



A Cross Country Ski Club for the FM Area for All Ages and Abilities

PENS Newsletter - December 2008

Welcome to the first newsletter of the 2008-2009 season! We have summarized some of our fall activities and preview upcoming events as the ski season gets underway.

- **PENS December Meeting.**



PENS members gathered December 21 at 1pm at the NDSU Downtown Campus for our December meeting. Homemade cookies, lefse and hot cider were provided by Erik Berg, Rebecca Smith and Jeff Quam. 8 club members were in attendance. We started with a basic waxing clinic with Craig Benson from Paramount Sports demonstrating basic waxing and ski prep. This generated lots of good discussion and sharing of tips. Jay Richardson, the one guy smart enough to bring his skis, got his skis waxed for free! The attendees went home with a lot of valuable tips. Thanks to Craig for coming out on a cold blustery day. His shop carries a nice selection of skis for all abilities, both classic and skate. Craig has been very receptive to helping our club, so check them out when you are in the market for ski gear.

We followed with a presentation on the North Country Trail by Matthew Davis, the coordinator for the MN and ND sections of this multiuse hiking trail system that nearing completion from New York to Lake Sakakawea. Check out the [NCTA website](#) for more information. The trail needs more supporters to see it to completion in ND and Western/Central MN. The trail is designated as a National Scenic Trail similar to the Appalachian Trail, which is much better known. Anyone interested in helping build this trail which will be a legacy for years to come should contact Matthew: <mailto:davis@northcountrytrail.org>. A big thank you to board member David Swenson for opening up the sculpture workroom at NDSU which was a great place to both do the wax clinic and view the NCTA PowerPoint presentation. BTW, as promised there was no general business meeting! The next meeting will be held after the awards ceremony for the Edgewood Ski Race on January 17th at ~1pm at the Edgewood Chalet.

- **PENS Members to Teach XC Ski Lessons at Edgewood for 4th year.**

PENS members led by Ski Instruction Coordinator Erik Berg will again be teaching xc ski lessons through the Fargo Parks University of the Great Outdoors program. See the [Parks website](#) for registration information (go to Youth or Adult Programs, University of the Great Outdoors for the class listings). You must be pre-registered and there is a limit on class size, so sign up today! New this year is a skate skiing class in addition to lessons for beginners and intermediates. So if you feel a tune up would be helpful or know a youth or adult who might want to take up cross country skiing this is a great opportunity to learn from our

experienced staff. The club wants to also encourage interested club members to come and help the instructors with the lesson groups on Sundays. The instructors do appreciate an extra person or two with each group who is available to help with minor issues. One other new item is that Parks will be providing some pullover bibs with the PENS logo on it to identify the instructors.

- **Ski Ambassadors Needed!**

Another opportunity to assist skiers is through the Ski Ambassador Program. The Ambassadors assist skiers at Edgewood when ever they can on Saturday afternoons. New skiers often have many questions such as where do the trails start, or may need a little assistance with their equipment, or even a few tips to get started. Having skiers available helps ensure that newcomers to the sport will have a positive experience and come back. Your enthusiasm for the sport is more important than how many years you've skied!

- **PENS Members in Holiday Lights Parade, November 25.**



About 10 PENS came out to march and roller ski in the annual downtown parade. Rebecca carried our new banner. We gave out 200 flyers to promote XC skiing to the general public as a great way to get out and enjoy the outdoors in the winter. A fun time was had by all on a very nice night. People were very receptive so we hope this was a good way to create exposure for the club and XC skiing in general. The roller skiers really got some attention!

- **PENS Fall Kickoff Meeting and Social Held November 23 at Edgewood Chalet.**



A good number of skiers came out to the kickoff meeting in November. Socializing and networking were the features of the day along with discussions on roller skiing. The meeting was held outside due both the nice weather and to construction on the front area of the Chalet to replace the roof and install new doors and windows. Rebecca unveiled our new banner featuring the club logo. Thanks to Rebecca for all the work to get the banner made! The logo generated excitement on getting some club apparel. Members present expressed interested in Ski Hats and Headbands. Stay tuned as we investigate our options. The ski swap saw a number of skis, boots and gloves being sold. If you have anything to sell please see our new classifieds page on the Yahoo group site. Member can post their own items for sale. Look for the Applications link on the left side of the Yahoo group home page. This is linked from the PENS site as well. The afternoon concluded with a walk around the outer EW trail where members trimmed braches and weeds. The trail had already been cleared of the major debris and leveled after the recent flooding, so our work served to fine-tune the trail. The Lindenwood (LW) trail is also reported to be well prepared and mowed heading into the ski season.

- **PENS Works on the EW Winter Blast Ski Race Schedule for January 17.**

Erik and John Pfund worked with Jeff Heisler from Fargo parks on modifying the age groups and race distances for the youth races this year. These changes are reflected in the [registration form](#) that now can be downloaded from the Parks Website. We have also set a make up date of Jan 24th in the event of bad weather on the 17th. PENS will be a co-sponsor of the race this year. Look for the PENS logo on the back of the race t-shirts!

- **PENS Works with Fargo Parks on Grooming.**

PENS board members meeting during the off season came up with suggestions for the groomers at EW and LW to improve the trails. PENS Grooming Coordinator Jeff Quam met in early December with Mark Lindberg from Fargo Parks who grooms the trails. Mark is also the golf course superintendent at EW, so one of his main parameters with grooming on the course is “do no harm to the grass”. So this always factors into what can be done out on the course. This and a number of other issues may shorten the course on the west end. Jeff also focused on keeping access to the groomed trail “user friendly” to the new and beginning skiers, trying to avoid a hill right off the bat. The grooming also ties in to the trail distances that can be offered in the EW race, so the discussions also covered various cutoff points and return loops to the Chalet. We thank Jeff for his work to make EW a better place to ski and for maintaining a good relationship with the Park District. Feel free to route any trail feedback to Jeff so we can keep a unified voice on grooming issues: <mailto:jaq@702com.net>

- **New Yahoo Group and PENS Website Updates**

While we are on the topic of trails, the new PENSxc Yahoo group is ready for your discussions of any ski related topic. Trail reports are especially welcome! We would also welcome any comments you have as members on how the club can serve you better. Also, for up to date trail reports, refer to the [Trail Reports page](#) on the PENS website. The page links to reports for all of the local ski areas, including NWS forecasts for each location.

The PENS website has also been spruced up with the new logo.

- **Upcoming Events:**

Check out the Calendar on the Yahoo group page for all the upcoming events including area races and candlelight skis. We highly recommend the West Itasca Ski Fest at Rainbow resort after Christmas as a great way to tune up your technique. They offer a one day clinic with have the day on skate and the other on classic. They usually have experienced instructors come in and the student teacher ratio is low. Last year it was two instructors and me, so you can't beat that! Let's get out and support them as it is a great service that they provide every year. The lessons are geared to each student, so whether you are a novice or an advanced skier, you will come away with a better understanding of technique.

Please forward any stories or ideas you have for future newsletters to PENS@cableone.net. See you on the trails!

Contact PENS