night skiing. There are 68 runs, with 11% of the runs for beginners and 37% advanced. The temperature in Mar-Apr averages 32F and 43F respectively. March averages 13:52 of daylight, while April has 16:20 hours. The ski lifts typically operate from 10:30 AM (you get to sleep in) till 5 PM depending on weather and lighting conditions. A trail map can be found at http://www.alyeskaresort.com/files/Alyeska/a2007_2008_Trail_Map.pdf. Contact me at snowsne@aol.com or 703-534-5759 if you want to get on this great trip.

Ski  **Banff**
lake louise
Sunshine

Currently, the Banff trip, March 14-21, has two openings, one for a single male and one for a single female.

If you are interested, please contact Dave Olsen at dolsen@pentagonskiclub.org or 301--579-2749 or (W) 202-385-7207; or Steve Peirce at speirce@pentagonskiclub.org or (H) 301-924-5173 or (W) 202-366-2553. Note these are new tripleaders.



Racing by Dave Olsen

Register Online for Nastar

Before you race Nastar for the first time you need to provide basic information such as your date of birth (because the medals are handicapped by age) and your home address (so they can rank the racers in each state). You can register by filling out a form at the top of the racecourse, but it's better to pre-register online. This is a one-time process that you won't need to repeat every winter. As it says on the Nastar website, "If you have raced NASTAR since 1997 there's no need to register again – we know who you are! However, you should quickly verify that you're in our database by searching for your last name in the field indicated at the top of the page."

It's also a good idea to verify that the personal information on your race record is complete and accurate prior to the start of the season. It's especially important that you verify the e-mail address that's stored in your record. You can not only choose to receive the several newsletters that Nastar sends each winter, but – more importantly – with a current e-mail address stored in the system, you can retrieve your password if the need should arise.

If you've forgotten your password, you may be in luck if your current e-mail address is in the system. Click on *Contact Us* in the left column, then on *Forgot NASTAR Password*. There's a space to "Enter the e-mail address you used when registering and we will e-mail it to you." Type in your e-mail address and hit the "go" button. The system will respond immediately with the message, "E-Mail sent – You should have the information in a few moments." The system will send you an e-mail message with your password.

You might instead get the response, "Sorry, no registrations were found with an E-Mail address of ... please try again." Two possibilities: Either you entered a different e-mail address than is stored with your Nastar record, or there's no e-mail address stored with your record. If you're in this situation, get in touch with me and I'll work with my contacts at Nastar, if necessary, to either reset your password or enter your current e-mail address into your record.

Nastar Resort List

The number of resorts participating in Nastar changes from year-to-year as some resorts drop out and others join in. As of late November Nastar's website identified about 120 resorts planning to offer Nastar this winter. Nastar has been available over the years at many nearby resorts in Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania. The current list includes:

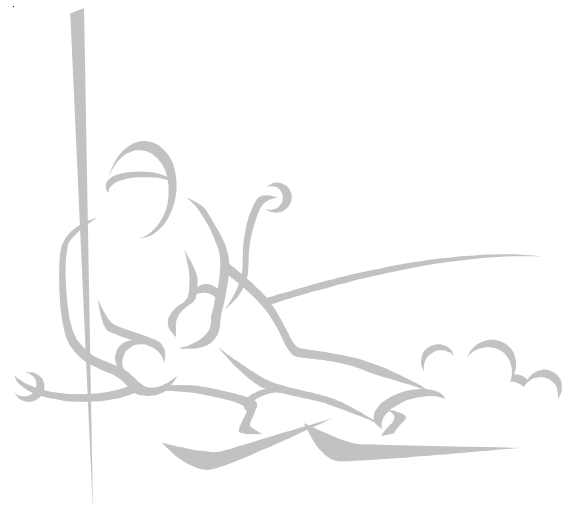
- MD: Wisp
- PA: Bear Creek, Blue Knob, Blue Mountain, Camelback, Seven Springs, Shawnee, Ski Roundtop, and SNO Mountain.
- VA: Bryce and Massanutten
- WV: Canaan Valley, Snowshoe Mountain, and Timberline

Can you guess which state has the most resorts offering Nastar? Colorado? Nope. With 14 Nastar resorts they're third behind Michigan (19) and New York (15). Following behind those are New Hampshire, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin (8 each) and Minnesota with 7.

The daily availability of racing differs from resort to resort, and races are subject to cancellation if snow conditions are marginal or if they're running special events. If your single purpose in visiting a local resort is Nastar, you'd be advised to call the resort, perhaps the day before your planned visit, to confirm racing availability. Phone numbers are included in the list of participating resorts at Nastar.com.

Online Results

Navigating the Nastar site is easy. Just click on *Check Race Results* in the left column and it gives you a pull-down list of every resort that has race results in the system this season, or any previous season back as far as 97-98. For instance, if you click on the 2007-08 season results and look at Steamboat, you'll get a list of all last-year's Nastar races at that resort. Look over the list and click on the February 7 Daily Nastar and you'll see everyone that raced that day, including seven PSC'ers that were on our club trip to the resort at that time. You'll probably recognize several of the names in the list! (Hint – most of those hailing from DC, Maryland or Virginia, plus Jay Weides who joined us that day)





Update on Ski Helmets

By John Pratt

How much is your brain worth? Or put another way, how much is it worth to you to be able to control all your body functions? That's a question from one of my Masters of Science in Safety professors at USC. There is an excellent article on the subject of ski helmets at www.telemarktips.com/Helmets.html. After you read it, you'll realize that through PSC, you no longer have an excuse to ski without wearing a helmet. On the subject of safety it dawned on me one day that I would never think of driving my car without the seat belts fastened. That same epiphany also occurred to me on the subject of helmets. As a helicopter pilot, I would never dream of starting a helicopter without a helmet on, even if I wasn't flying it anywhere. Nor would the Arlington County Chief of Police ever think of riding his bike again without wearing a helmet. But the thought of spending \$100+ for a helmet kind of held me back for a while, (God knows why, considering the price of skiing).

Now for the price of a lunch on the slopes you can have your own personal "Brain Bucket". The PSC, in concert with Ski Club Washington DC, is offering ASTM 2040 Certified ski helmets. The ASTM certification process for ski helmets is explained in the above link. I will also have a copy of it with me at club meetings. For those of you who are really fashion conscious, at \$23.00 each (the cost for the helmets, shipping etc have gone up like everything else), you can have one that matches all your ski outfits. They come in black (as pictured above), red, blue, silver, and new for this year, Hot Pink. You can order them at club meetings and have them by the next meeting. If you can't make the meetings, but want me to order one for you, send me an e-mail and I'll send you back the size charts and the website to choose your color along with an order form. As soon as I get your check, I'll order the helmet(s) and when they come in I will let you know so we can make arrangements to get you your helmet.

"Any skier who skis away from a head-first impact with a tree owes at least as much to his lucky stars as to his helmet. But there's certainly nothing wrong with giving your lucky stars all the help you can by wearing the best helmet possible." —Ed Becker, Executive Director, Snell Memorial Foundation.



PSC Logo Items

By John Pratt

Want to get extra Ski Lotto tickets or just some great clothing? At all ski club meetings except the picnic we have Ski Lotto, and if you are wearing something with the PSC logo on it, you are entitled to an extra ticket. Even if you don't attend the meetings or play Ski Lotto, the logo items are a great way to show off your club while you are on the slopes. We have all of the following in stock: automobile license plate holders, baseball caps, and cloisonné ski pins.

For clothing and others item such as tote bags, our supplier is Jill Lee of *Jill's Designs*. Jill has set up a web site at www.jillsembroidery.com.

It's also on the PSC website as a link. At the website you can pick the item you want from the pictures shown there, but if you don't see it listed don't hesitate to contact Jill directly. Just pick out what you want, print out the order form, mail it to Jill, and she'll get back to you when it's ready.

In addition to picking out the basic color of the item you want, you also get to pick out the colors on the logo: the skier; the pentagon diagram; and the words can be all the same color or whatever colors you want them to be.

On a final note, if you live out of the area or your schedule just doesn't allow you to get to meetings and you still want other non-clothing logo items such as ski pins, license plate holders, etc., send me an e-mail at jpratt@pentagonskiclub.org



**December 27-
January 3
\$1430**

Sat-Sat, 7 nights at Elk Country Inn in town. Daily breakfast and one elk bbq dinner included. 4-day lift ticket at JH, 1-day at Grand Targhee. RT Dulles to Jackson Hole on Delta. Contact Tim Tharp at skycoach@cox.net or 703-585-7177; or Boris Lloyd at lloydbsr@verizon.net or 301-317-4944.

**January 3-10
\$1600**



Sat-Sat, 7 nights in 2BR/2BA or 3BR/3BA Vail Spa Condos. 5-day interchangeable lift ticket also good at Beaver Cr., Keystone, Breck & A-basin. RT nonstop Dulles to Denver on United. Contact Dave Olsen at dolsen@pentagonskiclub.org or (H) 301-579-2749 or (W) 202-385-7207.



**January 10-17
\$1585**

Sat-Sat, 7 nights in 2BR/2BA Slopeside Solitude Village Condos. 5-day Superpass lift ticket good at Solitude, Brighton, Snowbird and Alta. RT Dulles to SLC on Delta. Contact Lesa Scott at lesa.scott@gsa.gov or 703-250-3211; or Pat Hobitz at khphoz@comcast.net or 978-373-8364.

**January 17-24
\$1460**



MLK/Inauguration Day Holidays. Sat-Sat, 7 nights in Mountain Suites at The Lodge at Big Sky w. daily breakfasts. 5-day lift ticket at Big Sky (may add Moonlight Basin). RT from Dulles to Bozeman on United (may change). Contact Steve Thompson at stevethompsonva@verizon.net or (H) 703-435-5170 or (C) 703-862-6535.



**January 30-
February 7/10
\$2650**

7 nights at 3-Star Hotel Merilys in Meribel w. all breakfasts and 3 dinners. Lifts extra; med. insurance included. RT Dulles to Geneva on Air France. Optional 3-night post-trip to Ireland for \$850 (departs Jan. 29, see article). Contact Anne Willemann at annewillemann@verizon.cnet or 703-941-7910.

**February 7-14
\$1450**



KEYSTONE

BRSC Western Carnival. Sat-Sat, 7 nights in 2BR/2BA Snowdance Manor Condos. 5-day interchangeable lift ticket also good at Beaver Cr., Vail, Breck & A-basin. RT nonstop Dulles to Denver on United. Contact Steve Peirce at speirce@pentagonskiclub.org or (H) 301-924-5173 or (W) 202-366-2553.



February 15-20
\$1160

Bargain trip: Presidents' Week Holiday; save your leave days. Sun-Fri, 5 nights at Durango's historic Strater Hotel with daily breakfasts. 4-day lift ticket; dedicated bus to Purgatory. RT Dulles to Durango on United. Contact Jim McDonough at jmcdo683@aol.com or 703-619-0020.

February 21-28
\$1485



Sat-Sat, 7 nights at Park City Peaks Hotel (ex-Radisson) with daily breakfasts and afternoon cider/cookies. 2-day lifts at PC; 2-days at The Canyons; 1-day at Deer Valley. 1-day option at Snowbasin. RT nonstop Dulles to SLC on Delta. Contact Christina Anderson at gerakisparta@yahoo.com or 703-719-6714.



WINTER PARK

March 1-7
\$1070

Bargain trip: Sun-Sat, 6 nights at base-side Vintage Hotel. RT nonstop from BWI (!) to Denver. 5-day lift ticket. Contact Pat Riggs at pat.riggs1@verizon.net or (H)310-372-0271 or (C)703-615-2709; or Lucy Gruenther at Lmandwx@hotmail.com or 703-771-9316.

March 2/6-15
\$2500



BRSC Eurofest. 7 nights at 4-Star Sunstar Park Hotel with daily breakfasts and 5 dinners. Med. insurance included; no lifts; 2 BRSC parties. Non-stop RT Dulles to Munich on Lufthansa. Opt. 4-night pre-trip to Budapest for \$775. Contact Peter Porton at prespsc@comcast.net or 703-471-7791; or Tom Strawbridge at TSbridge@FBBS-GSA.com or 301-652-7410.



March 14-21
\$1480

Sat-Sat, 7 nights at Banff International Hotel. 4-day lift ticket good at Norquay, Sunshine and Lake Louise; 1-day lift for Kicking Horse. RT Reagan (!) to Calgary on Air Canada. Dave Olsen at dolsen@pentagonskiclub.org or 301-579-2749 or (W) 202-385-7207; or Steve Peirce at speirce@pentagonskiclub.org or (H) 301-924-5173 or (W) 202-366-2553.

March 22-29
\$1560



Sun-Sun, 7 nights at 4-Star Hotel Alyeska (ex Prince) with orientation breakfast. 4-day lift ticket. Use extra days for the many sightseeing options. RT Reagan (!) to Anchorage on Alaska Airlines. Contact John Pratt at snowsnke@aol.com or 703-534-5759.

Pentagon Ski Club

The Liftline

Peter Porton, Editor

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PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 2782
MERRIFIELD, VA

January & February 2009



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CLUB WEBSITE: WWW.PENTAGONSKICLUB.ORG



MEETING DIRECTIONS: WWW.PENTAGONSKICLUB.ORG/DIRECTIONS.HTML

Our next membership meetings are on Tuesday, January 13 and Tuesday, February 17.

January's meeting will feature videos from last year's heliskiing trip to Canada and February's theme will be a trivia contest with rewards going to the winning team.

Our trips are almost sold out, so act quickly if you want to ski this year!

Our meetings start at 7 PM, or earlier for some of the old-timers who reminisce at the downstairs bar, but remember: don't drink and drive!

