

THE FLAKEY NEWS

Publication of the Fox Valley Snowdrifters

April showers bring May flowers, 2024



PRESIDENT:

John Walsh
630-777-9008

irwxplor@sbcglobal.net

VICE PRESIDENT:

Michelle Baker Etherton
630-777-8549

Carey_Michelle@live.com

TREASURER:

Laurel Davis
630-476-6896

laurelmdavis@comcast.net

SECRETARY:

Donna Ulatowski
630-279-1049

dulatowski@comcast.net

PAST PRESIDENT:

Greg Olson
312-520-5283

olsongregv@gmail.com

CMSC

Leo Ahasic
630-309-8885

bahasic@sbcglobal.net

MEMBERSHIP:

Cathleen Downs McDonald
Cathleendowns1@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER:

Joe & Dana Hopp
Jhopp23@hotmail.com

SOCIAL:

Maureen Joy
mojov@comcast.net

TRIPS

John Gamble
630-761-9550

john@johngamble.net

TRIPS & INS AGENT:

Frank Hodowal
630-584-0868
fhod@aol.com

WEBSITE:

Chuck Salisbury
2597fhd@comcast.net

[Fox Valley Snowdrifters](#)
P.O. Box 697
Batavia, IL 60510

Hello Snowdrifters,

We wrapped up another successful ski season with the completion of our ski trips to Big White Canada and Lake Placid. The season had some unusual weather patterns with a slow start for snow fall and then the late winter/early spring dumps of snow for many resorts. The Midwest was challenged with unseasonably mild temperatures and very low snowfall.

Many thanks to our Trip Coordinators and Trip Leaders for volunteering their time and efforts to plan out the trips and leading the groups out to the mountains for our skiing and social adventures. The Trip Reports were a testament to the adventure and fun enjoyed by all.

We have also kicked off our plan for the 2025 ski season. We did evaluate a trip to New Zealand/Australia in September, 2024 but have decided to postpone this trip to Fall 2025 or 2026 to allow more time to plan and promote a unique destination trip such as this. For 2025, we have initiated a proposal for Snowmass (with Aspen nearby) and continue planning for a February trip with Sanctuary Ski Club to Japan. We are also evaluating other leading destinations for the US West and Midwest, Canada, and Europe. The industry ski passes for next season continue their uphill climb in price.

In late February, our long-term monthly meeting venue, the Old Towne Pub in Geneva, unexpectedly closed for business leaving us with the urgent need to search for and evaluate new meeting venues. In support of this, we have scheduled some trial meetings. We met at Sturdy Shelter in Batavia on March 25th and plan to be at Pal Joey's in Batavia on Tuesday, April 16th. We appreciate your patience as we evaluate meeting venues.

We have several upcoming social events and meetups planned. This includes the Northern Illinois Food Bank 5K Walk/Run on April 27th, our End of the Year Party at Hawthorne's Backyard Bar & Grill in West Chicago on May 19th, our first Golf Scramble on June 30th, and the Swedish Days bike ride on July 7th.

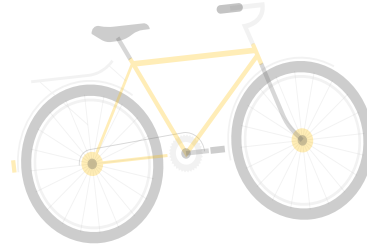
We are in the process of updating our Club policies to ensure compliance with current industry and legal trends. These policies will be posted on our website when completed.

The success of our Club is highly dependent on our volunteers for the Board and Executive Committee Chairs, our Trip Leaders and Assistant Trip Leaders, and our

Event Leaders. Volunteering gives in many ways by providing a service to the Club and many benefits for the volunteer such as a sense of purpose and accomplishment, engagement in their individual passions, building relationships, using their skills/experience and perspective to further the Club's mission, and a priority status for trip signups. **We currently have open positions for Executive Committee Chairs for Membership and Social Media and need Trip Leaders for planned 2025 ski trips.**

Enjoy the Spring season!

John Walsh
President



Trip Coordinators' Corner:



As I started to write this note up, I was getting ready for our last ski trip of the year to Lake Placid but now that trip is over. It has been an interesting year with a variety of snow conditions - lots of snow in some resorts and complete lack of snow in the Midwest including UP Michigan. Snow reliability may be a factor for our future trip planning.

We want to thank everyone who attended our February trip leader planning meeting and especially to Cathy and Brad for hosting. It was decided that this Fall is too soon for the Australia and New Zealand trip so that will be postponed until 2025. Some of the trips for next year are still tentative, but it was decided that Snowmass for January and possibly Historic Durango, Colorado (with skiing at Wolf Creek Pass & Purgatory), Japan will be in mid-February, and Europe trip hopefully early March. Additionally, we are working on Canada, possibly Silver Star, Kicking Horse, or Sun Peaks, and a potential trip to Lake Tahoe. This is the trip list we are providing for vendor proposals, but this can change completely when the bidding process starts due to availability, pricing, etc. Many times, as we start the process, the vendor may identify a trip that might be a good fit at a reasonable price that we never thought of.

We are still looking for trip leaders for next year as the planning process continues. If you are interested, please contact John or Frank. We would like to get our trip leaders involved in the planning process as soon as possible. We are hoping to have our next planning trip planning meeting sometime in April. Also, if you are interested, the CMSC trip vendor seminar is on May 18th at the Sheraton Hotel in Rosemont.

We look forward to your involvement and input and hope to have more details on the trips as the spring and early summer unfolds.

John & Frank

Cal's Angels

Anna Culver, Director of Development, of Cal's Angels presented at the March general meeting. Anna explained Cal's Angels' mission, the services and support they provide for families of children that are fighting cancer. Cal's Angels is a 501(c)(3) pediatric cancer foundation with a mission of granting wishes, raising awareness, and funding research to help kids fighting cancer. Because they have lived the battle with pediatric cancer, they understand what these families are going through. The help that they provide these families through their programs is a great resource when families need it the most.

See Cal's Angels link below to learn more about their organization and ways you can donate or volunteer.

www.calsangels.org



Anna Culver, Director of Development, for Cal's Angels presents at the Snowdrifters' March General meeting



Via



All Aboard for Adventure! Snowdrifters Take Epic Train Trip and Tame Winter Park!

Forget those newfangled airplanes! A group of adventurous Snowdrifters embarked on a nostalgic journey this past February, trading air travel for the romance of the rails! Our destination: Winter Park, Colorado, for a week of snowy slopes and mountain fun.

Forgotten are the days of crowded airports and security lines. Our Snowdrifters simply tossed their skis and bags aboard the baggage car, settled into plush, reclining seats with ample legroom, and waved goodbye to the hustle and bustle. The journey unfolded like a classic travelogue - peaceful chats with fellow passengers, scenic vistas rolling by, and plenty of time to unwind with a deck of cards.



But this wasn't your average train ride! A mysterious conductor named California "Cal" Zephyr had a surprise in store. Each Snowdrifter received a curious package containing relics from the "golden age" of railroads, setting us off on a playful historical scavenger hunt throughout the journey.

While some found the gentle rocking of the train a touch bothersome, it paled in comparison to the horror stories of airplane turbulence. Arriving in Fraser/Winter Park, the Snowdrifters were whisked off the train with their bags in under 10 minutes! No long waits, no lost luggage - just a warm welcome from Matt, our Winter Park representative.





After a quick orientation and grabbing our lift tickets, the group scattered like excited children. Some explored the charming town via the "The Lift" bus, while others embarked on a quest for the perfect plate of tater tots. The evening saw an impromptu party in the hotel lounge, with stories exchanged and laughter echoing through the halls.

Monday offered a mountain tour with Matt for the adventurous, while others carved their

own path. But Tuesday brought the real prize - a fresh blanket of four inches of powder snow! Visibility might have been low, and temperatures dipped, but for skiers and snowboarders, it was pure bliss.



However, not all adventures run smoothly. After a day of carving up the slopes, a group of Snowdrifters encountered a slight hiccup



with the "The Lift" bus system. Turns out, the Black Line schedule wasn't quite as advertised, leaving them shivering with their backs against the snowy wind. Luckily, a resourceful member managed to flag down an off duty departing bus, saving the day (and their noses!).

Wednesday brought clear skies and a crisp start. While strong winds kept the peak closed for most of the day, the Snowdrifters reveled in the perfectly groomed blue slopes, free from the usual weekend crowds. And for those seeking a different kind of thrill, the hotel's tubing hill proved to be a hit.



The week featured a celebratory pizza and potluck, complete with birthday wishes for Hank and Gail.

Thursday saw another bluebird day, and this time, the peak was conquered by a larger group, enjoying the breathtaking views and challenging descents.

With a final dip in the hot tub and a bittersweet wave goodbye, the Snowdrifters gathered for a farewell dinner at Randi's Irish Pub. There, a sealed envelope was opened and Cal's game came to a close with the announcement of the Zephyr Game winners. Randi's Pub sent us all off in style with a delicious meal, warm hospitality, and even a parting gift of wine to savor memories of our adventure.



Friday saw us head home, enjoying the clear roads and skies with minimal traffic. Sure, the return flight might have been quicker, but as we squeezed into our cramped seats, the Snowdrifters couldn't help but reminisce about the relaxed elegance of our train journey. After all, sometimes, the destination is only part of the adventure!



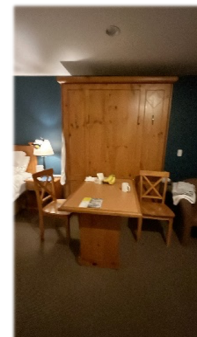
Mike and Hank

*APRIL SHOWERS
BRING
MAY FLOWERS!*

BIG WHITE TRIP REPORT March 7 - 12, 2024



Twenty-three Snowdrifters (including Tom T. and Denise B. from Austin) woke up very early for our Alaska Airlines 6:15 am flight to Seattle where John A. (Denver) joined us for our connecting flight to Kelowna BC. In Kelowna, we went through passport control with a few glitches, but all got through! After a grocery store/liquor stop in Kelowna, we continued on the bus for a 45-minute drive to Big White where we were welcomed by a “bluebird day” (one of few we saw). Arriving at the Inn at Big White, our check-in and luggage portage went smoothly. We also received our lift tickets. All seemed satisfied with their accommodations that included a microwave oven, induction hot plate, refrigerator, and utensils - no complaints! Our rooms included a Queen bed and a Queen Murphy bed that converted into a table when not in use providing extra space.



In the evening, we rode a gondola for our après party at the Happy Valley Lodge where we were greeted by representatives from Big White that provided us with an overview of the resort and answered our questions. Afterwards, we enjoyed the great assortment of hors d'oeuvres and drinks - no one left hungry and the staff took home the remaining leftovers.

Some of us continued to party while others went back to the hotel to enjoy a good night of rest and get ready for skiing the next morning.

On our first day skiing had us all looking for the easiest access from the hotel to the ski trails. Our hotel was not exactly ski-out/ski-in, but just a short walk or navigate a narrow icy trail to skiing. We had an assortment of weather conditions - snowy, foggy, and clear. A few early mornings, we woke up what is call a "Big White-Out" a heavy fog or also called a low-level cloud which makes skiing a little tough. This generally clears up during the late morning.



Overall Big White was a great ski destination, a good mix of Green, Blue, and Black runs without long lift lines. On the mountain, we encountered "Snow Ghosts" which are formed on trees by the winds, clouds and fog that blanket the ridge tops.



Big White had a decent selection of bars and restaurants with reasonable prices compared to other ski resorts (on top of that, we benefited with a 25% discount due to the dollar exchange rate). On Sunday afternoon, a group of us attended the Happy Hour in our hotel's Mexican restaurant. The merriment continued to the deck where a few of us partook in enjoying ski shots. We continued to party and dance with our newly acquainted Aussie and Swedish friends.

Heather and Aeko were particularly popular with their dancing. The party continued to Snowshoe Sam's where we joined another group of Snowdrifters having a great time.



Our last day was a perfect day for skiing, it was great snow, and great weather. In the late afternoon, we met at the Four Aces Bar and Smokehouse for an après ski party that included an assortment of smokehouse menu items and beverages to match. We were even able to get a vegetarian chicken for Denise B. We also, took our trip photo outside Four Aces, what a great group of friends!



That evening we met in the hotel's Rec Room for a Ping-Pong tournament and to have farewell left-over food & drink party.

For the five-day trip to Big White we had a great time, good skiing and parties, and many of us wish to make a return trip there again. Overall, it was an enjoyable ski resort with friendly people and moderate prices. Best of all, no ski injuries!

Traveling back home, our hotel bus pick-up was at 10:30 am. We had a long layover in Seattle and our flight back home arrived past midnight. Since our luggage for Alaska Airlines was delayed over 20 minutes, most of us took advantage of their \$25 airline delay baggage credit. After a long travel day, we took our waiting bus from the airport to the fairground car parking and arrived around 1:30 am.

Thanks to all you who made Big White a wonderful trip!

Frank, Paul, & Mark

Mt. Bachelor '24



Joe, Marie & Stan

Lake Placid Ski Trip March 19-24, 2024

Olympic Extravaganza!



Nine Snowdrifters carpooled or got a lift to O'Hare and then flew on to Burlington, VT. There we rented two cars to get to Lake Placid. We were definitely a cozy bunch in the cars with skis and luggage, but travel was smooth and the area is absolutely gorgeous!

Arrival and check in at the Grand Adirondack Hotel was simple, all rooms were ready, and we were pleasantly surprised at the suites we all had on the 6th floor. There was a great onsite bar (music on the weekend) and restaurant.

While the purpose of the trip, of course, was skiing (more on that later) we all took advantage of taking in the Olympic sites. Two Winter Olympics, 1932 and 1980, took place in Lake Placid. Our first foray into the Olympic sites was to the famous ice arena where the 1980 USA Men's Hockey took the gold – the "Miracle on Ice." We were able to visit the locker room where the USA team and Coach Herb Brooks rallied. The ice rink itself is small – the arena only seats about 7,000. But with the players' names and the retired jerseys of players from that team who have passed prominently displayed around the rink one could feel the history.



We then went to the smaller rink in the arena and learned how to curl. Our 'coach', Charlie, works for the Olympic Regional Development Authority and gave us a lesson on how to slide the stone, sweep offensively and defensively, and how to score. We divided up into 2 teams and had a blast!





We enjoyed four days of skiing, Whiteface was much larger and more challenging than any of us expected. We had two powder days and the first day was a bluebird day. There is 3,200 ft. of vertical which is a nice long run from top to bottom. Some of the highlights of the skiing along with lots of laughs are: found a great 2 1/2-mile blue run with views into Vermont and Lake Champlain (although the first time we skied we couldn't see all that) and found a cool warming house and Adirondack chairs after a little hike that had a commanding view of the view of the

mountain. One day rode up the gondola with this person who seemed to know the mountain very well, he seemed nice enough and on the last day while we were leaving he walked up to us and asked how we liked the mountain, turned out he was the General Manager. I think everyone enjoyed the skiing the mountain even though some of it was a bit challenging. More snow came as we left and lots of extreme terrain opened as we left.





Our second Olympic site was back to the ice arena to take in 2 ECAC playoff hockey. We watched St. Lawrence University, Quinnipiac, Dartmouth, and Cornell vie for a spot in the finals. Prior to the games many of us toured the Olympic Museum. Lots of memorabilia from the 2 Olympics – including uniforms, torches, posters. Really a treasure of our Olympic history.

Next, we went to the Olympic Ski Jump Complex. Due to a recent early thaw, there was no jumping. But we could ride a gondola to the top of the hill and then take an elevator up to the top of the jump. Definitely not a spot for those with acrophobia! The view of the entire valley was amazing.



The final

site was to the Mt. Van Hovenberg Olympic Bobsled Run. While there we were fortunate enough to be up close to watch several World Cup Men's & Women's runs! After each run the track is swept and blown and tended so that each run has pristine ice!





When our Sunday travel day rolled around we decided to visit the Paul Smith VIC to enjoy their maple themed all-you-can-eat breakfast. Not only was the breakfast delicious but the view was incomparable! We even got to tour a Sugar Shack on the property.

Quite a memorable trip!

Maureen Joy and John Gamble

?????April geography quiz?????

Do you know where Monkey Face is located?



From our Webmaster – Chuck Salisbury “Official Excel Geek of the Snowdrifters Ski Club”

Snowdrifters Ski Club profile

Here is the profile of our ski club for the 2023-2024 ski season.

232 Total contacts in our data base

167 Active members
This is down from 174 members last year

17 of our active members identify themselves as non-skiers.
(They often join to go on the European trips.)

60 Contacts have let their membership lapse, but we hope they rejoin us for a trip next year.

We have active members in the following states:

California	Colorado	Illinois
Indiana	Michigan	Minnesota
Missouri	Montana	New Mexico
New York	Ohio	Texas
Utah	Wisconsin	

How did you hear about us?

Source	Count
Internet search	20
From a friend	120
MeetUp.com	5
Newspaper item	10
No response	15

Word of mouth continues to be our greatest recruiting tool.

Membership

Year	Number of members	New members
2017	110	20
2018	140	50
2019	130	25
2020	135	25
2021	160	45
2022	175	25
2023	170	20

Membership has been growing recently.

Ages of Active Members

Age Group	Number of members
<50	25
50-54	5
55-59	22
60-64	18
65-69	48
70-74	30
75-79	10
80+	5

62.5 Average age (includes adult children)

Member Longevity

Consecutive years of membership	Number of Members
1	18
2	13
3	27
4	17
5	9
6	15
7	9
8	5
9	10
10	9
11	3
12	28

35% percent of members joined the club in the last 3 years

Recently implemented data privacy laws in parts of the United States as well as Canada and Europe require that organizations which collect personal information or process credit card payments from their members, customers, or website visitors must have both a privacy policy and cookie policy for their website.

Coming up in late March, Wild Apricot will be updating the check-out process for *all transactions* made through our Wild Apricot website. As a part of the updates, purchasers will be prompted to review and accept our organization’s policies, like [Privacy policy](#), [Refund policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#). We have no further details about when this new process will be rolled-out and which policies are actually required.

To assist us in creating these policies, Wild Apricot has directed us to a third-party service named Termly. We have had a refund policy in place for years

that people acknowledge when signing our liability waiver. The security policy noted on the example check-out screen above is covered by Wild Apricot. You can find our new privacy, cookie, and terms of service policies in the “Website policies” link on the home page of our web site. As these documents are new, please look through them and let the board know if you have any concerns. Note that some of the policies link to the Termly web site. These policy links will be implemented consistently once we learn more about how Wild Apricot expects these policies to be used.

The screenshot shows a checkout page for SF Yacht Club. It includes a credit card payment section with fields for cardholder name, credit card number, expiration date, and CVV. There are also fields for billing information like address, city, country, state/province, and phone number. A summary box on the right shows an invoice number, membership application level, total tax, and total amount. A checkbox for agreeing to the privacy policy, refund policy, security policy, and terms of service is highlighted with a red box. The page also includes a 'Pay \$1.10 (USD)' button and a 'Cancel' button.

Chuck

Website

Snowdrifters' Social Happenings

◆ April 27 – Northern Illinois Fun Run/Walk

Many Snowdrifters volunteer weekly at the Northern Illinois Food Bank. If you would like to help our neighbors overcome food insecurity here is another opportunity to support NIFB.

On Saturday, April 27, 2024, there will be a Fight Hunger 5k Run Walk + Fun Run in the Oak Brook Reserves. Join Snowdrifters who will walk/run/volunteer. We have a Snowdrifters Team headed by John Gamble. Michelle, Mo, Kathleen and Heather have signed up as well.

Sign up here: <https://runsignup.com/Race/IL/OakBrook/FightHunger>

If this is not your cup of tea, the team would LOVE your financial support in reaching our goal. You can donate to the Snowdrifters' team here:

<https://runsignup.com/Race/121299/Donate/lghnbf6ZcuEFk0MZ>

◆ May 19 – End of Year Party – see the flyer in newsletter

◆ May 31 – Heart and Soul Craft Brew Walk supporting Cal's Angels

Tickets can be purchased at <https://www.heartandsoufd.org/>

◆ June 30 – Snowdrifters' Golf Scramble

Register at <https://fvssc.wildapricot.org/event-5657869>



Snowdrifters' End of the Year Party

Sunday, May 19, 2024

2:00 – 7:00 PM



1200 W. Hawthorne Ln., West Chicago, IL 60185

Pig Roast, Quarter BBQ Chicken, Coleslaw, Mac & Cheese,
Baked Beans, Sliced Buns, and BBQ Sauce.

2 Beverages

\$25 per person

We have reserved the Back-Yard Tent.

Whiffle Ball fields, Bags, and Lawn Pong Available

Pickleballers –

If you wish to play contact Gail Daley gaildaley@comcast.net

She is setting up court times.

Registration ends May 3rd. Register and pay online

<https://fvssc.wildapricot.org/event-5656733>

**We will be collecting gift cards to donate to Cal's Angels.
If you wish to donate bring a gift card from a gas station,
grocery store, Target, Wal-Mart, Starbucks. Any amount is
welcomed.**

Questions? mojoy@comcast.net



54th ANNUAL
SWEDISH DAYS RIDE

FOX VALLEY BICYCLE & SKI CLUB • FVBSC.ORG

The Fox Valley Bicycle & Ski Club's premier recreational bike tour featuring quiet, scenic, paved roads through rural Kane, Kendall and DeKalb counties.

SUNDAY, JULY 7, 2024

Harter Middle School, Sugar Grove, IL

Featuring 12 • 28 • 51 • 73 • 103 • 133 mile routes
(or mix & match loops to create your own distance)

Fully supported with SAG and indoor rest stop

www.fvbsc.org



SUPPORTING:



projectmobility
Changing lives one bike at a time

easterseals
DuPage & Fox Valley

Swedish Days Ride 2024 REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

Sign up early for the best prices!

APR 1-MAY 31

- \$45 for single rider
- \$60 for couples/family*

JUN 1-JUL 5

- \$55 for single rider
- \$70 for couples/family*

JUL 6-JUL 7

- \$65 for single rider
- \$80 for couples/family*

**Family consists of up to two adults and children under 16*

See you on July 7th!

Maureen Joy

Social



Snowdrifters' Calendar

April 16th

Board Meeting @ 6:30 PM
General Meeting @ 7:30 PM
Pal Joey's in Batavia

April 27th

NIFB Fun Run/walk

May 19th

End of Year Party
Hawthorne's Backyard
1200 W. Hawthorne Ln, West Chicago

May 31st

Heart & Soul Craft Brew Walk

June 30th

Snowdrifters' Summer Scramble



Monkey Face is located at Smith Rock State Park in Oregon. Monkey Face is a towering 350 foot pillar that overhangs on all sides. And it looks like a giant monkey. Monkey Face is an icon of Smith Rock State Park to all who see or climb it.

Fox Valley Snowdrifters

P.O. Box 697

Batavia, IL 60510