



The  
**Easy Glider**  
 Kick 'n Gliders Nordic Ski Club

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Issue: March, 2000

## IMPORTANT!

### DATE CHANGE

The **Trip Planning Meeting**, scheduled for March 23, has been **RESCHEDULED** to March 30. It will be held in the Wildware canoe shed as originally planned.

## TRIP PLANNING

On Wednesday, March 30 (rescheduled from March 23), at the regular membership meeting at Wildware, we will plan the trip schedule for next season. We need your input and help.

Please:

- Participate in planning ski trips for the 2000-01 season.
- Bring your ideas and information for trips for next year to new destinations or at different accommodations.
- Volunteer to be a trip leader!
- Learn the ropes about planning and leading trips.

If you'd like to promote a trip, please assemble key information on ski areas, facilities, total costs, up-front costs and other pertinent information and bring it with you to the meeting.

## Come One, Come All!

### Year 2000 Kick'n Gliders' Awards Banquet!

- \* Celebrate a Great Season of Cross-Country Skiing!
- \* Eat Well!
- \* Meet Old Skiing Friends!
- \* Meet New Members!
- \* Receive Door Prizes!
- \* Get Free Kick'n Glider Gifts!
- \* Make & Receive Awards!  
 (Make your nominations on the enclosed form.)
- \* Musical Review!
- \* Animated Slide Show of the Season's Trips!
- \* ... Oh, Yeah, Election Of Officers, Too!



#### Menu?

Crab Bisque  
 Dinner Salad, choice of dressings  
 Hot rolls  
 Entree (choose one): Chicken Marsala or Fresh Salmon Filet  
 Redskin potatoes, parsley butter  
 Chef's choice of vegetable  
 Coffee or Hot Tea  
 Fruit pie of the day

#### When?

April 19  
 6:00 - 7:00 Cash Bar  
 7:00 - 8:00 Dinner  
 8:00 - ? Program

#### Cost?

Adults \$15.00  
 Children under 12 \$8.00

717-761-7539

#### Where?

Hardings Restaurant  
 3817 Gettysburg Road  
 Camp Hill

#### Reservations?

Use the enclosed form to make your reservations.

**No walk-ins, please!**

**Reservation deadline: April 13**

#### Questions?

Call or e-mail  
 Bill Pickering (717-232-1326)  
[billkaypick@aol.com](mailto:billkaypick@aol.com)

or  
 Sandy Stine (717-392-1675)  
[william.t.stine@gte.net](mailto:william.t.stine@gte.net)



## OKEFENOKEE SWAMP

Feb 16 Meeting Program

*Jonathan Daniels*

Twenty Kick'n Gliders gathered in the canoe shed at Wildware on February 17 to hear Bob and Carol Alexander and Jonathan Daniels narrate their slides of their canoe trip in the Okefenokee Swamp last winter. Thanks for a wonderful tale!

Below is Jonathan's description of that trip:

We were all sitting together at one of the large round dinner tables in the Beacon restaurant basking in the warm glow of that day's trip down the beautiful Lehigh river. After the various accounts and retellings of the day's adventures, conversation naturally turned to hopes and plans for trips to come. Bob and Carol Alexander mentioned that they were putting together a trip to the Okefenokee Swamp in the Fall.

"Oh." I said dreamily in my pleasant state of post-boating mellowness, "I'd love to go there!" Visions of gaunt knurled cypress trees hung with pale gray green Spanish moss towering over still black waters flashed through my mind.

Carol, with a much more sober tone, said, "You're welcome to come along but I need to know if you are serious. Planning and preparation for a trip like this requires a significant amount of time and effort. Can you make a commitment?"

"In front of these witnesses" I intoned playfully, "I say to you: I will go with you into the Okefenokee!"

Several months later at the end of a long very straight and very flat well rutted lonely little dirt road in Southeastern Georgia Bob and Carol and I passed a large fading sign which said "You are now entering the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge." Next to the welcome was a picture of a large hungry looking alligator. As we loaded our canoes on the convenient concrete ramp which sloped down into the black coffee colored water, I took a moment to stand and peer down the straight fifty foot wide canal which plunged into the obscure depths of the swamp.

The hint of blue sky above the morning mist promised a beautiful warm clear day and our anticipation of our next four days created a wonderful excitement. Despite those pleasant things, somewhere down deep in me a thin tendril of uneasiness twitched as I looked at that dark water. What strange creatures could be lurking there? What ghosts and spirits might watch

us from behind the dark of night and history while we slept in this primordial place? The indication on another earlier signpost that "Okefenokee" translated loosely from Native American as "Land of the Trembling Earth" did little to quiet these whisperings of my subconscious.

According to The Okefenokee Swamp, published by the Georgia Wildlife Federation, the recent history of this wetland has been somewhat unsettled. Native Americans are believed to have inhabited the swamp for thousands of years before a last band of refugee Seminoles were driven out in the early 1800's. A few white families slowly moved in to subsist here by hunting and keeping cattle until the Suwanee Canal Company purchased the swamp in the 1890's. Their attempts to drain it to create arable land failed and it was sold to the Hebard Lumber Company. Railroads supported on wooden pilings above the water and bogs were built to haul out the cypress lumber cut from the wetlands and the pine and hardwoods from the islands.

Voices started calling for preservation and conservation for the swamp as early as 1908. By 1929 groups like the Georgia Society of Naturalists began mounting a broader effort. Thanks in large part to the efforts of organized conservationists like them, plans to build an Atlantic-Gulf canal and a scenic highway through the swamp were prevented in the depression years of the early 1930's. Ultimately the land was purchased by the Roosevelt administration in 1937 to be conserved as a National Wildlife Refuge. Despite this protected designation, the alligators which now thrill so many visitors to the Okefenokee were hunted in the refuge and throughout the Southeast nearly to extinction in the late 1960's and early 1970's before they were listed as endangered species. Today conservationists are concerned about the consequences of a proposed Titanium mining operation along the properties immediately bordering the refuge to the East, so efforts to protect this unique environment continue.

Our trip into the Okefenokee was truly a wonderful experience. We wound our way along water trails through great stands of cypress trees and more diverse forests on the scattered islands. Expanses of tawny colored swamp grasses stretched away in broad prairies broken occasionally by open lakes. Here we caught glimpses of the Sandhill cranes in their stately gray plumage accented by the dark red cap on their brows. White ibis, wood storks, red-shouldered hawks and many other wetland birds circled lazily in the warm blue skies above us or flitted through the grasses on these prairies. At night the eerie calls of barred owls answered each other across the swamp. At

our camp on Floyd's island they were calling from the lofty tree tops right over our camp fire and even hooted in offense at our clumsy attempts to talk with them.

Some parts of the trails wound closely through dense undergrowth where we passed at times literally within a paddle's reach of swamp deer, a cottonmouth coiled on the bank, and several torpid alligators. At the right spots we saw the fantastic carnivorous pitcher and sundew plants dressed seductively in stunning shades of greens and reds blending and speckled on their dangerous foliage. At our last night's camp on a large prairie near the edge of bluff lake we were blessed with a full moonrise framed by the silhouettes of two old isolated cypress trees. The night was so lovely we strapped on our headlamps and went for a midnight paddle. To our delight the eyes of the bullfrogs and even the water spiders that hid in the grasses around the edge of the lake reflected the light of our headlamps back like tiny sparkling emeralds and rubies. Truly the Okefenokee is a treasure trove of natural wonders.



## SKIING ALONE

*Bill Stine*

Article 5.A of the club's "Rules of Conduct and Safety Regulations", published each year in the "Season Guide", states:

"In the interest of safety, we ski in groups generally staying within sight of one another."

There are several additional, related rules. The importance of the rules and other issues related to skiing in remote areas came into sharp focus on February 19 near Inlet, NY.

Late that day Fred Richter's fibula was broken in a fall about six miles from the nearest road or snowmobile trail. The snow was deep, about three feet of powder, and broken only by our own single track. The trail out was a difficult one. One Fred may not have been able to traverse had he been alone, had the break been worse, had it been

colder or had Fred not maintained a state of outstanding physical conditioning.

Fortunately, Fred WAS with a group who were able to assist him. Fortunately, the ends of the break did not separate. Fortunately, one skier was able to ski ahead to seek outside help. Fortunately, another skier had an Ace bandage to wrap his ankle and Tylenol to ease the pain.

Even so, the road was not easy. The snow was too deep to support anyone attempting to carry him out. It was even too deep to walk along side to help him ski. And there was the pain. All that could be done was to help him gently to his feet, point his skis in the right direction and provide words of encouragement. Remarkably, Fred managed to ski that way for about five of the six miles to the road. It was only then that a local fire department rescue team on a snowmobile managed to get to him.

Consider, carefully, the possible consequences before you choose to ski alone. If you choose to do so anyway, MAKE SURE someone who will miss you knows EXACTLY where you are going and EXACTLY what to do if you don't return.

Your life and the well being of your loved ones may depend on it.



## TRIP REPORTS

### LAUREL HIGHLANDS

#### Trip Report

2/11/00 - 2/13/00

*Bill Stine et. al.*

As rain lashed Pennsylvania the week of February 7, the overflow crowd of Kick'n Gliders who'd signed up for the Laurel Highlands trip began to fret. Would our luck this season finally run out? Nope, at least not yet!

The working dairy farm, Laurel Farms, where most of the group stayed, turned out to be very enjoyable. The house was filled with evidence of family life and farm memorabilia. Cows on the dishes and curtains, chicken lights, cow cups, moose bedding, stuffed red fox, deer and pheasant

and a saddle and sleigh bells on the banister were just a few of the many decorator accessories. A black rotary phone attested to the state of technology in the area.

Locating the farm was a bit of a trick for trip leader, Nan. It turned out that the sign indicating the lane where the farm was located had been knocked down by a snow plow. Our host dutifully gave the sign to Nan who went out to the intersection and planted it in a snow bank so the rest of us could locate the place.

The Bayberry Inn, where the overflow group stayed, was located in town and was a more conventional B&B, neat as a pin and VERY clean. The hosts were pleasantly accommodating, as was the ice cream shop located across the street. Even in the WINTER, a line formed outside the shop to get a taste of their delicious concoctions.



#### Glide on the trail at laurel Highlands SP

On Saturday the club skied at Laurel Ridge State Park on the wide skating trails operated by the concession, there. Although there had been some rain, the hard snow had been well broken up and immaculately groomed. Especially pretty was the hoarfrost at the top of the trail system.



#### Hoar frost sparkles at Laurel Highlands

While Jim Brandon and Barb and Paul Kase skied their own course, five "iron women", Wanda Cole, Wanda Pritulsky, Nan O'Donnell, Norma Brandon and Kim Lausch managed to ski more than fourteen miles without falling. They were humbled, however, by the skate skier who lapped them three times while they were skiing the orange loop. Others, including David Wolborn and Joe, Kathy and Jason Harfmann took a skiing lesson. Joe gathered special praise from the instructor for displaying the correct "weight over the

skis" double poling technique when he managed to fall flat on his face. Ahh ... the price of perfection!

Bill and Sandy Stine arrived Saturday evening, just in time for cocktails and the excellent dinner prepared by Nan. Joe Harfmann's good luck continued at dinner. While visiting a local winery on the way to the farm, he had purchased several bottles of wine for dinner and a bottle of old fashioned root beer for son, Jason. The root beer turned out to be super carbonated, and Jason ended up wearing most of it as Joe opened it in front of him.



#### Forbes State Forest warming hut

Sunday dawned pleasant, but overcast with the promise of a wintry mix for the evening. Most of the group packed their gear, said farewell to our hosts and drove to Kooser State Park. After skiing a warm-up mile around the lake, we set out to explore the linked trails of Hidden Valley. While pleasant, we were disappointed to find that new downhill trails at the ski center had cut off some old XC trails and that no connecting trail seemed to exist to the old trails at the top of the mountain. We then crossed the road to the Hidden Valley trails that connected to the trails in Forbes State Forest. After walking a couple of blocks through a muddy, newly bulldozed road, we found the trail head and had a lovely ski into the Forbes trail system. The trails were truly lovely. We skied to the state maintained warming shed for lunch and on to several other beautiful trails in the system.

Several Kick'n Gliders stopped for a cozy, satisfying dinner in Bedford on the way home Sunday evening. Leaving the restaurant, the group discovered that the promised "wintry mix" had materialized. They drove slowly home on the turnpike, past miles of backed-up eighteen wheeler rigs. Thankfully, road crews kept the ice pretty well in check and the trip was uneventful. Once again, we'd threaded the weather needle for a wonderful skiing weekend!

Side Note: Low on fuel and thinking they'd passed a filing station, a driver exclaimed, "Did I just pass gas?" This club just can't get away from that barking frog curse!

# INLET – ROCKY POINT

## Trip Report

2/18/00 - 2/22/00

*Bill Stine*

What WAS in doubt was actually getting to the Rocky Point condos in Inlet, NY for the weekend. Those who were able drove part way on Thursday night, staying at Binghamton or Norwich and driving the remainder of the trip Friday morning. Others had to make the trip on slippery, snow covered highways. What was NOT in doubt was that there would be snow. And, was there ever! At noon on Friday there was about 2½ feet of powder on the ground with an additional 6-8 inches overnight. Daily dustings kept the trail surfaces fresh all weekend long. Many Kick'n Gliders exclaimed that it was some of the best snow conditions they'd ever experienced!



### Deep snow at entrance to Fern Park

After unloading their gear early Friday afternoon, Bill & Sandy Stine, Kim Lausch, Dennis & Beth Major and Glen Pickering headed for Inlet's Fern Park to sample the snow while Fred Wilcox and Carol Lentz explored tamer stuff. The former group skied freshly groomed trails to the top of the mountain and then took off on a few of the ungroomed trails on top. We worked hard breaking trail in the deep snow. Ascending the short hills was especially challenging, with our skis sinking only a foot or so into the snow while the pole sank more than two feet. The beauty of the conifers between the ridges, however, made the struggle worthwhile! Coming down the mountain with two inches of powder on untracked, groomed trails was pure poetry.

Several of the early arrivals intercepted Bill, Kay & Laura Pickering, Nan O'Donnell, Jan Diehl and Joan Short at the Old Mill for dinner. Later that night, Fred and Tanya Richter arrived leaving only Dave and Nancy KauhRoy on the road. Thankfully, they arrived safely, though much later than they'd hoped.

Saturday's sunrise revealed Friday's snow would make for a delightful day of skiing. The group assembled shortly after 9:00 to

ski the Big Otter Lake truck trail. That would be the first to ski it since the most recent snow surprised no one. Trail breakers discovered, though, that going through the deep snow was really tiring. Taking turns at the lead, Fred, Dennis, Glenn, Joan and Kim broke trail through this lovely wilderness area just west of Old Forge to the five mile point. Just before lunch, five of the women hung back to take care of essential business while the guys proceeded a hundred yards ahead to pack down an area where we could have our lunch. Imagine Nan's surprise when, she literally "brought up the rear", rounding a curve in the trail and seeing five exposed derrières in the woods! While most turned back at the five mile mark, a few hardy souls ventured a mile or so farther before turning back.



### Breaking trail into Big Otter Lake

Then it happened. In a seemingly benign fall while descending a small hill, Fred heard something pop accompanied by intense pain in his left ankle. While Fred, the "bone breaking trail breaker" eventually got off the trail and to Utica's Faxton Hospital sixty miles away, the experience was a sobering one for all of us. (Read the related stories "The Longest Mile" and "Skiing Alone" for details.) A delicious meal of Chicken Kiev, prepared by Marci & Glenn Pickering and hosted at the Pickering condo, topped off the day and made up for at least some of Fred's frustration and pain.

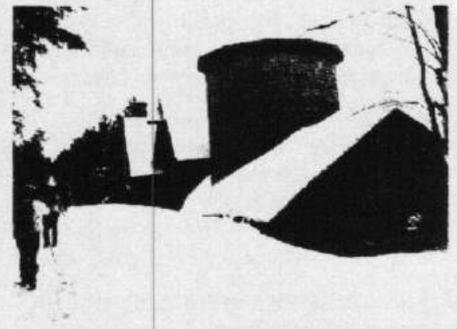


### Last stretch into Santanoni Great Camp

On Sunday morning we swept another inch or two of fluffy powder off the cars and drove to the trail head leading to the Santanoni Great Camp. The five mile long trail wended its way through exquisite woodlands along the camp's access road. About a mile in, we passed the farm that was built just to supply the camp with fresh

produce and dairy products. Happily, for the weary trail breakers, many other folks had used the trail so the going was easy.

Finally, after crossing a wooden bridge, we skied the last few hundred yards to this magnificent camp. About twenty or so other skiers were already eating their lunches on the porches of the complex. Others were peering in the windows of the interconnected buildings that comprise the camp, admiring the huge fireplace and birch bark "wallpaper" in the great room. Most Kick'n Gliders gathered in a corner that sheltered them from the wind while they ate and soaked up the sun's rays. After further exploring the area, we stepped back into our ski bindings and easily made the five mile trek back to the cars.



### Farm on way to Santanoni Great Camp

On the drive back to inlet, several of us stopped by Hoss's Country Store, purchasing items from their wide array of books and gifts. Another delicious chicken dinner was prepared by Beth & Dennis and consumed by all. Tired and sated, we postponed the traditional poker game and retired for the night.

Monday revealed another beautiful day with additional light snow. While some of our "glide" of skiers had to return to homes and jobs, others stayed to ski the Cascade Lake trail. At the trail head we met a group of ten folks snowshoeing out from a two night stay along the trail. They invited us to explore their encampment about a mile and a half in, which we did.



### Kick'n Gliders check out a snow hut

It was built of snow that had been mounded and then hollowed out, much like an igloo. The shelters adjoined a large fire ring,

complete with snow benches and smoldering embers. Later, we stopped at the waterfall "cascade" after which the lake is named. It was completely frozen and covered with snow. We listened intently for the flow of water. Hearing none, the guys offered to simulate the sound while undertaking necessary bodily functions. The women, wisely deferred. Skiing the rest of the way around the lake was a delight. That afternoon, most of the group opted to go shopping and exploring. They succeeded at pouring a few hundred dollars into the local economy in exchange for a variety of new gear including skis, poles with large powder baskets, duffel bags and an assortment of apparel.



#### Posing in front of frozen Cascade

After an evening meal of kielbasa soup and quiche, six of the clan settled down to poker while Kim, Nan, Tanya and Jan did a short night ski out to the point on Fourth Lake. While the bleary eyed card players couldn't confirm it, the skiers claimed it was a beautiful, starlight night with a nearly full moon. Ah, the lure of the poker chips!

Tuesday morning saw the remaining folks packing gear into their cars, taking out several days worth of trash and sorting their recyclables into the bins behind the office. After turning in their keys, seven hard core skiers made one last visit to the trails at Fern Park. As anticipated, they were in magnificent shape. We skied the easy route to the top of the mountain, did Lakeview Loop and skied back down using a variety of routes, depending on how adventurous each skier felt. After showers at Rocky Point's pool locker room, we all headed home ... five days and forty-odd deep powder skiing miles later, we couldn't have been happier.

Wildlife: Bill Stine spotted a long tailed weasel on his way out of the Big Otter Truck Trail. Pure white, except for the black tip on its tail, it was a rare sight!

Kudos: to Bill & Kay Pickering for orchestrating an outstanding weekend. (They must have GREAT connections.)

## THE LONGEST MILE

### Inlet Trip Article

*Fred Richter*

"Crack". I heard it resonate through my body; it seemed loud enough to register at least a 5 on the Richter Scale, but I know Glenn Pickering standing three feet from me couldn't hear it.

My body found comfort in the snow as I lie there with it not responding to my brain's command to get up! Struggling to my feet, I felt the excruciating pain in my ankle. My first thought, "I'm over five miles from the cars."

Each stride was painful and initially I didn't think I was going to ever be able to make it to the Thendara parking lot. Encouraged and supported by Glenn and Dennis Major, the glides became longer and easier, but very slow. Glenn decided to go ahead to seek help. It was about 2:30, but at the rate I was going I'd never get out before dark.

I plodded along, with Dennis directly behind supporting me, verbally and physically. Buoyed by endorphins, dopamine, adrenaline and other brain induced painkillers left over from man's fight or flight evolutionary development, thoughts of Motrin still danced through my head.

The trail seemed interminable, but the tracks left behind by nine Kick and Gliders, back and forth, left a smooth path through an enchanting white and green forest. The wet snow clumped on trees and stumps created sculptures of dragons, bears and at least one statue of Dave Leroy—"Oh it was Dave Leroy!"

Dave and Nancy were waiting along side the trail with Tylenol and an ace bandage. I'm still not sure what they were doing just standing along the trail: Searching for werewolves? Waiting for the 4:30 bus? But it was wonderful to see them. Nancy played forest triage nurse wrapping my ankle while I swallowed four Tylenol.

I was moving fairly well now, I knew I could get out especially after a mile gentle decent. I said to Dennis, who for over two hours patiently plodded along behind me, to go ahead. Dennis demurred. He stayed with me and remained my left foot manipulator—when my leg would collapse he'd move my

skis to parallel positions and pulled me upright.

We passed the 1.5 mile sign and I was increasing my speed from depressingly slow to despondently slow when a snow mobile rounded a curve. Dennis' reaction was to yell to get out of the way or we'd be hit. Somewhat ironic to be run over by the ambulance. John, the driver, asked if we had seen an injured person along the trail. Haltingly, I admitted it was me. John looked surprised— I guess that was positive? Peg, the paramedic, asked me to remove my skis and she immobilized my foot, while the rescue mobile, attempting, to turn around got stuck in the snow. Dennis, Dave and two skiers that happened by were needed to lift it out of the drifts.

Peg and John lifted me onto the snow mobile. With the wrapped leg protruding precariously, from the side of the snow mobile I prepared for the most harrowing part of the exiting. "Wow, that tree got close to my dangling leg! Aren't we going too fast for these conditions?"

We quickly traversed the last .75 miles and as we approached the parking lot Tanya and the Kick Gliders were waiting—with their cameras. A superb photo op, was this a slow day at news headquarters? Floods in Kentucky, an avalanche in Lake Placid, why me?



#### Fred, being lifted into ambulance

John with Fran, an EMA volunteer, lifted me into the red Old Forge ambulance. I was placed on the stretcher and Fran busied himself with making me comfortable. His major concern was keeping me warm. Fran asked if my foot was cold and I said my core was cold not my foot. Visions of shock! He talked about intravenous saline

solutions. "Fran, I'm not that cold! How about a blanket?"

Peg returned from the pick-up area and entered the emergency vehicle. She cut off my new Cool Max socks to expose a foot that looked like a bole was growing from where my ankle bone should be. She re-wrapped it in an inflatable cast while my friends entered the ambulance to snap pictures. This could be the most recorded event since the sinking of the Titanic.

We left the parking lot with the Stines slip streaming the ambulance. Cruising along 28 to Utica's Faxon Hospital, we covered the 60 miles in about half the time it took us to cover the same distance the night before. The personnel in the hospital picked up where the ambulance crew left off-competently and caringly attempting to meet my needs. X-rays revealed I broke my fibula slightly above the ankle. The good news is the bone did not pull apart- no surgery needed and very little pain. BUT, 6 weeks in a cast.

Reflections. I sit and feel sorry for myself, but my injury could have been far worse and it pales next to the tragedies others must endure. Additionally, I was fortunate to have a super support team around me. Thanks to: Dennis for painstakingly skiing behind me and lifting me when I fell; Glenn for skiing out to get help; Dave and Nancy for helping on the trail; Kim for what I'm sure will be a complete photo chronicle from my arrival in the parking lot till my departure; the whole ski club for tramping down the trail to the point where it was smooth and slick, the Pickerings for preparing a delicious supper and keeping it warm for us until we returned from Utica; The Stines, NASCAR Bill for staying with the ambulance all the way to the hospital, and Sandy for staying with Tanya and me; my house mates, the Stines, Fred W and Carol for all their help and, of course, Tanya whose major tasks are yet to come.

Epilog. Accounts of marathoners finishing a race with a cracked femur or a hunter walking out of a woods with a bullet lodged in his lungs, are not unusual. Now I can relate to the wonders of the human body's marvelous masking powers as I skied four plus miles over a rolling terrain with a broken bone in my foot. In essence, the nearly 2.5 hour trek is a blur- more mind over matter, as the body not only masks physical pain but mental pain as well.

I know I could have made it out all the way. What do you think Dennis?

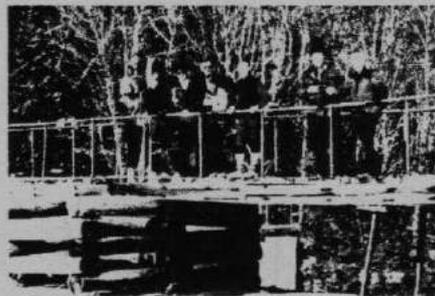
## LAKE PLACID AND THE JOYS OF WAX

Trip report  
3/3/00 - 3/7/00

*Bill Stine*

With the mercury at a record shattering 80+ degrees, it seems incongruous to be writing about a delightful cross-country skiing trip from which we returned only yesterday! The drive up was not encouraging. The predicted six to ten inch Thursday night snow had not materialized. The 22 inches that had fallen in time for the Goodwill Games just two weeks earlier had almost completely melted. Stopping by the Mount vanHovenberg Olympic XC ski venue on the way into town yielded a discouraging ski report of icy conditions and only half the trails open. Yet a stop "next door" at the Adirondack Loj was a bit more encouraging. Although the snow at the Welcome Center was sparse, they reported passable snow on the truck trail into Marci Dam and good conditions from Marci Dam to Avalanche Lake. A quick inspection of the truck trail head revealed an adequate covering of snow and only a single set of tracks. It seemed that we'd at least be able to execute Saturday's plan. With no additional snow events predicted, we'd just take it one day at a time.

Knowing that Dave and Nancy would drift into town late, the early arrivals, including the Stines, Brandons, Bernie and Sally went out for dinner. Meanwhile, Mike and the Majors relaxed in our rented, six-bedroom Philo house in the middle of Lake Placid. We also inspected the newly installed outdoor hot tub, looking forward to using it to relax tired muscles after long days of skiing. Agreeing that we would depart for skiing at 9:00, we settled in for the night.



**Gathered at Marci Dam**

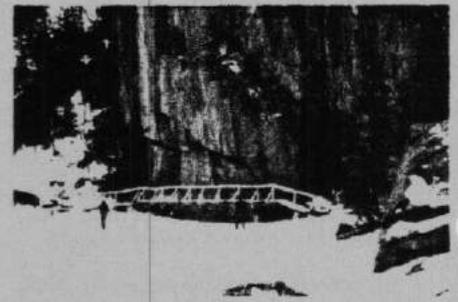
Saturday morning yielded a light, but welcome coating of new powder. Maybe the fates would smile on us! We noted that many skiers had preceded us as we started out on the trail to Marci Dam. This would prove to be a popular venue! Learning to carefully avoid the few spots of exposed gravel, we made our way in. Conditions

continually improved until we arrived at the dam about 2½ miles in. There, the three waxers among us added a bit of violet to the kick zone. Others fed sunflower seeds to the chickadees from the palms of our hands. We all watched as a steady parade of hikers, skiers and campers made their way up the trail toward Avalanche Pass. We also gazed soberly at the scar left by the Wright Mountain avalanche that had killed skiers just two weeks earlier.



**Atop the rock slide in Avalanche Pass**

Snow conditions improved dramatically as the trail narrowed above the dam, and we quickly made our way along the beautiful stream to the steep part of the ascent up to the pass. While most people opted to walk the second half of the switchback portion of the trail, we were impressed as Bernie skied the whole thing. Shortly after the big climb, we encountered an area where a large rock slide from Colden Mountain had buried about 100 yards of the trail under 20-30 feet of debris during the summer. Skiing over the huge heap of rock and broken, twisted trees, exposed root systems pointing every way but down, was an awesome reminder of the power of nature and the source of the name for this pass.



**"Hitch-up Matilda" on Avalanche Lake**

Even more awesome, however, was the sight of our destination, Avalanche Lake. About half a mile of beautiful, wooded skiing past the avalanche site, you ski onto the lake. Hemmed in between sheer rock walls hundreds of feet high, this half-mile long lake is a sight to behold. No wonder it is a popular destination! We huddled out of the wind to eat our lunch and then skied the length of the frozen lake to get a better camera angle. Along the way, we stopped to inspect the "Hitch-Up Matilda" walkways anchored to the rock walls to provide a way

for hikers to pass by the lake when it is not frozen.



#### Avalanche Lake from the eastern end

Reluctantly, we started back down the trail, passing a steady stream of people still making their way in. Coming to the steep part, half of us opted to ski down the switch back. Although the snow conditions were favorable, a foot of powder would have made it a lot easier. As it was, the descent was a real thrill for those who skied it. The rest of the return to Marci Dam was a wonderful, mile-long, downhill glide! Impressions of the skiing from the dam to the truck trail head depended on your equipment. The sun and many skiers had devoured the light powder from the morning. The waxers struggled with the fast, icy conditions and even resorting to walking in some instances. Meanwhile, most of those wearing waxless equipment had a delightful return to the vehicles.

Back at the house, the hot tub got its first workout of the weekend, the Stines prepared the traditional pork and sauerkraut dinner and we all agreed that we were too tired for poker.

The plan for Sunday was to ski the horse trail into Raquette Falls, another destination that we hadn't visited for more than five years. This would be another in-and-out ski of about ten miles. The guide book suggested only gentle slopes until a steep descent within the last half-mile or so. Reasoning that there was probably more snow to the west of Lake Placid, we were confident that conditions would be ok for skiing. We were right. The guide book wasn't.



#### We pose in front of Raquette Falls

While the first few miles were fairly easy, the remainder would not be suitable for

beginning skiers. The trail wound up and down a series of short but demanding hills through pleasant woods above the Raquette River. A couple of times many of us walked short sections. Finally, we came to the advertised steep descent. Only Bernie and Norma managed to ski it, and only Norma succeeded in doing so without falling. Dave, true to his bushwhacking ways, avoided it altogether by skiing a gentler slope through the woods. Another quarter mile brought us to the canoe put-in area and the final few hundred yards to the falls. All but Dave left skis and poles at the top of the final hill to scramble down to the falls for a leisurely lunch and photo opportunity.

Except for Bernie and Bill, the ski out was pleasant but uneventful. Once again, the warm sun made waxable skis (the klisters were at home) problematic. At this point, you need to know that all weekend long, Bernie had been coaching Bill on waxing techniques and Bill had been trying to convince Bernie that there really was a place for a pair of no-wax skis in his arsenal. After Bernie struggled back up all those hills in the first half of the return trip, Bill offered to let him try out his waxable skis. They each learned a lesson. Bernie learned that no-wax skis actually do glide and that, maybe he should get a pair. And Bill learned just how bad it can be to ski without kick. It was a long few miles home!

We ended the afternoon with shopping, a visit to The Cottage, another round of hot tub relaxation, a fine Beef Stroganoff dinner by Dennis and Beth and an early bedtime for most. No poker ... again!



#### Following Esker ski trail at the VIC

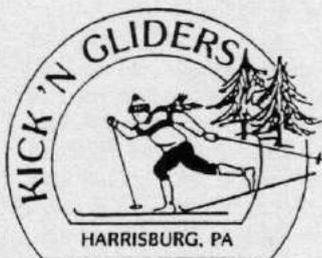
Monday morning found Dave and Nancy leaving for NYC, Sally and Mike determined to hike up the Whiteface Mountain Toll Road, Norma bound for downhill skiing at Whiteface and Jim bound to the phone with business calls. That left five XCers headed for the Visitor's Interpretative Center at Paul Smith's. With the possible exceptions of Jim, Nancy and Dave, we all had great days. Norma had great downhill conditions and never had to wait in a lift line. In fact, she was all alone on most of the rides she took on the new gondola! Sally and Mike got all the way up

the Toll Road in relatively benign conditions (wind chill above -20) with snow cover all the way. And the VIC crowd was mostly alone, with more than an inch of fresh snow over a hard six-inch base. We skied Esker, Tamarack and Heron Marsh trails at the VIC with an interlude for lunch in the center's sunny atrium. Beth got to ski her brand new metal-edged skis. They worked great! And Bernie tried out Bill's Fischer revolution no-wax skis. They worked well, too. The ride home rewarded us with wonderful views of the afternoon sun illuminating Whiteface and the other High Peaks. The evening found us enjoying yet another dip in the tub followed by a dinner of one of the Brandon's patented soups. While the conversation lingered longer that final evening, there were still no takers for poker!

Tuesday morning we all squeezed our gear back into our cars and wended our ways back home. That evening, several of us attended the regular K'nG social meeting at Chi Chi's on the way home. We were able, once again, to boast about just how good our trip leaders are, what with finding all that snow in the middle of a heat wave!



#### Packing up for the trip home



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

## In this Issue of Easy Glider

### **Meeting Date Change!**

Trip Planing Meeting moved from March 23 to March 30.

### **Trip Planing Meeting**

Participate in planing next season's trips!

### **Awards Banquet – Make your reservations now!**

Don't miss this event! The banquet should be a blast!

### **Articles**

Read Jonathan Daniels' article on Okefenokee Swamp, Bill Stine's thoughts on skiing alone and Fred Richter's account of a skiing accident!

### **Trip Reports**

It's been a busy month! Get the full scoop on trips to Laurel Highlands, Inlet and Lake Placid.