

# The Flakey News

Publication of the Fox Valley  
Snowdrifters Ski Club



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## “Flakes” from the Ski-EO

What a way to start off the upcoming year with the fabulous year-end party we had at the Fireside Grill! We had over 60 Snowdrifters there to celebrate this last year and welcome in the new Board of Directors. Kudos to Tom Quetsch, Chuck Salisbury and Donna Buchholtz for a great last year and to Frank Hodowal and Michelle Kinzler for all their hard work and the spectacular trips they organized these past years. Thanks to all our committee members for all their endless efforts. Welcome to all the new board members: John Gamble, Vice President; John Walsh, Treasurer; and Gwen Bosshardt, SKIsecretary.

My dad, Leo, who many fondly remember was a “Beacon” for the club for thirty years going on many of the trips every year. My dad wasn’t able to ski anymore when Joe Hopp and I joined the club in 2006. Every time Joe and I talked to my dad about the trips and where we were going, he would light up and tell us places to go and what to do while we were there. He had excellent recall and his recommendations were always right on.

Over the years we have added family members, friends, acquaintances and people we’ve met on overseas trips as members of our club. The trips, the places, the people on the trips and the price points all make our club the best value ever.

Let’s all work on bringing in new members. Let’s be “Beacons” for our great club. Whenever in conversation with someone, start with “Do you ski?” You’d be surprised at their responses. Just tell your story about our club and your experiences. This is another easy way to grow our vibrant membership.

Don’t miss out on the May 15<sup>th</sup> meeting to go over the France trip in January and the Midwest trip to Granite Peak in Wausau, WI. By then we hope to have some solid info on the February and March trips, somewhere great I’m sure.

Your PreSKIdent,  
Leo



# **MEMBER'S CORNER**

Let's congratulate our new Snowdrifter Board!! Be sure to come to the first Leo meeting on May 15<sup>th</sup>.

The following are our new board members:

- Gwenn Bosshardt Secretary
- John Walsh Treasurer
- John Gamble Vice President
- Leo Ahasic President

Tom Quetsch will be the immediate Past President and will fill those duties as described in our by-laws.

**There may be open committee chair positions, trip leader positions and assistant trip leader positions that Snowdrifters will need to fill. Please be open to volunteering, if asked, or if there is a position you have the skill set for please let the current committee chair know. It takes everyone to assist in some way to keep our club as vibrant as it is today.**

Joe

## **SNOWDRIFTERS' 2018 TRIPS**

We have been receiving trip quotes for the upcoming ski season and are close to establishing our final western ski trip destinations. We have already signed a contract for our January European trip to Moztine and Nice Franch - trip details are in the newsletter. For February, we are looking for a short trip to Crested Butte, Colorado (a first time club ski destination) and for March we are close to confirming a weeklong trip (March 10-17) to Sun Peaks, BC Canada (another first time club ski destination). Once we have confirmed all our destination trips, we will schedule a date for our bus trip (tentatively a weekend trip in February to Granite Peak in Wausau Wisconsin). At our May ski meeting, we hope to have information on all our trips and have details ready for the June newsletter.

**We plan to put all trips on sale at our June 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. Remember, you have to be a current paid-up club member to sign up for trips.**

One thing that we have experienced is that air fares have substantially increased for some ski destinations. We were hoping to book a short ski trip to Jackson Hole and a weeklong trip to Big Sky. However, the cost proposals for these two trips with airfare were not cost effective.

***We are in need of trip leaders for our February and March trips, please help us out and volunteer to be a trip leader.***

Trip Coordinator

*Frank H*

# **TRIP INFORMATION**

## **Snowdrifters trip pricing**

The most significant components of the price of our trips are the airfare and the lodging. The cost of airfare in particular has increased in recent years. The trip coordinator works with a vendor (for domestic trips it is typically Winter Ski and Sport) to choose a destination, transportation, and lodging that meets our club's expectations for quality and cost. Factors we consider include:

- ❖ Destination resort: Member preferences, special opportunities or pricing, time since last visit
- ❖ Lodging: condo or hotel, distance to slopes, quality of accommodation, local transportation
- ❖ Transportation: airline used, connections, flight schedule, bus transportation at the destination

The trip coordinator selects trips based on the vendor's ability to meet our requirements. The vendor then provides a contract that provides per person costs for lodging, airfare, and lift tickets. These costs are all based on group rates for the requested number of participants. In some cases an airline or resort will offer a complementary ticket for a sufficiently large number of participants. Ground transportation at the destination is also included in the contract, normally as a cost per bus trip rather than a per person cost.

To the contract price, the trip coordinator adds costs for a number of other items:

- ❖ Ground transportation to O'Hare
- ❖ Bus driver tips
- ❖ Group dinner / pizza party / "meet and greet"
- ❖ Miscellaneous trip expenses

Again, the bus related costs are per trip, not per person. The final pricing must account for the possibility that the trip will not sell out and the per-trip costs must be borne by fewer than the targeted number of participants.

If the group size exceeds expectations or we meet our "comp" targets, the club often has money for additional trip events (pizza, après ski, resort gift cards, et.al.) The converse holds if the expected number of participants is fewer than planned. This was often the case just three or four years ago and led to us using more conservative assumptions in pricing current trips. When trip sales are finalized, the trip budget is re-evaluated and the trip leader adjusts the off-slope activities accordingly.

For international trips, a vendor may include terms that are affected by the monetary exchange rate.

In the end, the result is a price for a trip that begins and ends at the Kane County Fairgrounds for a skier that brings his/her own skis. To provide reasonable pricing for non-skiers and remote members, the club offers three price levels:

- ❖ Lodging, Transportation, and Lift tickets (for skiers)
- ❖ Lodging and Transportation (for non-skiers)
- ❖ Lodging and Lift tickets (for remote club members)

Continued on next page

For some club members, these pricing options do not exactly match the services they actually use. Specifically, our pricing options do not separate out the use of ground transportation and they do not separate out lift ticket prices based on age.

The issue with ground transportation is that our costs are per trip, not per person. We do not know up- front how many people will take the bus either to O'Hare or at the destination, since that depends on where people that go on the trip live and the details of their travel plans. To adjust for your actual use of transportation services, we would need to add at least three pricing levels (both ends, destination end, neither). Actual prices would depend on who signs up and what their travel plans are. These could change when, for example, the airline schedule changes.

For lift tickets, our experience has been that in the majority of cases senior discounts are not substantial enough to warrant the additional bookkeeping of adding more pricing levels. While the contract from the vendor does not offer group rates for different age ranges, the price the club pays for group lift tickets is normally well below window prices, even for seniors. For example, our group rate at Steamboat was \$65 per day compared to over \$100 at the window for a regular adult ticket. However, in some cases it may make sense for a senior to sign up as a non-skier and purchase tickets at the window for the senior rate and possibly for a reduced number of ski days. When the trip roster is finalized, we do work with the vendor to get the discounted rates. The savings from any reductions are funneled back into the trip budget to be used for group activities.

The board views pricing transportation and lift tickets individually as adding unnecessary complexity to the job of pricing trips. We do not see other ski clubs doing differential pricing and believe that our pricing, based on group rates, represents a great value even with these simplifications.

### **Trip cancellation policy**

In essence, our cancellation policy is that all money that is refunded to the club is in turn refunded to the member. The actual amount will vary depending on how far in advance the cancellation is made. In some cases we are able to avoid additional costs when there is someone on the trip waiting list. Prior to joining a trip, everyone signs an acknowledgement of our cancellation policy. If you would like to be reminded of the details, the form is available on our web site at [http://fvssc.wildapricot.org/Resources/Trip%20forms/Liability\\_and\\_refund\\_forms.pdf](http://fvssc.wildapricot.org/Resources/Trip%20forms/Liability_and_refund_forms.pdf) .

### **Online payments**

People have also asked about making payments online. We have investigated this and determined that the club would incur service charges to provide this capability. There are various online payment options requiring either a flat fee or a per transaction fee. Potentially this would become an additional factor to consider in pricing (e.g. a credit price and a cash/check price). Anyone who would like to investigate this topic further is invited to step forward.

# *Morzine & Nice France Ski Trip, 10 Day - \$2175*

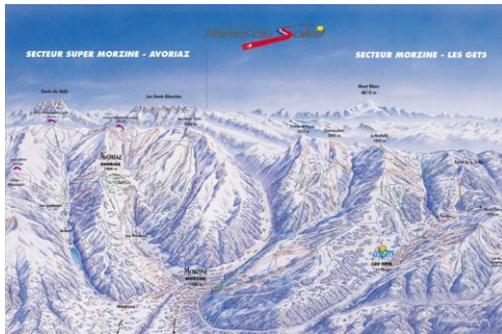


*January 12 - January 23, 2018*

Come join the Snowdrifters on January 12, 2018. We will follow the sun and snow to the winter wonderland in the heart of the Portes du Soleil, Morzine, France. It is the largest town of all the “Portes du Soleil” resorts. On January 20<sup>th</sup>. We will follow the sun for a three night extension to Nice, the heart and soul of the French Riviera. This is our crème-de-la-crème trip next season.



This unique ski area interconnects 12 resorts in France and Switzerland, passing from villages of Savoie to the landscapes of the Valais; one lift ticket does it all (no supplements for cross-border skiing and riding). Loosely translated, “Portes du Soleil” means “gateway to the sun”, and the vibrant Rhone Alps town of Morzine is the main portal to this incredibly large ski circus. Via its state of the art modern lift and piste connection with adjacent Avoriaz, Morzine accesses 214 lifts and 435 miles of pistes linking over a dozen villages in two countries. It just doesn’t get much grander than that!



Variety is the spice of skiing and the choices are many on the slopes of the Portes du Soleil. Skiers and riders wake up in the morning to difficult choices. Head west and you’ll find yourself in the stylish part of the Portes du Soleil resort Morzine-Les Gets, head east, and you’ll find yourself skiing across the border to the Swiss part of the resort - Champéry, Les Crosets and

Champoussin. Take the ski lifts from the center of Morzine to the adjacent valley of Ardent and Les Lindarets. This section, also accessible by shuttle bus, is aptly named “Super” Morzine-Avoriaz. There, you can break for lunch at “La Chalande,” an old converted farmhouse where the cuisine is matched only by the charm of the décor. Your lunch choices on the mountain are abundant. Frankly, it’s impossible to make a bad ski decision in Morzine.

All the Portes du Soleil resorts share the marvelous terrain. Beginners (30%) can stick close to the resorts and intermediates (30%) won’t have a problem if they stay on the trails, while both the extensive off-piste skiing and the exhausting expanse will stretch experts (40%). The terrain at Portes du Soleil stretches over an area so wide that it defies simple definition. Busy beginner slopes drape down the mountainsides on the fringes of Morzine and other nearby villages. Long boulevards wind through shaded forests as they drop thousands of vertical feet from high ridges into deep valleys. Piste markers define groomed routes down vast snowfields above the timberline. And from the mountaintops, the panorama starring the Mont Blanc massif, western Europe’s highest peak, is displayed like a rack of postcards—each a little different from the others, but all unique.

While in Morzine, our hotel is **Hotel Fleur des Neiges** located in the heart of the village and is family owned. The hotel is located 300 meters away from the Super Morzine lift and allows you to be on the Morzine-Avoriaz ski slopes quickly. Hotel Fleur des Neiges features a cozy lounge, a charming restaurant featuring a menu combining local traditions and culture, as well as spa, sauna, gym, heated swimming-pool and game room. Of course, there is the hotel bar with music.

Morzine Après ski is exciting with many tropical bars and discos to choose from or you may enjoy a hockey game or figure skating exhibition at the Ice Palace. There is also cross-country skiing, dog sledding and ice climbing. Ski Morzine and discover an authentic alpine Savoyard village offering many activities for nonskiers alike: skating, hiking, shopping, guided tours of historical Morzine, guided tours with snowshoes around Morzine and sleigh rides. Morzine is close to Geneva, Annecy, Montreux, Lake Geneva and many other points of interest for day trips and activities.

**3 Night extension to Nice, the heart and soul of the French Riviera**

Nice is located in the heart of the French Riviera. There are too many things to do. You can relax on the beach, or daily excursions can include a visit to a traditional village bistro, visit local open air markets, medieval villages, and explore Roman ruins, monuments, and museums. Nice is considered the crown jewel of the French Riviera. Cannes, about 20 miles while Monte Carlo is 13 miles away...easily reached by local transit! You can visit the ancient town of Antibes where the Alps loom in the background from a harbor filled with fishing boats and big yachts. Moreover, Nimes is home to some of the greatest Roman ruins such as the Pont du Gard, an aqueduct that is over 34 miles long. This engineering feat, built by the Romans in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, was part of a 50-meter long aqueduct that carried waters from Uzes to Nimes. You will also have the opportunity to visit the Picasso museum, the Popes' Palace, the greatest Gothic palace in Europe, the Saint Benezet Bridge, a UNESCO world Heritage monument, or the changing of the guard at the Royal Palace in Monaco which is a colorful daily ceremony. Did I forget to mention the many wineries that one has the opportunity to visit, such as Chateauneuf du Pape?

Our Nice hotel is the **Westminster Hotel & Spa**, a 1 minute walk from the beach on the Promenade des Anglais. The hotel features a spa, private beach and seafront terrace. The hotel is decorated in a Belle Epoque style and offers both a bar and lounge areas.



**Full Package Cost: \$2,175\***

**Lufthansa Air fare Chicago to Geneva - Nice to Chicago**

✚ LH 431 12 JAN ORDFRA*	415P 725A +1
✚ LH1214 13JAN FRAGVA	905A 1015A
✚ LH1069 23JAN NCEFRA	705A 845A
✚ LH 430 23JAN FRAORD	1040A 110P

- Ground Transfer from Geneva to Morzine
- 7 nights lodging at Hotel Fleur des Neiges (double occupancy) Breakfast and dinner daily (<http://www.hotel-fleur-des-neiges.com/>)
- Ground Transfer from Morzine to Nice
- 3 nights with breakfast 4-star Westminster Hotel & Spa (double occupancy) (<http://www.westminster-nice.com/en/>)
- (Option: Nice Sea View Room \$70/person extra)
- (Morzine/Nice Single Supplement \$590)

**Payment Schedule (per person):**

- Deposit \$350
- July \$350
- August \$350
- September \$350
- October \$350
- November \$350
- December Balance Due

\* NOTE: All taxes that are currently in effect, including airline taxes are included in the price. Please note any additional airline tax or fuel surcharge imposed before our final ticketing is beyond our control and will require an adjustment in the final price. Any fuel surcharge imposed on our ground transfers is also beyond our control and will require an adjustment. Also, currency exchange rate fluctuations may affect final payment.

A passport is required for this trip and your passport must not expire 6 months past our return to the USA.

**TRIP LEADERS:**

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- ❖ Joe Hopp: [jhopp23@hotmail.com](mailto:jhopp23@hotmail.com) (630-918-0130)
- ❖ Leo Ahasic: [bahasic@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bahasic@sbcglobal.net) (603-309-8885)

# SOCIAL

New and Coming Soon !!!!

## **Snowdrifters' Dinner Club**

Do you want to eat some great food and also get to know your fellow Snowdrifters on a more personal level? Why not join our new "**Snowdrifters' Dinner Club?**"

Here is how it will work:

- We will meet three to four times per year (July, October, February, and May, for example).
- We will have eight people in each dinner group. At every dinner, you will have dinner with six or seven new people. The groups will change every time.
- The theme will be determined by the committee for each month. There will be a host for each group and the host will contact his dinner guests to arrange a night for the dinner. The date should fall within a four to five week period after the announcement for the themed dinner. (Saturday or Sunday afternoons or evenings can work.)
- The host will provide the main course and possibly the side, one pair of guests will bring the appetizers and one pair will bring the dessert. Each group will decide how they will handle the food assignments and beverages.
- I will be asking for ideas on themes in the coming

We can do this with 24-32 people or more. If we have groups of eight people, we will need only four hosts per monthly event. If you do not want to be a host, that is fine. the themed dinner, we can share recipes and recap our experiences at our next club meeting. This can be a good new members, or members who do not go on many trips, to meet people from our club on a more personal level than at our meetings.

Interested people, please email Michele Kinzler [gbmkinz@gmail.com](mailto:gbmkinz@gmail.com). Please include name, phone number, email, and whether you can be a host for a dinner.

Any ideas are welcome!

**Hope to see you at dinner soon.**  
**Michele**



weeks.

four

After

way for

If you have a suggestion for a fun activity, please email me at [quetsch@sbcglobal.net](mailto:quetsch@sbcglobal.net)

*Pat Quetsch*

Social Director

# Snowdrifters' Calendar

## SAVE THE DATES

**May 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Board Meeting 6:45 p.m.**  
**General Meeting 7:30 p.m.**  
**@ Old Towne**

**June 19<sup>th</sup>**

**Board Meeting 6:45 p.m.**  
**General Meeting 7:30 p.m.**  
**@ Old Towne**

**July 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Board Meeting 6:45 p.m.**  
**General Meeting 7:30 p.m.**  
**@ Old Towne**

