

# Snow News IS Good News

Newsletter of the Nooksack Nordic Ski Club

P.O. Box 28793, Bellingham, WA 98228  
Website: [www.Nooksacknordicskiclub.org](http://www.Nooksacknordicskiclub.org)



**DECEMBER 2023**

## **Board Members**

### **President**

Pete Tryon

### **Vice President**

John Keates

### **Secretary**

Cleo Richard

### **Treasurer**

Lynne Oliver

### **At large**

Sarah Wymann

Will Witon

Mary Beth Jaynes

Mark Smith

Cindy Joseph

## **Other Volunteers**

### **Salmon Ridge Coordinator**

Gail Garman

### **Membership**

Vacant

(Pete Tryon)

### **Publicity**

Mary Beth Jaynes

### **Lessons Coordinator**

Cindy Joseph

### **Hospitality Chair**

Vacant

### **Program Coordinator**

Mark Smith

### **Newsletter Editor**

Lynn Alderson

### **Webmaster**

Pete Tryon

### **Equipment Manager**

Jim Rhodes

### **Trip Coordinator**

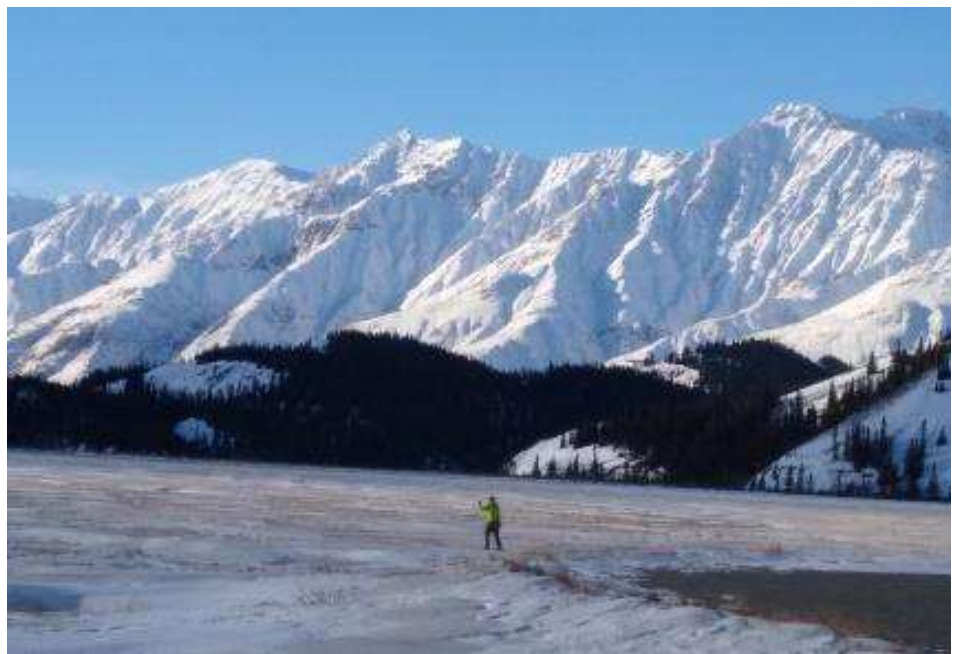
Kurt Duey

### **Day Trip Coordinator**

Pete Tryon

### **Contact emails:**

[president@nooksacknordicskiclub.org](mailto:president@nooksacknordicskiclub.org)  
[boardmembers@nooksacknordicskiclub.org](mailto:boardmembers@nooksacknordicskiclub.org)  
[newsletter@nooksacknordicskiclub.org](mailto:newsletter@nooksacknordicskiclub.org)  
[membership@nooksacknordicskiclub.org](mailto:membership@nooksacknordicskiclub.org)  
[lessons@nooksacknordicskiclub.org](mailto:lessons@nooksacknordicskiclub.org)  
[webmaster@nooksacknordicskiclub.org](mailto:webmaster@nooksacknordicskiclub.org)  
[trips@nooksacknordicskiclub.org](mailto:trips@nooksacknordicskiclub.org)



## **Club Meeting – Meet with NNSC on Zoom!**

**When** – Tuesday December 12th

**The Zoom link is in the article on the next page.**

Meeting starts at 7:00 PM.

**Who** - Everyone is welcome!

**Visit Our Website for the Latest Information: [www.nooksacknordicskiclub.org](http://www.nooksacknordicskiclub.org)**

## MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**Tuesday, December 12**  
**2023: 7:00 PM** (by Zoom)

Think you might be interested in X-C ski racing? How to get started? Club members will be covering this and more at our next club zoom meeting, December 12th.

We will discuss the different local races that might help you decide what sort of race might work best for you to start with. The closest races are Ski to Sea and the Tuesday Night Races (TNR). The TNR races are north of Vancouver BC and up into the mountains. Just a little further afield are 3 races each year at Cabin Creek near Snoqualmie Pass.

If you feel ready to race, you might want to sign-up for one of the local races.

If you'd like to watch a race first, observing a Vancouver TNR would allow you to watch a race and decide if it looks like fun. NNSC will put on a clinic each Wednesday morning following a TNR, turning the race-watching into an overnight trip.

There will also be a clinic the morning preceding two of the Cabin Creek races.

The club puts on clinics in the weeks preceding the Ski to Sea to help both experienced X-C ski racers and beginners navigate both the course and the logistics involved.

Zoom-in with us and get the details by joining in on Tuesday, Dec 12. We'll open Zoom at 6:45 to give you a

chance to get connected, check your settings, and maybe chat a little before 7:00.

Email the club at [zoom@nooksacknordicskiclub.org](mailto:zoom@nooksacknordicskiclub.org) and we'll send a Zoom link to you.

### WILL WHITON



### CLUB SKI TRIPS ARE BACK!

[Also to be discussed at the December 12 Meeting.]

Club-sponsored, multi-day ski trips were dropped during Covid. This season we are bringing them back. A committee has formed to plan trips for this season. We have developed three types of trips:

**Logan Lake/Stake Lake, BC.** This trip will be a four-day trip, (nights of Jan. 11,12,13), based out of the Highland House Bed and Breakfast at Logan Lake which is about 3 hours north of Bellingham. This location provides ready access to two excellent XC venues – Logan Lake and Stake – see descriptions on NNSC website. More information is forthcoming on the club website. The Highland House can accommodate up to 9 people.

**Methow Valley, WA.** We are also working on a February trip the Methow Valley – the most extensive XC trail system in the country. This is also being planned as a four-day / three night trip, potentially from Friday through Monday. We are considering two lodging options – a cabin that could accommodate a group or, as an alternative, recommending a hotel where club members would book individual rooms. Everyone would be invited to get together for dinners at local restaurants.

**Hollyburn Mountain, BC** in conjunction with the Tuesday Night Races (TNR) that Will Whiton mentions in his article about his upcoming presentation on racing. Those interested in skiing on Wednesday can book a room at the nearby SureStay by Best Western in North Vancouver – 21 minutes away. Will Whiton will be offering race clinics on Wednesday mornings.

Depending on the level of interest, a multi-day trip to Hollyburn may be developed in the second half of March."

Join the membership meeting at 7:00 pm on December 12 to get additional information and ask any questions.

### MARK SMITH

## THE WIND

Ah, weekends; all hopes for outdoor activities focused on two rather brief days, followed by a seemingly-endless five day commitment to work, errands, responsibilities and sensible bedtimes.

The day's forecast looked unpromising, but I had to work the following day. My options were stark: sit around at home and continue to monitor my increasing girth....or ski. I chose to ski; I can always resume girth-monitoring duties some other day.

I arrived just in time for my customary crack-of-noon start. For some reason, people were leaving in droves as I arrived. I found a good parking space, stepped outside....and got knocked to my knees by the wind. Hmmm. I managed to get geared-up while cowering behind my van. The snowflakes felt sharp, as if capable of leaving little puncture wounds where they struck.

Suitably attired, I stepped from my shelter and headed into the maw of the tempest: steady snowfall, shrieking winds, bad visibility and thoroughly-scoured snow surfaces. Where did all the snow end up, if not on any of the aspects I skied? The clatter of graupel hitting my hood at 60+ mph made it hard to concentrate, but there wasn't much to concentrate on--just one foot in front of the other, with a wide stance and a low center of gravity helping to keep me upright.

I headed for Swift Creek. Trees, famous refuge in times of bad visibility, high avalanche danger and wind. Those winds, which elsewhere seemed approximately from the west and north, were here blasting straight up the drainage from the east. I dropped in anyway, thinking they'd surely dissipate below the crest.

Uh, no. I headed straight down the fall line on the steepest slope I could find, but found it difficult to maintain forward momentum against the pressure on my chest. I fought my way through the trees into the open avalanche runouts beyond to change back to uphill mode, more afraid of falling trees than of avalanches. I carefully felt my way back uphill--the wind now at my back, thus easier than expected--then down through the deserted ski area to my car and called it a day.

Downhill traffic on the Mt. Baker Highway was ridiculously slow, almost congealed--other drivers perhaps taking the hint from two vehicles which had slid out on curves, ending precariously perched at the tops of steep dropoffs. There were many, many police wearing various style of hats, tending to—one can only assume—patrons of the beer garden and other ski area festivities.

I stopped shivering somewhere in the neighborhood of Deming. Once home, I checked the Avalanche Center's telemetry reports, which indicated winds blowing locally from almost all points of the

compass at a steady 50-60 mph with higher gusts. There was also, apparently, a foot of fresh snow, although I couldn't find it. Where *did* all that snow end up?

By dinnertime the sense-memories had begun to fade--howling winds, stinging graupel, obscured vision, uncertain balance--and I began to regret not taking another lap, or maybe caging a ride on the ski area lifts. People write books about this sort of thing, I thought to myself: the cognitive distortions, the twisting of facts into self-serving narrative arcs, the heroic journeys into places of transformation....at which point I fell fast asleep, as one does, my dreams projecting me forward through the 5-day working morass into distant weekends beyond.

## MARK HARFENIST



## SHARING INK WITH THE SNOWBOARDERS

The winter edition of the *Mt. Baker Experience* magazine is out. If you look on page 16, you'll see an article about our very own NNSC – 'Winter Adventures Without Heart Palpitations'. It's also found online:

<https://www.mountainbakerexperience.com/stories/nooksack-nordic-ski-club,958?>



## NORDIC SKI LESSONS

*This article is adapted from information posted on the NNSC website*

Nordic skiing is not difficult. It provides a wonderful opportunity to get outside during the winter and to enjoy the outdoors and the snow while getting some fun exercise at the same time. Many start to learn through experience and trial and error. But some skill is involved and improving one's techniques and fitness levels arguably make it more fun. So get out on skis and try it, but consider three paths to improving your skills:

I. The Internet. Kids say that they learn everything from YouTube. While that's not really true, there is a lot of good information out there. Go to the Lessons page on the NNSC website and follow those links to instructional videos. There are many more out there – but the ones listed appear to be appropriate for the topic mentioned (and we're trying not to swamp you with too many choices).

II. Our club is not large enough to support regularly scheduled lessons. Conditions and other commitments mean that we can't schedule a series of half day lessons that will take someone from a beginner to a world class Nordic skier. But sometimes a half hour or so spent with someone more experienced than yourself can help answer a specific need of yours and allow you to work towards the next level. NNSC should be able to provide you with that half hour of specific problem-

solving or introduction to skiing. We have a number of helpful instructors ready to meet with you for 30-60 minutes at the SnoPark before they go out on their own ski. We can also talk with you on the phone or Zoom to advise on equipment choices.

III. Extended Lessons. Other, larger ski areas and organizations offer more extensive lessons, but they are further from Bellingham. You might investigate Stevens Pass, Methow Valley, Hollyburn (BC), and Leavenworth / Lake Wenatchee.

For further details and a chance to sign up for lessons or volunteer as an instructor, visit

<https://www.nooksacknordicclub.org/events/lessons/introduction/>

## PETE TRYON



## STATE OF SALMON RIDGE TRAILS

The Salmon Ridge Snopark trails made it through last winter without any calamitous storms or flooding. At the end of the season, our trails were in remarkably good shape. Starting from that point add the normal growth of vegetation, the occasional treefall, normal dropping of

dead limbs, water running over the road, and mechanical improvements and you have summer on our ski trails. In early fall, they didn't look quite so good. Now remedy this by over 535 hours of labor done by 27 individuals and you have some trails that are back to looking pretty good! And those volunteer hours are banked for matching contributions for our maintenance grants!

We also want to highlight the excellent work with power equipment done by contractors Drake Harkness and Rich Ternan. Rich opened the canopy on Mom's to allow more snow to fall on the trail and less on tree branches. Drake mowed the shoulders of all the groomed trails, ready for classic tracks and corduroy, given the addition of sufficient snow. All of the back-country ski/snowshoe trails are ready for adventure and some are in the process of being reopened! As we await that snow, we hope to have a few more 'recreational' work parties. Watch for announcements by email.

## PETE TRYON





## EL NIÑO AND CROSS COUNTRY SKIING

Meteorologists predict that this winter will include particularly strong El Niño, affecting weather globally, including our Salmon Park SnoPark trails. But what will it bring? All predictions suggest that Whatcom County will have warmer than average temperatures. Most suggest that it will also be a drier winter than normal, although some have suggested wetter, but with the precipitation coming as rain. The last three winters were La Niña – the opposite global pattern from El Niño. Remember what good skiing we had? Before that, 2014-2016 were El Niño years.

What happens to our skiing if it is warm and dry? I hope that we will still have snow at White Salmon (higher up at 3500'). Our groomer has

been able to groom there more consistently in the last several years. And maybe we can have a nice tour trail along the Ridge Road, complete with views of Mt. Shuksan!

Even in the event that we don't have a normal snowfall, the trails will still provide opportunities to hike and admire our forest in winter. Views of the Nooksack, Mt. Shuksan, and the mountains will still be magnificent from the River Trail, Southeast Extension, and Jerry Bourn. The bridge and waterfall will still be a destination for a hike along the Cougar Loop and Huckleberry. We can still find tracks and evidence of animals along Anderson. The SnoPark has much to offer even in an El Niño year.

## PETE TRYON

### NEW NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE

An observant reader might notice that this issue of Snow News Is Good News arrived in your inbox significantly later than usual. While our hard-working newsletter editor, Lynn Alderson, has consistently published right at the beginning of the month,

the board has not been able to meet, discuss, prepare materials, and get them to Lynn in time for publication. The board has decided to adjust the schedule. With the general membership meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of every month, the newsletter will usually be sent out on the preceding Thursday.

Do you have a good ski-related photo? A topic of interest to other club members? Write up an article (or just the photo) and send it to Lynn at [newsletter@nooksacknordics.kiclub.org](mailto:newsletter@nooksacknordics.kiclub.org) (or her personal email address).



**FROM OUR WEBSITE:** Check out places to go ski! (Click on image for map)  
[Map of Nordic ski areas in Washington and southern British Columbia](#)



## Nooksack Nordic Ski Club Membership Application and SnoPark Order Form

Use this form to purchase SnoPark permits, join the club or renew your membership. Sign and mail to the club with your check. Or, bring it to the next meeting.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street/PO Box City State Zip

Phone 1: \_\_\_\_\_ (Home, Cell, Work) Phone 2: \_\_\_\_\_ (H, C, W)

Email 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Email 2: \_\_\_\_\_

### Dues and SnoPark Information

Check Membership Level: \$20 Individual \_\_\_\_\_ \$35 Household \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

SnoPark Permit – Vehicle License Required for Permit: \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 SnoPark Fee \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Vehicle License

Optional Donation – we are a 501(c)3 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total membership + SnoPark + Optional \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Please read this agreement carefully before signing and dating:

In signing and submitting this form, I recognize that cross-country skiing involves strenuous activities, is potentially hazardous, and involves inherent risk. I knowingly and voluntarily assume all responsibility and risk for my actions and my family's actions while cross-country skiing, during travel related to Nooksack Nordic Ski Club (NNSC) activities, and during use of facilities and equipment. This includes, but is not limited to falls, collisions, effects of weather, conditions of equipment and trails and other areas while skiing or participating in NNSC activities. I hereby for myself, my heirs, administrators, or anyone else who may bring claims on my or my family members' behalf, covenant not to sue, release and discharge the NNSC, its Board and Committee members, and all related organizations or individuals, from any and all claims of liability for death, personal injury, or property damage arising from my or my family members' participation in NNSC activities.

Name (Print please): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Other family member(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Other signatures: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to receive Snow News is Good News newsletter by: Email: \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### Select Club Tasks you could help with:

Serve on NNSC Board \_\_\_\_\_ Clear brush from trails \_\_\_\_\_ Find speakers/program  
fundraising \_\_\_\_\_ Lead a ski trip \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks out to: Nooksack Nordic Ski Club and mail with this form to:  
Nooksack Nordic Ski Club, P.O. Box 28793, Bellingham, WA 98228

<u>Deposit Date</u>
<u>Sno Park #</u>