

# The Flakey News

## Publication of the Fox Valley Snowdrifters

April, 2022



**PRESIDENT:**

Greg Olson  
312-520-5283

[olsongregv@gmail.com](mailto:olsongregv@gmail.com)

**VICE PRESIDENT:**

John Walsh  
630-777-9008

[jrxplor@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jrxplor@sbcglobal.net)

**TREASURER:**

Peggy Courser  
630-632-0789

[peggycourser@comcast.net](mailto:peggycourser@comcast.net)

**SECRETARY:**

Donna Ulatowski  
630-279-1049

[dulatowski@comcast.net](mailto:dulatowski@comcast.net)

**PAST PRESIDENT:**

John Gamble  
630-761-9550

[john@johngamble.net](mailto:john@johngamble.net)

**TRIPS & INS AGENT:**

Frank Hodowal  
630-584-0868

[fhod@aol.com](mailto:fhod@aol.com)

**SOCIAL:**

Maureen Joy

[Mojoy@comcast.net](mailto:Mojoy@comcast.net)

**MEMBERSHIP:**

Michelle Baker Etherton  
[Carey\\_Michelle@live.com](mailto:Carey_Michelle@live.com)

**NEWSLETTER:**

Joe & Dana Hopp  
[Jhopp23@hotmail.com](mailto:Jhopp23@hotmail.com)

**WEBSITE:**

Chuck Salisbury  
[2597fhd@comcast.net](mailto:2597fhd@comcast.net)

**SOCIAL MEDIA:**

Sue Stanciu

[Skstanciu314@gmail.com](mailto:Skstanciu314@gmail.com)

**CMSC**

Leo Ahasic  
630-309-8885

[bahasic@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bahasic@sbcglobal.net)

**Fox Valley Snowdrifters**

P.O. Box 697  
Batavia, IL 60510

### President's note

It's been a good year for the Snowdrifters. We were able to get back out and ski a full season. It took several shots (the COVID Vaccine kind) and lots of paperwork, but the Club has managed to ski and play in Europe, the U.S. and Canada. Some Snowdrifters are still looking forward to yet another trip this season.

Ah, but the season is winding down. Of course, that only means that planning season begins. That would include planning for the May 15<sup>th</sup>, End of Year party. (Can't wait to see what Laurel, Maureen and others cook up.)

It would also be planning for next year's trips. John Gamble and Frank Hodowal got input from members at the March meeting. Then, several Snowdrifters got together after the monthly meeting looking to be even more involved in planning and leading trips for next season. Between the member suggestions and getting more folks involved in trip planning, I think next year's slate of trips will not only take us to some great destinations but will offer something for everyone, whether it's great skiing or other fun events and attractions.

One more planning item - We also want to plan out our meetings as best we can for the coming year. To that end, I'd welcome suggestions for meeting destinations and meeting topics. If you know of somewhere local that would make a great meeting place – and provide interest to our membership – let me know. Or, if you have a topic (ski-related or otherwise) that you would like to present or know someone who could present on a topic – let me know. Of course, it would be even better if you helped to plan the topics and meetings. We can talk more about this at the April meeting.

  
Happy Easter

*Greg Olson*

*President*





They don't call it the Great White North for nothing. Canada's beauty was a welcome sight for 35 Snowdrifters. Snow-capped alpine heights uplifted in multiple directions, carved by glaciers and wind into the deep bowls and knife-like ridges, and dotted with lakes and woods, and the Bow River winding through it all.

Ah, but I am getting ahead of the trip story. First the journey. Okay, first the COVID stuff.

Canada was still in safety mode prior to our travels, so we all started with COVID testing and loading our vax status, passport info, and quarantine plans into the ArriveCan app. With that out of the way, most of us boarded the bus at the fairgrounds, met up with a few others at O'Hare, met a few more in Denver and picked up our 35<sup>th</sup> Snowdrifter upon landing in Calgary.

We were a little late getting in and even later getting out of the Calgary airport. Several Snowdrifters were selected for "random" COVID testing at the airport. Not the fastest of processes. We were delayed even further when one Snowdrifter was the victim of the dreaded lost ski bag and then was also selected to undergo COVID testing. Once on the highway, our driver took us on a bit of a local history and geology tour which really made for an enjoyable bus ride. After a very brief grocery stop, we made it to the town of Banff and the Banff Caribou Lodge.

At the Lodge, we enjoyed a nice breakfast every morning. Our location also provided us the pleasure of being first on the ski bus in the morning and first off the bus at the end of the day.

As for the skiing, we had our choice of Lake Louise, Sunshine or Norquay. Most folks opted to ski only Sunshine and Louise, but a few managed to hit all three for the SKIBIG3 Trifecta. Day one showed plenty of snow cover, but some runs were a bit icy in spots. Day two and the runs pretty much stayed the same. Day three, the crowds thinned out and the snow came.



It topped off the runs with more than enough snow to kick up the fun levels. And the snow continued. Day four was amazing – one of those where your boots seem to go on a bit easier because you're full of the anticipation of a great day on the ski slopes. And it's one of those you'll remember; because, hey it was a great day of skiing.

Skiing may be part of our name, but there are so many other fun and interesting things to do in the Banff National Park area. There's the Olympic X-country course in Canmore, dog-sledding and various hikes and tours through the park and surrounding areas. Of course, the hot springs and the Chateau always attract visitors. I did see that the Ice Canyon tour and the dog-sledding were a few of the big hits

with the Snowdrifters. There's also plenty of nightlife in Banff. A few Snowdrifters went dancing, while others enjoyed the local dining and music scene.

Our Assistant Trip Leader, Tom Devries, set up an opening dinner at Chili's to give everyone a chance to meet and greet each other, grab a bite to eat, have a few drinks and talk about the day's skiing and other adventures. Then on Sunday evening, Tom helped us close out the week with another Club dinner at the Meatball restaurant in the Ptarmigan Inn. We had a pretty eclectic selection of pizzas to go along with the beer, wine and cocktails. We finished the dinner with a picture on the stairs at the Ptarmigan, just as another group of Snowdrifters did seven years earlier.



The trip home was uneventful and while a 12 AM arrival shouldn't be wished upon anyone, baggage claim turned out to be not so difficult and, thanks to our bus driver, we were able to load quickly and made pretty good time back to the fairgrounds.

As many of you already know, we did have a couple of Snowdrifters injured on the trip. John Asare, unfortunately hit a tree resulting in some very serious injuries, a hospital stay in Calgary and a further stay at a hospital in Denver. Tim O'Brien took a bad spill on the ice at a trailhead and broke several ribs. Best wishes to both John and Tim as they recover.



**Does February March?**

**No, but April May!**



Iron River, MI Thursday March 10 – Sunday March 13

### Thursday – The Gathering



It was a lovely day to travel up North to Iron River, MI! Arrival and check in was smooth. The folks at the front desk, especially Chris, were amazingly warm, welcoming, and helpful. As you can see, they knew we were coming and welcomed the Snowdrifters!

The Pioneer Lodge was right across the street from the main lodge and ski lifts. While we didn't fill the entire lodge, we definitely had the majority of the lodge. Room configurations made for some fun combos of roommates.

After many gathered in rooms to relax with a beverage, it was decided to walk across to the restaurant at the Main Lodge only to find the staff leaving for the evening and the restaurant closed! BUT with just a bit of cajoling they agreed to open the restaurant and bar just for us! Definitely UP nice.

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
10 LIFTS 9AM-4PM NITE SKI 4:30-7:00	11 LIFTS 9AM-4PM NITE SKI 4:30-7:30	12 LIFTS 9AM-4PM NITE SKI 4:30-7:30
13 LIFTS 9AM-4PM NITE SKI 4:30-7:30	14 LIFTS 9AM-4PM NITE SKI 4:30-7:30	15 LIFTS 9AM-4PM NITE SKI 4:30-7:30

### Friday Fun

It was a sunny and very crisp day for skiing! What fun we had skiing the slopes: very well groomed, got to ski around the entire mountain, lifts run to the top and you can decide what direction to ski down. There were all levels of slopes including a snow park. As an added bonus on Saturday when it was a little more crowded (not crowded by any means), they ran the antique lifts so we could see and ride a blast from the past 😊! Also just to rub it in the weather was bluebird days and not as cold as all expected.

A few of us took the snowshoe trails for lovely trekking. A few others held tables in the lodge as they were not able to ski or chose to just hang out. The lodge had windows all across the back allowing those not skiing a front row seat to watch our friends come down the mountain. Group lessons were offered to all skiers on the trip and many took advantage of this. I think some skiers came away with a tip or two!



Best laid plans often go by the wayside only to find that the new plan is that much better.

This was definitely the case for Friday night. We were to have a group fish fry dinner but found out that there would be NO dinner at the lodge on Friday night. BUT we were in the thick of a very special event! Ski Brule was welcoming home their very own Olympic Gold Medalist, Nick Baumgartner. He honed his skill and worked at Ski Brule as a teen and lives in Iron River with his young son when not training around the globe.

The Iron River community sure knows how to throw a party! There was food galore (free to all), a silent auction, and a huge raffle. All proceeds were going to Nick to support his continued training. You know that Olympians do not get paid and rely on sponsorships and fundraisers for financial support.

Several lucky Snowdrifters won great prizes! A BIG win was Sandy Etherton who won a snowboard (which he got Nick to sign).

We all found that this gold medalist is a very friendly, nice guy. He interacted with all who stood in line or welcomed and congratulated him. He was kind to all.





### Saturday Fun

Another very crisp day with intermittent snow - skiing, snowshoeing, and time with friends in the lodge. Many at the lodge took advantage of the hot tubs situated right outside the door of the lodge in the afternoon. A lesson learned was that one should move their towels and shoes a bit farther away from the hot tubs because any water splashed on those immediately froze making shoes, towels and shirt covered with ice!

Because of the proximity to St. Patrick's Day, many were wearing the green! At 6:00 the shuttle bus picked us up at the lodge and took us to the other side of the mountain to take a sleigh ride to the Homestead Lodge and an all you can eat BBQ. The Homestead Lodge is the 1800's Oberg Homestead and the original Homestead Act, signed by President McKinley, hangs on the wall. (Believe it or not, some of Snowdrifters would stop there during skiing for a beverage or 2 😊!)

The sleigh was fun way to get to dinner. We had the entire upstairs for our group. Great food and friends! After a sleigh ride and shuttle back, we met in the main lodge for a night cap or two. It was a great final evening together.



**Sunday – The Leaving**

Another fun Midwest trip in the books! And a good time was had by all!





### *Trip Coordinators' Corner:*



© dreamstime.com

We are excited to get more Club members involved in the trip planning process and to have some more great trips! At the last Club meeting we asked for people to volunteer as trip leaders as well as vote on what trips we should start getting bids on. We still need trip leaders, so please talk to John or Frank if you have some interest. As far as trips that were discussed and we are now pursuing getting bids on are: Taos, Crested Butte, Quebec City in conjunction with their winter carnival, Big Sky, Snowmass, Brianhead, Utah in conjunction with National Parks, Paganelli for Europe with an extension in Italy, possibly Snowbird/Alta. The bidding process has started and we are trying to get various vendors to bid on the trips. Who knows what we will end up but that is the direction we are going and hope to find some good deals. Also if you are considering being a trip leader, we would like you to consider attending the all day trip seminar in Rosemont on May 14th. We will also announce trip planning meetings as all this unfolds.



*John Gamble and Frank Hodowal*

## Scouting Report: Purgatory-Durango

Tim Briggs, Peggy Schmidt, Leo Ahasic and Joe Hopp, the Snowdrifter's advance scouting team, met in Durango on March 17<sup>th</sup> for a reconnaissance mission for a possible future Snowdrifter ski trip. Report as follows.



Durango has a lot to offer for skiers and non-skiers. There are many hotels to choose from, however, the Strater Hotel is situated in the heart of the downtown, is a living history museum with the largest collection of American walnut furniture in the nation. It has two unique bars: The Diamond Belle is a trip back in time to an authentic Western Saloon with live Ragtime Piano Music and The Office is a local favorite for happy hour and entertainment. The Mahogany Grille offers the finest in steak and seafood.

There are many other bakeries, cafes, restaurants micro-breweries and saloons. In addition, on weekend you can find Bluegrass bands playing at many venues. The Animas City Theatre hosts national touring bluegrass bands. Or if you like to dance to country-western music, the Wild Horse Saloon is the place to be - bring your boots!



The Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad has the "482" which is a 1925 steam locomotive that pulls "turn of century cars to Silverton and back. This is a ride back in time with breathtaking views and a stop in Silverton for lunch and shopping. For the experienced, Silverton, CO, may be perfect for top skiers in our group looking for challenging Rocky Mountain skiing or a Durango back country trip. For dining, a wide choice of inexpensive restaurants such as taco bars, deli's and food trucks. A variety of

vegetarian/vegan, Italian, 50 types of wings, bar-b-que and more. Foodies will love the dining experience at high end wild game and steakhouses. Whatever you can think of is there and will fit your budget!

Purgatory Mountain offers a wide variety of runs and a quaint mountain village. This ski village is about a 30–40 minute drive from downtown Durango. Porgy's is a favorite base bar that has Adirondack chairs that surround the base for skiers to take in the sun. Scenic views of the San Juan Mountains can be had at Dante's on-mountain restaurant.

After a day's skiing at Purgatory, the Durango Mineral Hot Springs with cold plunge pool is a short drive on the road back to Durango. This hot spring spa has many large naturally fed hot tubs at varying temperatures and a 54-degree cold plunge that is highly recommended.

Many other local attractions include Mesa Verde, Dog Sledding, horse drawn sleigh rides, Sky Ute Casino Resort, or a walk on the Animas River Walk.

Air travel is best to fly into Albuquerque as our inbound and outbound United flight got cancelled causing all kinds of problems (like our skis being left in Denver).

Transportation shuttles were not running at pre-COVID levels so before venturing off with a large group, we would need to be assured that the Durango-Purgatory shuttles were back at normal level of operations.

## SOCIAL

We are looking for someone to be the new Social Chair Person. This is a fun position where you can delegate social activities during the year to other Snowdrifters. Activities include Trip Kick Off Party, End of Year Party, Golf Scramble, Bike Ride, etc. Please let Maureen Joy or Greg Olson know if you are interested.

## Membership

Welcome new members:

Julie Bizer  
Henry Lobbes  
Joel Petterson

*Michelle Etherton*

# DUES

Regular membership dues will be \$30 for next year which starts May 1st. If you'd like to score a discount – pay your dues before May 1st and take a \$5 deduction! Regular dues are \$30 beginning May 1st. Reminders will be sent out around April 1st. Be sure to take advantage of the discount by entering the code EARLYBIRD when you pay online by April 30th. If you'd like to pay by check, take advantage of the discount by paying at the April meeting or mailing your check on or before April 30th to:

Snowdrifters Ski Club  
Attention Membership  
PO Box 697  
Batavia, IL 60510

Many members have trip credit. If you would like to use your trip credit for membership dues, please send an email to me at [peggycourser@comcast.net](mailto:peggycourser@comcast.net). Please email before May 1st to take advantage of the early bird discount.

Thank you,

*Peggy Courser*

**Which month of the year is the shortest?**

May. It only has three letters.

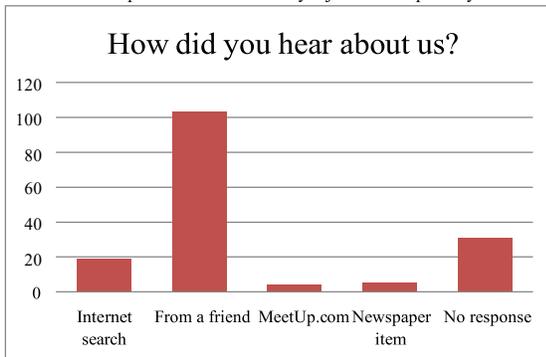
# Stats from the Webmaster

## Snowdrifters Ski Club profile for 2021 - 2022

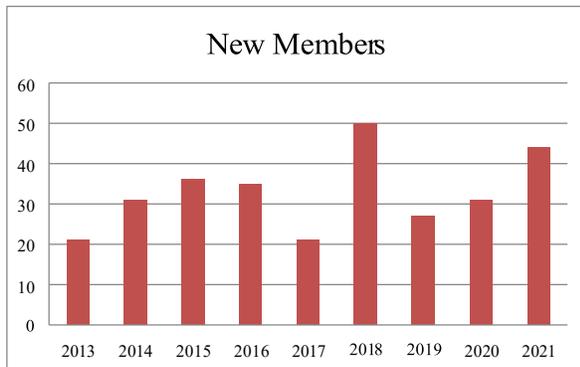
Here is the profile of our ski club for the 2021-2022 ski season.  
165 Active members  
This is up from 133 members last year  
14 (or more) of our active members identify themselves as non-skiers.  
They often join to go on the European trips.

We have active members in the following states:  
Illinois                      Minnesota                      Washington  
Michigan                      California                      New Mexico

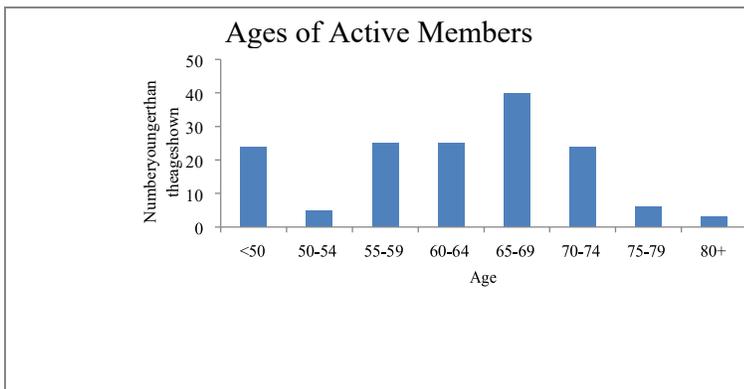
233 Contacts in our data base  
This includes Lapsed members who may rejoin for a trip next year.



Word of mouth continues to be our greatest recruiting tool.



38% Typical percent of new members that join for only one year.



60.7	Average age (includes adult children)
64	Median age (50% older, 50% younger)

# RECIPE

*Just in time for Easter*

## *HARD BOILED EGGS*

- *Fill a 4 quart pot with 2 quarts of water and bring to a boil.*
- *Gently place a dozen (12) eggs into the water.*
- *Boil for 7-13 minutes (shorter time for a softer yolk).*
- *Let cool in refrigerator.*
- *Crack shell and peel.*
- *Enjoy 😊*

**What can you find in the middle of April and March but not at the beginning or end of either?**

The letter R!

## **Snowdrifters' Calendar**

04/17/22 - Happy Easter!  
04/19/22 - Board and General Meeting  
05/15/22 - Year End Party

**Fox Valley Snowdrifters**  
**P.O. Box 697**  
**Batavia, IL 60510**