NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
ANCHORAGE, AK
PERMIT NO. 330

the ALASKA nordic skier

OCTOBER 2023, VOL.25, NO.1

TOBIAS ALBRIGTSEN / WWW.UNTRACEABLEGLOBAL.SMUGMUG.COM

Snow is dusting the mountains, hills and even ground across Alaska … which means ski season is right around the corner! The snow is also a reminder that it's time to renew your membership with your region's Nordic skiing organization to support their work with trails, events and programs that make our ski community so special. The first issue of the Alaska Nordic Skier catches you up on all of the summer activities of clubs across Alaska and previews the season ahead. Here's to lots of snow, skiing and fun in the wintery months ahead.

Anchorage 2
Eagle River. 14
Fairbanks. 16
Girdwood 10
Juneau. 8
Kachemak 12
Mat-Su. 11
Statewide 6,19

Anchorage Nordic Skier

Newsletter Of The Nordic Skiing Association Of Anchorage, Inc.

9170 Jewel Lake Rd, Suite 200, Anchorage, Alaska 99502
Phone — 276-7609 **Hotline —** 248-6667
anchoragenordicski.com
info@anchoragenordicski.com

AROUND THE BOWL

Swap 'til you drop! NSAA Ski Swap arrives on Sunday, Oct. 15

The annual, and always popular, NSAA Ski Swap is the perfect timing for locals to upgrade their gear, get their first sets of skis, or to unload extra gear. The event is also an excuse to get fired up and prepared for the season ahead. Gear dropoff: 4-6 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 14, Kincaid Park wax bunker; Ski Swap: 2-4 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 15.

Learn more, sign up as a seller, or find ways to volunteer at **anchoragenordicski.com/events/ski-swap/**.

Save the date to celebrate: NSAA Season Kickoff Party on Sunday, Nov. 12

Embrace the spirit of winter as we kickoff the skiing season with a festive gathering of outdoor enthusiasts, families, and local businesses from 3-7 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 12, at the Kincaid Park chalet. Learn more about NSAA programs, enjoy good food with good friends, check out the local sports expo, and have a chance to win Alaska Airlines tickets. There will be a silent auction, and beer garden hosted by Ravens Ring and Contra Dancing.

Learn more, sign up to volunteer, and RSVP at **anchoragenordicski.com/events/annual-celebration/**.

Join the NSAA team: Seeking groomers, Operations crew and coaches for Junior Nordic and Adult Lessons

NSAA offers rewarding careers that allow you to work outdoors and be part of an awesome organization. Join our team! We are hiring trail groomers to support daily trail maintenance and grooming to advance the mission of NSAA. Trail groomers work with the Director of Operations, Mechanic/General Foreman, and NSAA office staff to provide safe

trails for the community year-round. Full-time and Part-time positions available; Pay DOE; Applications are accepted year-round. Please email your resume to business@anchoragenordicski.com.

Interested in working with adults and sharing your passion for cross-country skiing? NSAA is hiring instructors for adult cross-country ski lessons this winter. We are looking for experienced coaches who want to share the excitement of learning to ski with others. Successful applicants must pass a background check; PSIA and USSA coaching certification preferred; Pay DOE; Applications are accepted until Nov. 1. Please email your resume to: **program@anchoragenordicski.com**.

Are you or someone you know looking for the perfect part-time winter opportunity? All you need to coach Junior Nordic is a pair of skis, a fun-loving attitude, and the ability to wrangle a group of kids! Coaching ages 6-14 with skill levels ranging from first-time skiers to early competitive racing development, we have a place for any level coach! Reminder: Parent-coaches get their kids enrolled in the program for free!

Learn more and apply at **anchoragenordicski.com/programs/junior-nordic/**.

NSAA Junior Nordic preview

NSAA's Junior Nordic program provides an opportunity for children to enjoy the Anchorage winter while learning the sport of cross-country skiing. Children ages 6 through 14 of all abilities are welcome to join and learn a sport they can pursue for a lifetime. The emphasis is on having fun and learning proper technique rather than competition.

Program Structure for 2023-24 Season: The Junior Nordic program will be structured as one session with two breaks for both the Anchorage School District winter and spring breaks. The program runs for 15 weeks from November 27-March 30. Practices are split into both weekday and Saturday-only times. Junior Nordic Holiday Break Dates: December 22-January 5, 2024; March 9-15. Practices will be held on: Monday, January 15 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day; Monday, February 19 – President's Day.

Junior Nordic Registration: Opens at 9 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 14, at **anchoragenordicski.com/programs/junior-nordic/**. Junior Nordic is an NSAA membership program so join the club before JN registration for an efficient process.

Junior Nordic Gear Pick Up: 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 29; 6-8 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 2; 6-8 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 9.

See **BOWL,** Page 3

BOARD MEMBERS

PRESIDENT
Will Earnhart
PAST PRESIDENT
Sara Miller
VICE PRESIDENT
Mike Miller
SECRETARY
Josh Niva
TREASURER
Barbara Amy
MEMBERS
Joey Caterinichio
Elizabeth Knapp
Chris Seaman
Tim Miller

OFFICE STAFF
Kikkan Randall, Executive Director
Kalysta Schmidt, Program Manager
Elly Maurer, Office & Events Administrator
Ida Gullett, Race Director
Art Harmon, Jr. Nordic Sport Manager

OPERATIONS STAFF
Craig Norman
Bill Brion
Annette Brion
Matthew Pauli
Tyler Norman
Dave Wolfe
Chip Schoff

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

ALASKA SKI FOR WOMEN
Molly Mylius

AMH ANCHORAGE CUP
Ida Gullett

BESH CUPS RACE DIRECTOR
Anson Moxness

BIATHLON
Kalysta Schmidt

HIGH SCHOOL RACING
Buzz Scher, Ida Gullett

JUNIOR NORDIC
Kalysta Schmidt, Art Harmon

MIDDLE SCHOOL RACING
Julie and Mike Truskowski

SCHOLARSHIPS
Diane Moxness

SKI 4 KIDS
Elly Maurer

SKI JUMPING
Zak Hammill

SKI TRAIN
Travis Taylor

SOLSTICE TREE TOUR
Sara Miller, Elly Maurer

SUPER TOUR/BESH CUP
Ida Gullett

TOUR OF ANCHORAGE
TBD

NSAA OFFICE HOURS
10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday

BOARD MEETINGS
Fourth Thursday of the month
6:30 p.m. at NSAA Office
Open to all

Summer work, old friends and new staff drive NSAA into season

Message from the NSAA Board President / Will Earnhart

After several years of COVID and unexpected staffing changes, NSAA has an energetic and intelligent group ready to support our volunteers and to lead us forward. Our accounting is finally up to date, and we have streamlined a number of our processes, although we are still working on a full set of applications for membership, accounting and programs that work together.

Outside of the office, it has been a busy summer. On Hillside, we had an unexpected major repair of the Spencer Loop. The heavy snowfall combined with snowmaking operations at Hilltop led to a major washout leaving the Hilltop maintenance building under more than a meter of mud and the end of the Spencer loop impassible. Kudos and our appreciation to Bill Spencer and his assistance and advice on this project.

Along with our planned brushing of the classic only trails, you may have noticed, Spencer Loop was slightly widened at a number of locations. This is in anticipation in having a PistenBully 400 on Hillside by the end of the season. A larger piece of equipment will allow the trails to be groomed in one pass, cutting maintenance costs substantially and improving the groom by avoiding the "hump" or "seam" in the middle of the trail caused by two passes with the smaller equipment. We are working with Hilltop and the MOA on their master plan for the area to locate an improved storage and maintenance facility.

At Kincaid, a terrain park is being created behind the timing building toward the chalet; on the left after you cross the bridge. We have also discussed improvements and repairs at the biathlon range and options for a future expansion of a rollerski loop. Although not our immediate priority, this is an important project as rollerskiing continues to expend as the preferred method for summer training and competition worldwide. A rollerski loop would provide a safe training location with varied terrain and closed loops. Beyond funding, there are a number of details to be resolved taking in account current trial users and Kincaid activities. Thank you Forrest for spearheading this development.

I look forward to seeing you all out and enjoying these improvements to our community's world-class trails this season. Renew your NSAA membership and encourage others to support the organization today.

BOWL

Continued from Page 2

Save the dates for NSAA 2023-24 season events, programs and deadlines:

Oct. 1 — NSAA Membership Season Starts
Oct. 13 — 60th Anniversary – Our History Presentation
Oct. 15 — Ski Swap
Nov. 12 — Annual Season Kickoff/Meeting
Dec. 5 — 60th Anniversary – Biathlon History Presentation
Dec. 10 — AMH Anchorage Cup #1
Dec. 17 — Solstice Tree Tour
January 7 — AMH Anchorage Cup #2
January 14 — 60th Anniversary Party
January 21 — AMH Anchorage Cup #3
Feb 3 — Ski for Women (Virtual)
Feb. 4 — Ski for Women (In Person)
Feb. 5 — 60th Anniversary – Ski Jumping History Presentation
Feb. 11 — AMH Anchorage Cup #4
Feb. 18 — AMH Anchorage Cup #5
March 3 — Tour of Anchorage
March 4 — 60th Anniversary – Touring History Presentation
March 16 — Ski Train

Learn more at the NSAA Season Calendar at **anchoragenordicski.com/calendar/**.

the ALASKA nordic skier
Advertise here and your business can reach skiers across the state.
nordicskieradvertising@gmail.com

the ALASKA nordic skier

EDITOR
Josh Niva
nordicskiereditor@gmail.com

LAYOUT
Kevin Powell
kevin@powelldesign.net

AD REPRESENTATIVE
Sara Lucey
nordicskieradvertising@gmail.com

LOCAL EDITORS
ANCHORAGE
Josh Niva
nordicskiereditor@gmail.com
EAGLE RIVER
Barbara Johnson
sbejohn1@mac.com
FAIRBANKS
Eric Troyer
newsletter@nscfairbanks.org
JUNEAU
Tristan Knutson-Lombardo
tkl1289@gmail.com
KACHEMAK
Mike Gracz
mbgracz@gmail.com
MAT-SU
Ed Strabel
matsuski@gci.net

The Alaska Nordic Skier is a publication representing the nordic ski clubs of Anchorage, Eagle River, Fairbanks, Homer, Juneau, Mat-Su, Salcha, Seward, Soldotna, Kenai, Talkeetna and Valdez. The Alaska Nordic Skier is published October through April by the Nordic Skiing Association of Anchorage, Inc.

All rights reserved. © 2023 Articles, letters and advertisements are welcome. Please ensure all names are correct and information is accurate. Submissions may be edited for clarity, content and space limitations. Deadline is the 15th day of the prior month. E-mail nordicskiereditor@gmail.com.

On the cover: And they're off! The UAF Nanooks Nordic Ski Team take their fall workouts to the Interior hills outside of Fairbanks. Photo by TOBIAS ALBRIGTSEN / untraceableglobal.smugmug.com

2023 NSAA Scholarship Awards honor outstanding student-athletes, community members

The Nordic Skiing Association of Anchorage is pleased to announce six Anchorage area student/athletes were awarded $1,000 college scholarships this summer. These outstanding youth demonstrate a love of skiing and commitment to community service while maintaining exceptional academic success.

This year's scholarship recipients are: West High School's Benjamin Goltz, who will attend Dartmouth College; Nora Hulse, who is headed to Northern Arizona. Representing Bettye Davis East High School is Marley Ireland, who will attend the University of New Hampshire. Headed to The College of Saint Scholastica is Dimond graduate Emily Erickson. Scholarship winners from Service High School are Aaron Power, who will attend Dartmouth College, and Meredith Schwartz, who will join Harvard College.

Nordic Skiing Association of Anchorage has awarded college-student scholarships for 30 years. Congratulations and best wishes to this year's scholarship winners and many thanks to all who applied. Stayed tuned for information on next year's scholarship information, applications, and deadlines.

Ben Goltz

Nora Hulse

Marley Ireland

Emily Erickson

Aaron Power

Meredith Schwartz

No matter the season or weather, NSAA Operations team stays focused on trails

Despite the wet weather this summer, NSAA's Operations teams made some progress in the shop and on the trails at Kincaid Park, on the Hillside trails and at Beach Lake. Three of the PistenBully snowcats (two 100s and the 400) received new belting and rebuilt tracks, we revitalized and recommissioned the batwing ditch/bank mower with a new hydraulic pump and motor, we replaced the cutting shaft on the chipper and are continuing to fabricate implements for our fleet of snowmachine groomers.

Earlier this summer, we finished renovations on Stairway to Heaven at Kincaid and will spend the remainder of the season refurbishing some of the trails on the Hillside. As you may have heard, we have a new PB400 joining our family sometime this winter. This snowcat will reside on the Hillside, and we've been working hard to remodel some of the trails to accommodate this larger machine by removing obstructions and widening and reshaping the pinch points to a width of 18 feet. All the Lighted Loops and adjacent cutoffs are finished, and Double Bubble and Spencer are nearing completion.

In Chugiak on the trails at Beach Lake, the remainder of the junk cars and related debris on the Junkyard Loop were removed. In partnership with the Chugiak/Eagle River Nordic Ski Club and Eagle River Parks and Recreation, NSAA helped reclaim that old dumping ground and transformed it into a useful play area and terrain park.

The before and after images of Annie's Alley embody NSAA's important summer trail repair work.

It's been a busy and productive summer and we'd like to thank all the volunteers who donated their time, energy, and resources to help us maintain your favorite trails. Special thanks to Ben Ariens and his crew of brushers; John Mahaffey for helping with equipment maintenance and chipping and the mowing crew: Mike Miller, Tim Stone, Jack Porter and Steve Beardsley. Enjoy the rest of the season and we'll see you out there!

Meet the new NSAA staff

Elly Maurer

Elly Maurer

Office and Events Administrator

Hometown/grew up: Born in Portland, Oregon. I was raised to work hard, question things, and explore. When not in school, I was with my older siblings, rock climbing at Smith Rocks, skiing at Mt. Bachelor or Mt. Hood, and hiking on the Oregon Coast. Moving to Alaska when I turned 18 seemed fitting. A vast playground with endless possibilities, I quickly grew my outdoor skillset to include backcountry skiing, cross-country skiing, sea kayaking, mountaineering, and glacier travel. Even with all my time spent exploring, I graduated with a bachelor's degree from the University of Alaska SE.

When did you start at NSAA: I started with NSAA in June.

Favorite part of the job: In my short time with NSAA, it is hard to pick just one favorite part of my job. I enjoy organizing events and creating memorable experiences. Being a part of a team with passionate, knowledgeable people takes the work out of my job and makes every day fun and fulfilling.

Favorite hobby: Anything that allows me to be outside and active. For the past two years, ultra-endurance trail running has monopolized my time. Most recently, I completed a 50-mile Ultra Marathon in Steamboat, Colorado.

What is one life lesson or piece of advice that has had a significant impact on you: Embrace failure as a teacher and learning from it allows us to grow, develop resilience, and achieve greater heights personally and professionally.

Kalysta Schmidt

Kalysta Schmidt

Program Manager

Hometown/grew up in: Anchorage

When did you start at NSAA: I started with NSAA in mid-May. I grew up Nordic skiing with Junior Nordic, at Dimond High School, and APU. I've also coached with Junior Nordic, South Anchorage High School, APU, and Alaska Nordic Racing.

Favorite part of the job: It's awesome working with a program like Junior Nordic that I've been a part of as a child and as a coach. I love athletics and the outdoors, and it's really unique to have the opportunity to learn more about ski jumping, biathlon, and trail maintenance and grooming through this position.

Favorite hobby: In the summer, there's nothing better than being able to get into the mountains and explore new trails and places I've never been, even as a lifelong Alaskan. In the winter, I enjoy skiing on our awesome trail systems and playing soccer.

What is your favorite part of living in Alaska: I'll never see it all. With so much to do and so many opportunities, there's always something to explore; a mountain to climb or a waterfall to see, a new adventure right around the corner.

Proud to Support NSAA and Anchorage skiers!
Offering a large menu of salads, appetizers, baskets, 35+ great sandwiches, Beyond Burgers, dairy & non-dairy ice cream treats and more!
Call 248-3068 for orders to go or visit www.tfalaska.com
Proud to serve beef from Mr. Prime Beef, and Alaskan cod, pollock, salmon & crab
Jewel Lake TASTEE·FREEZ
Serving Alaskans Since 1958
Wear your NSAA Trail pin to Tastee Freez and save 10%!

PHOTO BY **KIKKAN RANDALL**

A little rain can't stop summer workouts for Alaskan skiers, especially these APU skiers competing in an intersquad time trail at Kincaid Park.

Summer training builds winter champions

TOBIAS ALBRIGTSEN / WWW.UNTRACEABLEGLOBAL.SMUGMUG.COM

The UAF Nanooks Nordic Ski Team take their fall workouts to the Interior hills outside of Fairbanks.

PHOTO COURTESY **FAIRBANKS FXC**

The Fairbanks Cross Country (FXC) Junior Racing squad takes a break from some scenic summer rollerskiing along the Denali Highway near Paxson.

Transition time means flying through snow and Junior Nationals are coming soon

BY ZAK HAMMILL
NSAA Jumping Program Director

Saying ski season is upon us just does not seem appropriate for NSAA's Ski Jumping Program. It's always ski season when you can ski jump year-round at the Karl Eid ski jumps, but that does not mean we don't get excited seeing snow high up in the mountains this time of year.

It's been a great summer ski jumping season, but we are all ready for that transition time when we can scrap the summer wax of the skis and prep those same skis for sliding on that beautiful white snow! In just a month's time, we will prepare our ski jumps hills with blue cargo to hold all the snow that Anchorage will receive this winter. Once temperatures are cold enough, we will break out the snowgun and start making snow!

This winter will not just be a regular winter ski jumping and Nordic combined season for our club. We are hosting the 2024 Junior Nationals! Every fifth year, we host this event, and we are more than excited to bring in the best junior ski jumpers and Nordic combined athletes in the country. From February 27-March 2, these athletes will fight for the podium spots at the Karl Eid Ski Jumps and Kincaid Park.

If you have ever been curious about ski jumping or Nordic combined for your skier, this winter is the one to come and check it out! New ski jumpers start slow and progress their way up on their own timeline. Our ski jumping community is very welcoming, and supportive of everyone. Ski jumping is a great way to increase anyone's confidence on skis in a very controlled and safe environment!

To learn more about the NSAA Ski Jumping and Nordic Combined Programs, head to our website, **anchoragenordicski.com/programs/ski-jumping/**.

Ski for Women's winter fun leads to powerful summer giving

BY MOLLY MYLIUS
ASFW Director

First things first: Save the date for 2024 Alaska Ski for Women, which happens on Sunday, February 4. Stay up to date on the latest event details at **anchoragenordicski.com/events/alaska-ski-for-women/**.

The Alaska Ski for Women raises funds for nonprofit organizations working to stop the cycle of domestic violence and support survivors. We raise funds for important causes, while continuing the great tradition of North America's largest women's cross-country ski race.

We had great turnout at this year's event, with over 850 participants. Thanks to the generosity of participants, sponsors, and donors, we were able to contribute over $40,000 to nonprofits in our community! Two organizations were selected to receive grant funds from the 2023 event:

- $37,525 went to AWAIC to support one of their Children's Advocate positions
- $5,475 to Standing Together Against Rape (STAR) for warmth and safety gear for survivors of sexual assault

Thank you to all our participants, sponsors, and donors for supporting the cause and making these grants possible.

Interested in volunteering on the planning committee or supporting the 2024 event as a sponsor? Contact us at **alaskaskiforwomen@gmail.com**.

Service High School Nordic Ski Team Wax Fundraiser

Saturday, November 18 from 12-3pm at Service High School

Get your skis waxed and ready!

Who? Skiers of all ages and abilities

What? Bring your skis – downhill, cross-country, back-country – and snowboards to get them waxed and ready for the ski season! Please scrape off old wax and clean skis with liquid wax remover, if possible.

Where? Service High School – use entrance at back of the school near football field

Bonus! A bake sale, too!

DONATIONS GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED

Juneau Nordic Ski Club

Juneau, Alaska

P.O. Box 21262
Juneau, AK 99802
jnski.org
info@jnski.org

Mission: To enhance, develop, and promote Nordic skiing in Juneau.

Goal: Great Nordic trails for all skiers!

AROUND THE CAPITAL CITY

Our "Give What You Believe In" membership drive

As we turn the corner to fall and anxiously await the snow to begin its eventual creep down the mountains, we begin our annual work to prepare for the upcoming ski season. Which means we also turn to you, our members, to keep our machines fueled, our skis waxed, and our spirits high. This year, we are trying something different with our membership giving:

We are asking all users of our trails (skiers, walkers, snowshoers, fat bikers, dogs …) to consider the value of regularly groomed trails throughout the winter, and make a contribution to match.

Our ski trails are more than just groomed snow. For literally thousands of Juneauites, we take care of ourselves, nourish our friendships, and raise our families on them. We sweat, learn to ski, scavenge for clues, follow luminarias, dress in wacky costumes, race, decompress, and let loose. JNSC-sponsored programs get 100-plus future Olympians and dozens more adults out on more than 30 kilometers of freshly maintained trails throughout the borough each and every winter.

And all of this happens because of members like you!

A donation of any amount means you're a member for a year, and you're always welcome to donate again if and when you like. Visit jnski.org/membership to join or renew your membership. (We also encourage you to consider turning your membership into a recurring gift–then you won't worry about forgetting to give next year!)

Or, if you're like us and still bust out the wood and slap on the pine tar, you can always print out one of our membership forms online and mail it with your payment to PO Box 21262 Juneau, AK 99802. Thank you for getting more people on skis, more often, on more groomed kilometers!

Why join our youth ski teams? Because this is how much fun we have :)

New grooming machines on the way!

We met our summer fundraising goal and were able to raise the funds needed to expand our fleet of grooming equipment! Last spring, we knew that the 2023-24 ski season was going to present itself with the opportunity for us to groom more kilometers than ever before (more on that below), which meant we needed more equipment to keep the corduroy fresh and the stoke high.

The club was able to purchase two new Can Ams this summer as part of our grooming equipment fundraising campaign this offseason.

So, we asked for your help, and boy did you respond! Super big thanks to the City and Borough of Juneau Assembly for recognizing the value of the service our club provides and kicking off our campaign with an appropriation in their FY24 budget. The Rasmuson Foundation, Juneau Community Foundation, and the AARP Alaska office all followed with significant grants. Sealaska Corporation, Dr Benjamin Pinney, and

See **JUNEAU,** Page 9

JUNEAU

Continued from Page 8

the Jurasz Hall Veliz Group gave generously alongside members Keith, Michael, Susan, Cindy, Shaun, Tom, Laurie, Thomas, Jetta, Ritchie, Nicole, Shelly, Nan and Ron, Joyanne, Carl, Franz, Charles, Mary, Mary Pat and John, Rachel, Malou, Tracey, Brian, Lael, Angel, Anne, Gina, Beverly, Susan and MK, Greg and Tamara, Tom, Patsy, Gary, Hank and Anya, Charlene, Jayme, Adrian, Brian, Christine, Brenda and Joe, Doug and Martina, and Andrew.

This winter you'll see two new Can Ams (four wheelers on snow tracks that pull the grooming implements) alongside an additional ginzu-style groomer and roller in action on the trails. This means we'll have enough equipment stationed at each trailhead as well as a full set of grooming equipment on standby if/when equipment breaks or needs repair.

In short: your support > more equipment > more groomed trails > more skiing for you!

High school skiers getting their summer training in on a recent Skagway/Yukon training trip..,

The Return of Montana Creek: More groomed KM than ever before!

HUGE shout out to the Alaska Department of Transportation who were finally able to install a temporary bridge across Montana Creek this summer! We're over-the-moon grateful for their work. The JNSC board will continue working with ADOT and CBJ on a permanent solution to ensure we can ski across the creek for many seasons to come.

This means Montana Creek will be cycled back into our grooming rotation and we will keep grooming Salmon Creek (last season's Montana Creek replacement). Add in Pioneer Road, the Campground, the Lake, and Dredge Lakes along with our recently expanded fleet of grooming equipment, and the JNSC is ready to groom more trails and more kilometers than ever before!

This also means that skiers can look forward the return of the Juneau trail that holds onto snow the longest during our occasional warm spells. (El Niño-no.)

2023-24 Youth Ski Programs: Get in before it's too late

Registration for our middle and high school Juneau Nordic Ski Teams is open and filling fast! We welcome middle and high school youth of all abilities, regardless of ski experience, who are looking to have fun, compete, and improve their skiing skills alongside others doing the same. The high school season runs November through February while middle school begins in December. Both seasons include travel to races outside of Juneau.

Registration for our Junior Nordic (elementary) program opens October 8. This nine-week program for elementary-aged youth begins in January and focuses on developing a healthy, enjoyable, lifelong connection to being active outdoors on skis. Skiers will be grouped based on a combination of age, ability, and technique (skate or classic), and will be led by an exuberant cast of coaches (sometimes in costume).

Program fees are offered on a sliding scale (pay what you can afford, no questions, no judgment) and are open to skiers of all abilities and experiences. Whether you were born on skis or join us as a high school senior new to the sport, all we ask is to come with a desire to improve your skills, try new things, and have fun.

More information, including registration links and coach contacts, can be found at jnski.org/youth-programs.

Eaglecrest's "When They Go Low, We Go High" passes

Does the phrase "El Niño" conjure up thoughts of warmer-than-average winters more than Chris Farley on the SNL Weekend Update desk? If so, best supplement your JNSC membership with an Eaglecrest Nordic season pass. When the temps rise, so must we–skiing at higher elevation, that is. Hurry before prices go up! More info at skieaglecrest.com.

Volunteer much?

Our club runs on volunteers! From the Board of Directors to trail groomers to youth ski coaches, we just couldn't do what we do without the time invested by our volunteers. As we round the corner into a new ski season, we have a number of volunteer positions that need someone like you:

Board: We meet once/month and strive to make Juneau the best ski town this side of the Mendenhall.

Groomers: Whether it's once a week or as needed, join an enthusiastic team that keeps the corduroy fresh and us skiers smiling.

D-1 Shovel Club: Clearing a landslide, a snow berm, or digging out after a storm, you'll be added to this as-needed email list.

Events: Help with an existing event or bring your new idea to reality!

Spendthrift? Looking for someone to help guide this season's JNSC-branded gear and swag for the 2023/24 season.

Coaches: You don't have to be a great skier to be a great coach. A good coach is someone who loves to ski and wants to share that passion with young people. A good coach is supportive, respectful, patient, communicative, and brave. A good coach brings their authentic self–and the fun! The commitment is what you make it and there is room in all three of our youth programs for new energy and ideas. (**jnski.org/youth-programs**/)

Or, maybe you have a particular skill or talent that we haven't listed but think would be beneficial to our little club that could?

Whatever you've got, we want it! For more info or to volunteer, email info@jnski.org.

We'll be back on the Mendenhall Lake before we know it!

Girdwood Nordic Ski Club

Girdwood, Alaska

P.O. Box 337
Girdwood, AK 99587
skigirdwood.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DEB ESSEX, President
BRIAN BURNETT, Vice President, Events
BRIANA SULLIVAN, Secretary
JUSTIN THOMAS, Treasurer
JIM BRAHAM, Trail Maintenance
BEN KOHLER
BRIAN KARI, NELS BARBER, Events

AROUND GIRDWOOD

No signal, so get outside

BY DEB ESSEX
PRESIDENT, GIRDWOOD NORDIC SKI CLUB

PHOTO BY **NICOLE GEILS**

Snow creeping down the Chugach Mountains is welcome proof that there is a benefit to all these storms. Following the continual petrichor of summer, the smell of fall is upon us. I don't know the word for the "smell of fall" but in Girdwood it includes decaying leaves and mushrooms, a hint of dog waste, ski wax, and wood burning stoves. It is the crisp air and wood burning stoves that gets the mountains to say, "Made you look!" when we get up in the morning and check out the snowline.

Girdwood shops are doing the annual pivot from bikes to skis, and Girdwoodians are switching from rain gear to well … rain gear with a puffy. The descending snowline signals it's time to finish up our trails maintenance, check the snow machines, and write the first NSAA newsletter article. Not surprisingly, the rain has kept our summer trail maintenance to a minimum, but we are currently prepping for the ski season and for the Girdwood Trails Marathon.

Kicking off our 2023-24 season, we would like to remind folks that we no longer mail out the moose ski pins. We have created a general "Girdwood Nordic" pin, and will have them available for pick up at Slack Tide Gallery, Bake Shop, and Powder Hound Ski & Bike Shop. We will still be mailing out receipts and stickers (if wanted) or you can sign up in person for this season's membership, pick up moose pins and purchase fun moose swag at Girdwood's Holiday Bazaar, and our Solstice Celebration on December 21, 2023.

Here is a list of the events happening this fall in Girdwood … and we hope to see you on the trails!

September 21, noon-8 p.m.: Girdwood is hosting an Anchorage School District Middle School Cross Country Event on the 5K Loop. Expect about 300 people for this event and come cheer on the runners!!

October 7, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.: The Girdwood Trails Marathon will host 200-plus runners throughout the Girdwood Trail System. This event is a fundraiser for the GNSC and a fun event to be a volunteer. Pumpkins for the winners, and pickles for the red lantern finisher.

November 4, noon-3 p.m.: The FVCS Annual Sports Swap at the Alyeska Daylodge! Always a well-attended event and definitely one to sign up as a volunteer.

December 9, noon-4 p.m.: Do not miss this packed holiday event at the Girdwood School gym. This is where most of you sign up for your annual memberships and check out our latest moose swag. Yes – we have new items this year!

December 21, 6-8 p.m., 5K Loop: We will host our annual Solstice Celebration with the lighted 1.5K Loop, goodies from the Bake Shop, music, disco lights on the downhills, and more GNSC moose swag to purchase as last-minute gifts. Kick off the holiday season with this family fun event!

Mat-Su Ski Club
Palmer, Alaska

P.O. Box 364
Palmer, Alaska 99645
(907) 745-SKIS
www.matsuski.org

AROUND THE VALLEY

Mat-Su Ski Club summer recap

PHOTO BY KIM TAYLOR

Trailwork

As caretakers of the ski trails throughout the year, we deeply appreciate the individuals who dedicate some of their spare time each summer to assist us in various maintenance tasks. From the demanding work of clearing rocks, mowing, and trimming overgrown brush to repairing culverts and addressing issues caused by water runoff, the tasks are numerous and demanding. The jungle never rests and keeping the trails free from overgrowth is a big job! We are immensely thankful for those who generously contribute their time to help us preserve and enhance the trails at GPRA. Your support makes a world of difference! Learn more and renew your memberships at **matsuski.org**.

Blueberry Knoll trailhead moved

Within GPRA, we take responsibility for maintaining the Blueberry Knoll hiking trail. To improve accessibility and minimize ski trail crossings, we have recently moved the trailhead. If you venture up the trail in search of this new entry point, you'll discover clear signage guiding you to the new trailhead, conveniently located at the first bridge on the Pioneer Loop.

GPRA stadium expansion

In collaboration with the Mat-Su Borough, we seized a valuable opportunity this year during the construction of a new parking lot project to enhance the stadium's size and functionality. The stadium not only serves as the starting and finishing point for ski races but also as a gathering hub for Junior Nordics, ski lessons, and various training groups. Thanks to the generous support of Mass Excavation (Mass X) company, which provided the material and heavy equipment from the project, we acquired the necessary resources to expand the stadium and eliminate a tree island at its center, transforming it into a spacious, open area.

This project would not have been possible without the generous contributions of Mass X, the collaboration of the Mat-Su Borough and RESPEC Engineering, as well as a generous grant provided by the Fishhook Community Council. Many generous volunteer hours were also donated in support of this project. We also extend our gratitude to the Colony High cross country running team for their commendable efforts in rock picking and tossing, a crucial step before the hydroseeding process could take place.

Volunteer Trails Day

Join us for our Volunteer Trails Day, where all are welcome! Roll up your sleeves and help us tidy up the trails as we anticipate the arrival of winter. Several jobs await, including helping with fencing in the stadium area, repairing culverts, tossing rocks, and brushing the edges of trails. It's all happening from 1-4 p.m. Sunday, October 8. Remember, many hands make the work feel light.

Junior Nordics registration opens October 9 and 16; coaches and volunteers needed

Exciting news! Junior Nordics is making a highly-anticipated comeback, and we've got some thrilling updates. This year, we've shifted our registration from September to October, giving everyone more time to prepare.

For our returning participants, mark your calendars for October 9 – that's when your registration kicks off. And for all you newcomers eager to join the fun, your registration opens on October 16.

We're on the lookout for enthusiastic coaches and volunteers to help make this season unforgettable. Join us in spreading the love for skiing and nurturing the next generation of Nordic enthusiasts! Email us at info@matsuski.org to learn more.

Annual Fall Meeting

We're gearing up for our 17th season, and we're kicking things off with our annual Fall Meeting at the GPRA Chalet on Saturday, October 28. Best part? It's a laid-back, free event, and absolutely everyone is welcome!

Come hang out with fellow ski enthusiasts and friendly faces from the community. Make new friends, meet new people, and learn how to get involved. Plus, we've got some cool Mat-Su Ski Club limited edition swag just waiting for you to get your hands on!

We'll chat about what we've been up to this year and share what we are planning for the future. Keep an eye on our website for more deets about this evening – you won't want to miss it!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
PRESIDENT
Lucas Parker
VICE PRESIDENT
Ailis Vann
TREASURER
Jerry Hupp
SECRETARY
Chris Gierymski
BOARD MEMBERS
Ed Strabel
Mark Strabel
Cyndi Koop
Steve Brown
Ben Raevsky
Kim Taylor
MAT-SU SKI CLUB /
www.matsuski.org

PHOTO BY **MARLA JAKAB**

PHOTO BY **JERRY HUPP**

Kachemak Nordic Ski Club

Homer, Alaska

P.O. Box 44, Homer, Alaska 99603
kachemaknordicskiclub.org
kachemaknordicskiclub@gmail.com

AROUND THE BAY

Kachemak Nordic Ski Club Annual Meeting

The KNSC Annual Meeting and Fundraiser is set for 6 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 11. We're still determining location, stay tuned!

Get updates, celebrate the club's Volunteer of the Year, and participate in a live auction. Come celebrate with us person! This event will be a fun way to connect with the rest of the club members. One important part of this meeting will be the KNSC's Board of Directors election. We have several openings coming up that need to be filled! If you are interested in running, please contact us at kachemaknordicskiclub@gmail.com.

Cross Over Event kicks off ski season with swap, films, food

Join us for a fun night of community connection, bargain shopping, film, food and good times at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 8, with Mountainfilm Fest at 7 p.m.! Homer Community Recreation is sponsoring this "Cross Over Event" as we kick out the upcoming winter season of recreation!

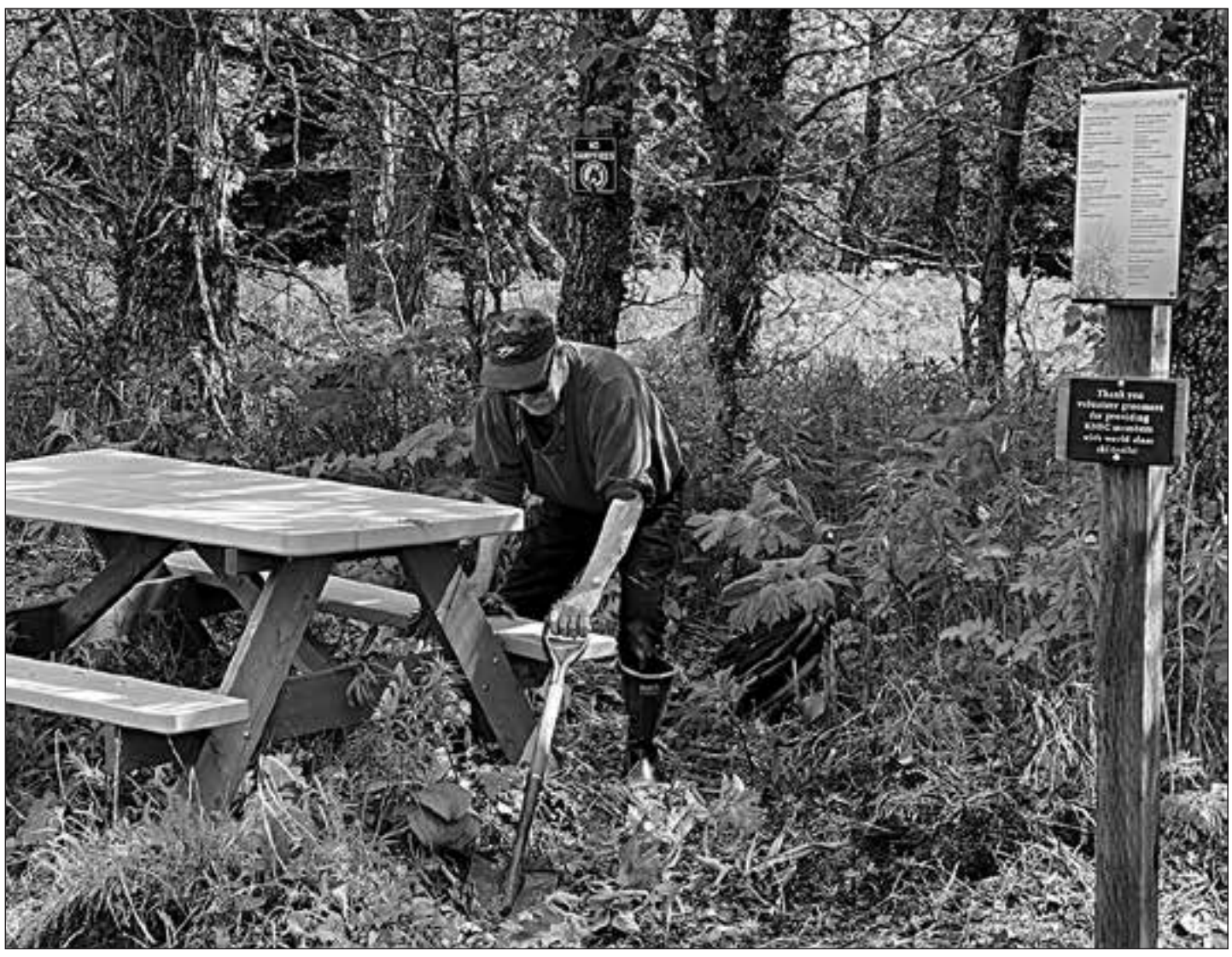
The Ski & Winter Gear Swap starts at 5:30 p.m. in the Homer High Commons. Look for some bargains of folks selling their equipment/clothing and/or bring your gear to sell or trade. This is a free event, no businesses please. Bring all of your skis and snowboards to get them waxed by the Homer High Cross Country Ski Team for a small fee as this is one of their important fundraisers.

Plan to stay for dinner as HOWL will be selling delicious soups and bread as a fundraiser to support their outdoor adventure programs. Dessert selections will also be available for purchase and enjoyment provided by the Homer Middle School "AK to DC Annual Trip" fundraising group.

The rest of the evening is takes place at the Mariner Theater for a night of amazing documentary films from the Telluride Mountainfilm On Tour Show No. 1, sponsored by Homer Community Recreation starting at 7 p.m. Tickets are available for purchase at the door for only $10.

For more information please call the Recreation office at 235-6090.

Junior Nordic rental gear will not be available at the gear swap. We will hold a separate rental pick up in early November, or as the snow flies! KNSC has invested in even more rental gear for K-6th grade skiers and are working to expand to 4 year olds and into middle school sizes this year. Stay tuned for more information, we look forward to getting your kids outfitted and on the trails!



BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Mike Gracz | President
Derek Bynagle | Vice President
Cameale Johnson | Secretary
Richard Burton | Treasurer

BOARD MEMBERS
Kenny Daher
Jason Neely
Robert Glen
Peter Crimp
Melissa Cloud

COMMITTEES AND EVENTS

Baycrest Upper
Pete Alexson

Baycrest Lower
Dave Brann

Lookout Mountain
Mike Byerly

McNeil Canyon School
Nicky Szarzi

Eveline State Recreation Site
Nicky Szarzi

Snowshoe Trails
Cameale Johnson

Trail Signs
Mike Gracz

Equipment Chairperson
Bob Glen

Equipment Maintenance
Bill Hague

Junior Nordic
Kathy Sarns

Junior Nordic Equipment Rental
Mike Gracz

Homer Nordic
Kathy Sarns

Membership
Derek Bynagle

Website
Richard Burton

Alaska Nordic Skier
Erik Schallock

School Races Coordinator
Jan Spurkland

Winter Backcountry Film Festival
Dan Del Missier

Winter Gear & Ski Swap
Mike Illg (Homer Community Recreation)

Friday Night Lights
Melissa Cloud

Besh Cup Races
Jan Spurkland

Kachemak Bay Ski for Women
(Benefit for Haven House)
Kris Holderied / Shelly Laukitis

Wine & Cheese and Wooden Ski Tour
Mike Gracz

Kachemak Bay Ski Marathon
Kenny Daher

Marathon Connector Trail
Kenny Daher

Homer Epic 100
Homer Cycling Club

Sea to Ski Triathlon
Derek Bynagle

Take a seat and a moment to thank our volunteer groomers

KNSC is forever grateful to our incredible groomers who provide us with world-class ski trails from the first dusting of snow in the fall to the last bit of slush in the spring. We've been working on a small tribute to their tremendous efforts and finally have it in place (due to the efforts of several volunteers.)

Last year, Aron Peterson built KNSC a picnic table from materials Dave Brann sourced. This year, Lyn Maslow and John Miles were able to set the picnic table and several plaques honoring our groomers on the Lookout Trail system. Many thanks to all of these people for doing the work to get our tribute ready for the ski season. And a huge special thank you to Milli Martin for allowing us to use her land.

This winter as you're skiing Milli's Loop, look for the picnic table in the cottonwoods, a special place for Milli and it's soon to be a special place for the rest of us. Take a minute to read the poem she wrote (provided in weatherproof format by Fred Dickerson and Bay Weld) and you'll know why we chose this place. Please feel free to bring a snack and share in the majestic tranquility of the space, and leave no trace. No campfires, no garbage and this is only accessible in the winter. Looking forward to seeing you on the ski trails!

The 2023-2024 KNSC Ski Season begins October 1: time to renew that membership!

Clubexpress, our membership database, sent out reminder emails and so many of you have already renewed, thanks! While it may seem early, it's that time of year to start thinking about snow (and be done with all this rain!). While it seems early, this is the start of our fiscal year. We hope you will continue to support us by renewing your membership as soon as possible; this helps the board make sound fiscal decisions to sustain the club.

KNSC currently maintains over 80 kilometers of groomed trails at the BayCrest, McNeil Canyon-Eveline, and Lookout Mountain trail systems. If you use the trails, we need your support!

Click HERE to renew your membership today! Questions? Email us here kachemaknordicskiclub@gmail.com

Thanks to our 2022-2023 KNSC members … and for signing up for the new season!

The last several seasons have seen KNSC grow to include more members and record numbers of skiers! We love seeing so many skiers out there: young, old, beginners, experts, and all with huge smiles of joy gliding across our amazing trails. A huge thank you goes out for signing up and helping maintain those trails from October to May, a great, lengthy season.

While costs to purchase, maintain, and operate the equipment that makes that lovely corduroy has risen significantly over the last few years, our growing and generous membership has allowed us to continue to keep the same low entry-level memberships starting at $50 for an individual or $75 for a family for a long season of fun and fitness. Due to popular request, we have added another Super Patron membership level of $500 this year, and of course many of you decided to generously add on extra donations to the trail fund which is much appreciated!

Also new this year is a Dog Membership! KNSC provides a unique and special opportunity to enjoy high quality Nordic trails with your dogs on designated trails. In response to the club membership base that enjoys skiing with dogs, KNSC has created an opportunity to sign up your pup! In return for the $20 dog membership, skiers with dogs will be helping to offset the expenses associated with dogs on trails, pledge to make an effort to keep dogs allowed on trails and receive doggy swag: a KNSC dog bandana designed by Kathy Sarns!

In addition to continued maintenance of dog bag stations throughout the trail system, KNSC has invested in parking lot and road improvements behind KESA at McNeil to mitigate dog conflicts at trailheads. On dog-friendly portions of the system we expect all to abide to club policies of: picking up their poop, keeping to one-dog-per-skier that's under voice control or is on-leash, and understanding Eveline is part of Kachemak Bay State Park and therefore requires dogs to be on leashes of nine feet or less. Whether you get a dog membership or not, please be a conscientious neighbor on the trails!

Kachemak trail updates

Thank you to all our volunteers who have been busy this summer upgrading and maintaining trails! There's a lot of time put into getting set for snow.

Eveline SRS and McNeil Canyon Elementary: Like every trail this summer, the park is muddy! But still, it saw a lot of use from summertime visitors and locals alike. Between rain showers the trails were mowed several times and are ready for freeze up and snow!

The dog parking lot and road above the KESA fire station were redone by Nathan Wise and will be a vast improvement throughout the season as McNeil Canyon Elementary will continue to enforce the district-wide policy of no dogs on the school property. Please be courteous, control your dogs at all times, and pick up after them at trailheads and on the trails. There is hope to get some mulching done by Eco Forestry on the McNeil 5k loop before snow flies, but the wet conditions keep delaying the work, we don't want to rut the trails instead of improve them! Another project happening is the construction of an outhouse at McNeil so the unsightly and costly porta-potty can be avoided.

Sunset Loop: The trails are in great shape and were mowed several times awaiting snow!

Rogers Loop: This summer's rain and wet ground proved challenging, but the trails were much improved by last year's mulching. The volunteers still got out to mow, repair some of the many bridges, and remove downed trees. Thanks to all who fought the mud to do the work!

Lookout: Lookout trails saw the battle against encroaching alders continue with extensive alder removal on many of the trails. This work involved contracting Southern Exposure with their grinder, Bill Worsfold with his tractor and brush hog, and the ATV with pull-behind mower. The improvements were visible as Homer Mariner XC running Invitational race was held in September.

Call for volunteers: We do need some volunteers to remove brush from the trail. Contact kachemaknordicskiclub@gmail.com if you're available!

Equipment updates: October to May skiing means KNSC equipment gets worked hard every ski season! Thanks to our careful volunteer groomers or maybe just through a lot of hardworking maintenance volunteer hours, we've been able to keep the grooming equipment running fairly smoothly. The fleet of machines does age and wear out, however. A new Scandic snow machine is on order for fall delivery at All Seasons to replace an older damaged machine, and they are working with the club to get other machines ready to go for the season. Homer Saw and Cycle worked hard with the club as well, replacing two ATV engines this summer, going above and beyond in identifying a design problem in those machines and ultimately getting those engine replacements with no cost to the club. A huge thanks to our great local shops, mechanics, and helpers that keep it all chugging along!

Eagle River Nordic Ski Club

Eagle River, Alaska

P.O. Box 770117, Eagle River, Alaska 99577
Club hotline — 689-7660
Junior nordic hotline — 689-7661
cernsc.wildapricot.org

Gear up for winter! Support your club and trails! Become a member today!

PHOTO BY **BARB JOHNSON**

Junior Nordic skiers in action on the Beach Lake Ski Trails.

Ski season is fast approaching and many in the ski club are gearing up. This is a great time of year to check out all of the gear swaps and used gear stores like Play It Again Sports or the Hoarding Marmot. If you need new gear for yourself or your family, check local stores like Alaska Mountaineering and Hiking or REI! You can also learn more about gear on our website at **cernsc.org/education/gear/**.

Now is a great time to sign up to be a member of your local ski club. Your membership supports Jr. Nordic and our partnership with NSAA and Eagle River Parks & Recreation which allows us to have incredible groomed trails. Bill Brion, who works for NSAA, grooms at Beach Lake Trails, Eagle River High School, Yosemite Dr, and Mirror Lake Middle School.

We are so fortunate to be able to ski for free, anytime, on lighted, well-maintained ski trails at Beach Lake. The chalet is an added bonus, as well. It is because Eagle River residents support our parks and also due to many hours of work by volunteers like Bob Stehn.

Your support is greatly appreciated – please become a member of your local ski club today! Sign up to become a member at **cernsc.org/registration/**.

BOARD MEMBERS

PRESIDENT
Jason Dennis

VICE PRESIDENT/RACING CHAIR
Mike Beiergrohslein

TREASURER
Bob Stehn

SECRETARY
Lydia Haigh

JR. NORDIC
Ted Stille

NEWSLETTER
Barbara Johnson

AT LARGE
Aaron Foye, Jim & Ros Singleton, Alycia Beiergrohslein, and Aurora Agee

SPONSORED

RUNNERS' EDGE ALASKA
HEALTHY. ACTIVE. FOR LIFE.

WE EMPOWER ACTIVE ALASKANS OF ALL AGES TO RETURN TO WHAT THEY LOVE SAFELY AND EFFICIENTLY... FOR LIFE!

www.runnersege.physio
(online scheduling for PT and massage)
info@runnersedge.physio · 907.929.9009
Come see us in clinic, mobile, or telehealth – we are there for you wherever you need us!
***** we are in our new location, right by South Restaurant, come say Hello!!*****

Shin Splints and Bone Stress Injuries – Something to worry about?

BY ZUZANA ROGERS, PT, ScD, SCS, COMT
Runners' Edge Alaska

Our body adapts. In other words, if everything goes as it should, the body adapts to training loads and we get stronger, faster and more resilient. What happens when this balance is disrupted?

Have you ever dealt with nagging injuries that just don't go away? Shin splints? In fact, shin splints are very common condition in youth runners and cross-country skiers, especially in athletes with low body mass index.

Shin splints (or tibial bone stress syndrome) happen when the pull of the muscle exceeds the capacity of the bone to resist, leading to local inflammation and pain, most commonly on the inside edge of the shin bone, the tibia.

Here is the big deal – many times, it is not 'just' a muscle injury. It is a part of a bigger picture.

Relative Energy Deficiency Syndrome (RED-S) describes a clinical syndrome resulting from energy deficiency (an imbalance between dietary energy intake and energy expenditure required to support normal bodily function, regular activities, growth and sport). It is formerly known as the Female Athlete Triad. It affects many aspects of physiological function such as bone growth and healing, hormonal balance, immune system, concentration and mental energy. In other words, when the demand for the body to expand energy is larger than the energy going in in form of food, the body goes into a self-preservation mode and 'takes' the energy from somewhere else – the menstrual period gets irregular and sometimes disappears, the bone loses its mineral density and microfractures happen.

https://insyncphysio.com/effects-of-energy-deficiency-on-performance/

So, if you are dealing with shin splints, have a closer look at how much you are training, how well you recover and how well you eat to fuel your training. Because if left untreated, shin splints can progress to bone stress injury and stress fractures.

To prevent, recognize and manage shin splints/stress fractures:

1. ***Training –*** make sure the progression is gradual and consistent. This means that if you are a runner, you have to maintain some form of running shape during the off -season. Bone stress injuries can happen when there is a sudden increase of training that the body has difficulties to manage.
2. ***Eating well –*** if your training load increases, make sure the meals follow! Make sure you get plenty of energy in your food
3. ***Sleep –*** get plenty of Zzzz's – this is one of the best recovery methods after exercise
4. ***Vitamin D supplementation –*** this is the most legal form of performance enhancement! Great for bone health, immune system, recovery, and many other aspects of well-being. Consult your medical provider for exact dosage.
5. ***Make sure –*** your **running technique and footwear** is optimal. Your physical therapist can assess your running technique and recommend appropriate shoes.
6. ***For girls –*** if you miss your **menstrual period** for 3 or more months or your periods become irregular, you have to talk to your PT or pediatrician! This is a big red flag!

If you are dealing with a bone stress injury:

Depending on your symptoms, you may need to see a physician, dietician, physical therapist and/or sports psychologist. Optimizing the energy availability is the core of treatment. You really need to maintain a high intake of nutritious food — it can't be potato chips and brownies. If you have adequate nutrition to compensate for the energy you are expending, things should reset and go back to normal.

Resources for more information:

- **uwhealth.org/health-wellness/red-s-syndrome-what-atheletes-need-to-know/51699**
- **bjsm.bmj.com/content/48/7/491.short**

Disclaimer: Since we don't know you and we can't perform a detailed examination, responses are general tips only and not medical or physical therapy advice. If you need detailed answers to your questions, please contact us directly.

From junkyard to play land: Creating a new terrain park at Beach Lake

As the leaves change color and the snow line starts coming down the mountains, our Nordic ski community is getting excited about the ski season and some of the new improvements at the Beach Lake Trails.

The Chugiak-Eagle River Nordic Ski Club (CERNSC) has been working with Bill Brion of NSAA and Jeff Urbanus of Eagle River Parks and Recreation to improve the Beach Lake Trails. Excitement is growing about the result!

The Junkyard Loop was actually an unofficial junkyard (1950-70s) before the park was established and the ski trails were ever built. The old dump site grew into an impenetrable tangle of alder, willow, cottonwood, and devils club. This summer it was cleared and dozens of old rusty cars, appliances, tires, and mountains of trash were pulled out, recycled or taken to the landfill. The banks, slopes, and bumps of the old dump were not changed but now it is smoothed, planted with grass, and converted into a play area and terrain park for Junior Nordic skiers.

The project has been on the ski club's to-do list for several years and we are excited to get it completed this summer. Bob Stehn, our most frequent volunteer, led the charge along with Jim Singleton, Mike Beiergrohslein, Barb and Steve Johnson, and Kristi Brown. It quickly became obvious to us that cutting all the alders by hand would take more than all summer of work. We were fortunate to get help with the project from Andy Milauskas using a forestry mulcher and skid steer from Boreal Tree Care. Within a day his machinery cleared the site as much as was possible.

PHOTO BY **BOB STEHN**

Part of the smoothed out, cleaned up area that is ready to become a fun play area for skiers this winter for the first time!

PHOTO BY **BOB STEHN**

More junk collected throughout the terrain park, removed and taken to the landfill.

The next steps were done by Bill Brion of NSAA, using his excavator to dig out stumps, roots, gather and bury woody debris. Smaller branches were chipped. Bill's excavator hauled out 13 cars plus a lot of car parts including hoods, frames, engines, etc., which were taken to a metal recycling operation. Hopefully, this is the last of the metal cars! A few years ago, 16 cars were removed, so the place is looking much, much better! In addition to the cars and parts, about 30 old light poles, and 25 tons of garbage and debris were removed this summer. The lowest section was too wet and mucky, so a 300-foot sub-surface drainpipe was added and a network of surface channels to help it all drain. Craig Norman of NSAA used his bulldozer talent by putting in the final contours. Bob Stehn and Annette Brion probably filled by hand 20 trash cans with old cans, glass, wire, rags, and plastic. It was a major job and a lot of the junk is finally gone!

PHOTO BY **BARB JOHNSON**

Bob Stehn and Jim Singleton work at the site, chipping up piles of cut alder.

Thanks to all the ski club volunteers who chipped in to help when they could this summer. Stalwarts included Bob Stehn, Jim and Ros Singleton, Mike Beiergrohslein, Barb and Steve Johnson, and Kristi Brown plus eight other volunteers: Sam Newbury, Aurora Agee, Ray Camissa, Lucy Galloway and Kanon, Nyle Brown, and Monica Sanchez and Camilla. We are ready for these exciting new improvements. We are especially grateful to Bill and Annette Brion, Bob Stehn, and Jeff Urbanus for their help to make this project come to fruition. We will all be enjoying these improvements for many years to come!

Get the kiddos, and adults, ready: Junior Nordic season will be here soon

PHOTOS BY **BARB JOHNSON**

Junior Nordic skiers on the Beach Lake Trails.

Sign-ups on Oct. 1

Winter is fast approaching and it is about time to begin signing up for the Jr. Nordic season again. The Junior Nordic Committee for CERNSC has been meeting since August to get things rolling for the new year. We are excited to have Aurora Agee as the new coordinator, replacing Ted Stille who moved with his family to the Lower 48. Aurora has coached in Jr. Nordic programs throughout the state and brings a wealth of experience, enthusiasm, and talent with her as the new coordinator.

Join us for a fun-filled season! Sign-ups begin Oct. 1 at **cernsc.org/registration/**.

Part of our Jr. Nordic committee at a recent meeting discuss the schedule, coaches, training, T-shirts, and more. From left are Junior Nordic Coordinator Aurora Agee, Debbie Slater, Brian Slater, Lucy Galloway and Jess Hutchings.

Coaches needed

The CERNSC is still looking for more coaches for the Jr. Nordic program. If you might be interested in coaching for the ski season or being an assistant or back-up coach, we would welcome your help. Please email Aurora Agee at erjrnordic@gmail.com.

Coaching for the CERNSC Jr. Nordic program is a volunteer position. However, by coaching, your children are given priority in being able to sign up for the season. Coaches receive a coveted coaches jacket, too, and we offer some training. Aurora is planning skills training sessions for coaches and more specific training for how to help kids learn to ski and enjoy the sport. What a gift you can give to others – the lifelong, healthy sport of Nordic Skiing! Please reach out if you have an interest or share this information with someone who you think would like to coach.

Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks

Fairbanks, Alaska

SKIING UNDER THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

P.O. Box 80111, Fairbanks, AK 99708-0111
Competition Office — 907-474-4242
Competition Fax — 907-474-2073
Racing Hotline — 907-457-4434
nscfairbanks.org

AROUND THE INTERIOR

Norris wins Mount Marathon again

Former Fairbanksan David Norris proved that he's still as awesome a mountain runner as he is a Nordic skier by winning Mount Marathon for the fourth time! In an interview with the Anchorage Daily News, Norris, who also won in 2018 and 2021, was shooting to break his 2016 record of 41:26.

"All spring I wanted to get my own record," he said. "In my own mind, I thought there's no reason I should be slower. But the conditions today were definitely super slow. I got to the top and looked at my watch and I was like 'It's behind schedule.' "

See the ADN story here: **tinyurl.com/3u8chtha**; See an Alaska Sports Report story here: **tinyurl.com/3u4dwsuc**.

Two other Fairbanks finishers were listed in the results: Kenny Brewer, who finished 12 in the men's race, and Eileen Fisher, who finished 217 in the women's race. Ari Endestad, another former Fairbanksan, finished 34th. **adn.com/sports/2023/07/04/2023-mount-marathon-results/**

Norwegian film full of ski chase scenes

If you're missing the ski season already, you can geek out on film. We recommend the 2016 Norwegian film "The Last King." It is based on events that are the basis for the Birkebeiner cross-country ski races in Norway and America (Wisconsin). While apparently suffering some in historical accuracy, the film has been highly rated, and it's got many good ski chase scenes! As an added benefit to NSCF members, one of the films heroes looks a lot like NSCF member Donovan Granger!

NSCF seeking Junior Nordics coaches

Our youth skiers are in need of your help! We have lots of excited, budding Nordic skiers ready to enjoy this amazing snow and not enough volunteer coaches to go around. You do not need experience, just a positive attitude and love of skiing. If you are interested, please contact Susan Kramer (juniornordics@nscfairbanks.org; 907-371-9564).

Military RAP Is now SAP, costs $10 annually

The United States Army Garrison Alaska now has a fee for getting a Sikes Act Permit (formerly known as the Recreational Access Permit. People already holding a permit won't have to pay until their current permit expires and a new one is purchased. The permit is needed for some Birch Hill area trails. The permit is rarely enforced (most people never see Army enforcement personnel), but it is the law. To find out more about the permit and how to get one see this article: **nscfairbanks.org/2021/12/03/permits-required-for-using-some-birch-hill-trails/**.

NSCF Calendar keeps you updated

Remember to check the NSCF Calendar for upcoming club events. You can check competition events, social activities and more. Visit **nscfairbanks.org** > calendar for more! You can also "like" the Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks on Facebook to keep up with local events.

Who's Who in the Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks

PRESIDENT
Chris Puchner
president@nscfairbanks.org

VICE PRESIDENT
Vacant

SECRETARY
Olivia Karns
secretary@nscfairbanks.org

TREASURER
Ann Jamieson
treasurer@nscfairbanks.org

AT-LARGE MEMBERS
Peter Delamere
Jon Denton
Pam Laker
Dan Darrow

ADULT LESSONS
Susan Schwartz
adultlessons@nscfairbanks.org

JUNIOR NORDICS
Susan Schwartz
juniornordics@nscfairbanks.org

FXC (FAIRBANKS CROSS COUNTRY)
Jesse Wilkins
fxc@nscfairbanks.org

RACE PROGRAM DIRECTOR
John Estle
competitionevents@nscfairbanks.org

MEMBERSHIP
Rebecca Heaton
membership@nscfairbanks.net

BIATHLON
Jim Pasek
biathlon@nscfairbanks.org

TOURING
Eric Troyer
touring@nscfairbanks.org

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
Eric Troyer
newsletter@nscfairbanks.org
For more contact information
nscfairbanks.org/about/

Make tracks straight to a skier's door

The Alaska Nordic Skier is mailed directly to 3,000 ski enthusiasts every month. When you advertise with us, you won't have to break new trail to get your word out. • **nordicskieradvertising@gmail.com**

Fairbanks Comprehensive Trail Plan update passes

BY ERIC TROYER

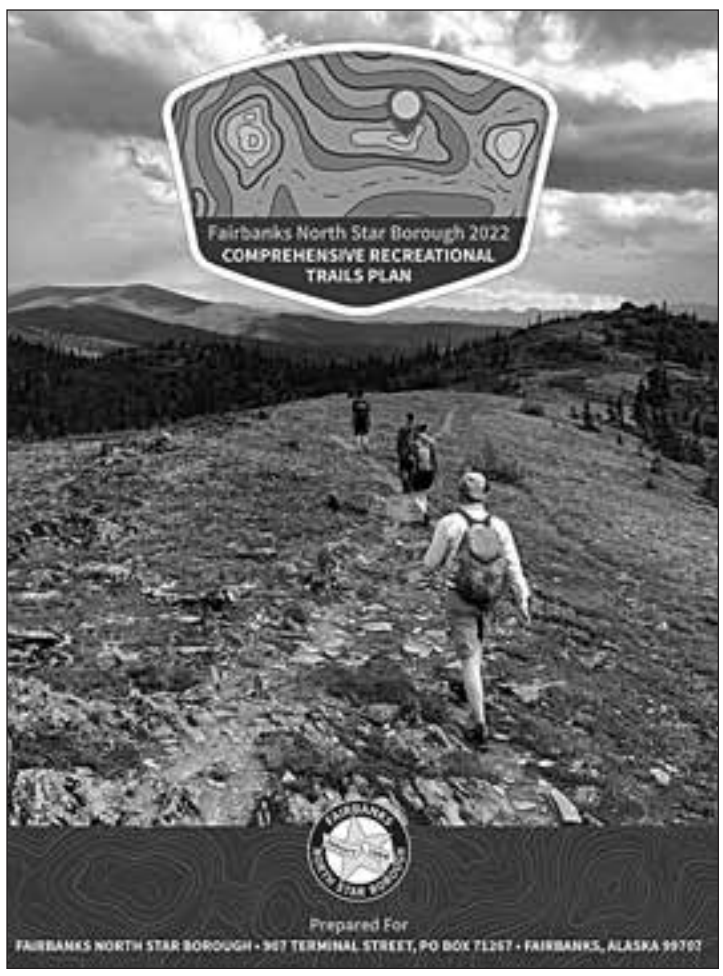
In June, the Fairbanks Borough Assembly passed the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan update – almost fully intact and by a 7-2 vote. A last-minute compromise deal devised by Assemblyman Aaron Lojewski, and then refined by Mayor Bryce Ward and his staff, assuaged most of the private property concerns of several assembly members. In the end, only Assemblymembers Barbara Haney and Brett Rotermund voted against the plan update. And during comments at the end of the meeting, Assemblyman Rotermund said he was pleased to see the compromise work.

"Even though I stuck to my 'no' vote, I'm pretty happy this thing passed," he said.

To get the compromise, the plan update was changed in two significant ways: The definition of C trails was changed so that it now gives borough staff more latitude to expend resources on those trails; Several trails new to the plan were reclassified from A and B trails to C trails.

To find out more detail about the compromise – including how a planned trail to connect Birch Hill Rec Area trails to Creamer's Field trails was not reclassified – see this Interior Alaska Trails blog post: **tinyurl.com/24kzvw6r**.

In related news, a planned Steese/Johansen intersection, slated to start in 2025, will include a trail tunnel for a planned trail that would connect Birch Hill Rec Area trails to the ADMA-Creamer's Field trails. That trail was included in the compromise that allowed the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan update to pass. However, as of deadline, funding for the tunnel had yet to be found. The project has received support from several organizations including the Fairbanks Borough Assembly, the Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce, and FAST (Fairbanks Area Surface Transportation) Planning. For more information on this project, there are a couple of posts about it on the Interior Alaska Trails website: **tinyurl.com/557s8k2z**. For more information on the intersection project go here: **dot.alaska.gov/nreg/steese-johansen/**. A Fairbanks Daily News-Miner story on the intersection also has information on the trail tunnel. Read the article here: **tinyurl.com/yc65nsa9**



NSCF hosts first Annual Meeting in several years

BY ERIC TROYER

For the first time since 2019 the Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks held its annual member meeting as an in-person event! Thank you to everyone who helped organize and who attended the event, which happened in July and combined a meeting and social picnic. The contributions of staff members, volunteers, and board members were acknowledged, as were significant events of the past season. We also had yard games.

The current financial status of the club was summarized, and board appointments were approved. It was also a good opportunity for the board and membership to hear from each other and enjoy a pleasant evening. Just before the meeting, the NSCF released its 2022-23 Annual Report. The report is available online here: **tinyurl.com/zm7teykp**.

Several days before the meeting, a thank you picnic was held to honor and thank four people for their service to the NSCF. Two of the honored recently retired from long years of service to the club. John Estle, Director of Competition Events, and Norma Haubenstock, Coordinator of Ski Race Volunteers, have served the club for more than 20 years. Also honored were Steve Taylor, chairman of the organizing committee for the highly successful 2023 Junior National Cross Country Skiing Championships, and his wife Maria, who provided invaluable support. If you see John, Norma, Steve, or Maria, please thank them for all they have done for the club.

PHOTOS BY **ROY EARNEST**

NSCF President Chris Puchner and Director of Skier Development Christina Turman give reports at the annual meeting.

NSCF Annual Meeting attendees and Director of Skier Development Christina Turman share a laugh.

SCUM repair Start Mesa ski racks

BY ERIC TROYER

Over the summer, several SCUM volunteered time to repair the dilapidated ski racks on the Start Mesa. Several of the racks had broken pegs and the paint was wearing off.

Dan Johnson and Dermot Cole repaired broken boards on the racks, sawed off all the dowels (broken and otherwise), and replaced them with 2x2s across the top. The 2x2s don't look as nice as dowels, but they are much stronger, and they strengthen the racks instead of weakening them (which dowels do when holes are drilled into the boards). The Carpenter's Union did the same on the other racks last year.

Eric Troyer belt-sanded the edges of the 2x2s to smooth them out a bit. He also coordinated the project. Tom Wickwire and Andy Blossy pressure washed and painted the racks, as well as the rack near the Timing Hut door and the rack in front of Rikke's Roadhouse.

This is the culmination of a project to refurbish all the ski racks at Birch Hill. In Summer 2022, the Carpenters Local Union 1243 donated supplies, time, and expertise to the refurbish the rest of the racks. Some of the boards were splitting and many of the dowels had broken off. Unfortunately, the union didn't have time to refurbish the racks on the Start Mesa, so the SCUM stepped forward to finish the job.

Thanks to all for helping with this project!

(SCUM stands for Susan's Class of Untrainable Men, though the U can stand for an uncountable number of adjectives. SCUM is a social group of skiers, and many spend all winter training – if you want to call it that – to do the NSCF's Sonot Kkaazoot ski marathon in March.)

PHOTO BY **ERIC TROYER**

SCUM members Dan Johnson, foreground, and Dermot Cole repair the ski racks on the Start Mesa at Birch Hill Recreation Area in June.

BLM denies permit for helicopter day tours at Tolovana

BY ERIC TROYER

In May, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) denied a permit for day tours at Tolovana Hot Springs that would have included helicopter landings. A public release announcing the decision was dated May 24. Below is from the decision statement:

A field inspection was conducted by BLM staff in mid-February, 2023, which illustrated a number of issues with the proposal for which no reasonable mitigations could be identified. The rationale for denial included increased noise and reduced bather privacy resulting from the proposed action that would likely create recreation conflicts and diminish user experiences of Tolovana Hot Springs Ltd guests. Other issues noted were a lack of sufficient water flow and water temperature from the seeps near the proposed tub location to support the proposal, and safety concerns arising from helicopter operations in close proximity to public recreational use. Due to the decision to deny the permit for the above stated reasons based on a field inspection by BLM staff, an environmental analysis was not completed.

NATHANIEL WILDER/ALASKA PUBLIC MEDIA

Skiers make their way toward Tolovana Hot Springs in 2012.

According to the proposal submitted late last year, a hot tub would have been brought in for the operation and tours would have been done via helicopter with a maximum of three landings per day. You can find the public release regarding the decision, as well as other documents including a scoping report on which the decision was based at **eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2021127/570**.

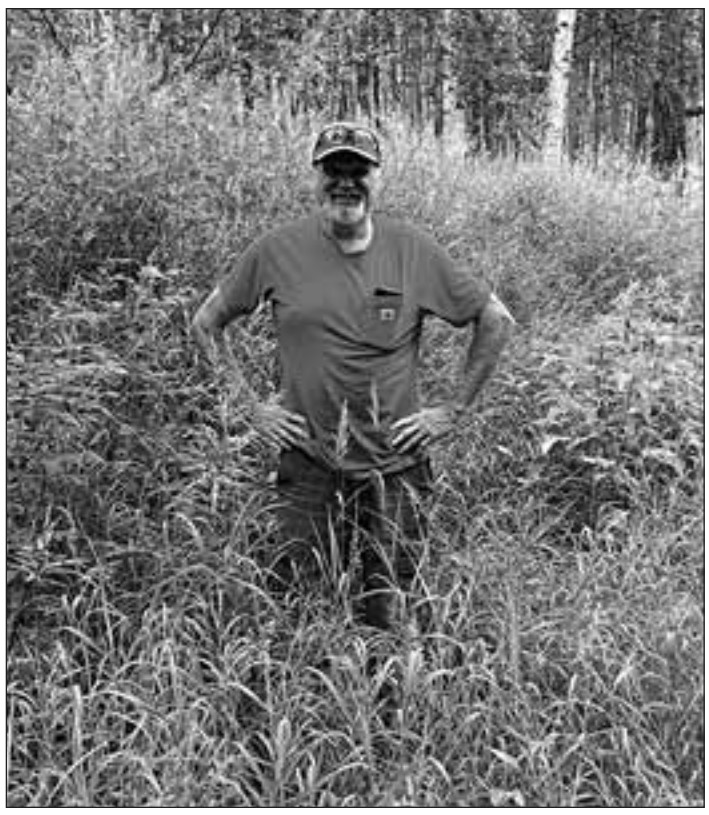
NSCF starts mowing Birch Hill trails

BY ERIC TROYER

The Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks has added a new service to its members and the public. During the winter of 2022-23, the club got a 2010 Kubota mower from the borough that they no longer needed. Thank you to Mayor Bryce Ward and the Borough Assembly for making it happen!

This summer, NSCF groomers put it to good use mowing the trails at Birch Hill Recreation Area. As Birch Hill summer trails users know, in the past the grass could get a bit on the long side on some of the trails before the Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks & Recreation Department did the fall mowing before ski season starts. Now trail users can use nicely groomed trails throughout the summer.

If you have enjoyed the club's mowing efforts, please consider donating to the Birch Hill Trail fund to help cover the cost of fuel, maintenance of the mower, and wages for the groomers. Use the link (**nordicskiclubof-fairbanks.wildapricot.org/Donate/**) or use the "Support NSCF" dropdown menu and go to "Donate to the Trails Fund" on the club's main page: **nsc-fairbanks.org/**. Thank you!



PHOTOS BY **BILL HUSBY**

Head Groomer Tom Helmers stands on Moilanen Meadows Trail before and after the mowing.

Bill Husby shows off his mowing skills.

STATEWIDE

Anchorage biathletes target podiums in East Coast summer racing

Anchorage biathletes had a busy racing summer competing in Canada and Vermont! Fortunately, the traditional heat and humidity stayed away so the Alaskans acclimated easily to the amazing venues.

The first event was the NORAM Summer Cup hosted at the Valcartier Biathlon Training Center near Quebec City, Canada. The Anchorage Biathlon Club (ABC), coached by Olympian Jean Paquet, sent four athletes to compete with Canada's finest. Elias

Watson made the podium in both the 9km Sprint (third place) and 15km (first!) even after racing up to the Youth Men's division. Other biathlete and finishes include Grayso Melocik (fifth), Maxwell Richarson (seventh),and Levi Watson (eighth).

Next, the Alaskans traveled to Jericho, Vermont, for the U.S. Biathlon Rollerski Nationals held at Camp Ethan Allan, where ABC athletes had seven podiums over the two days of racing. Joining the group was Elias Soule, who raced up to finish third

PHOTO BY **DEANA WATSON**

Alaskan's Levi Watson (bronze), and Maxwell Richardson (Silver) at the U.S. Biathlon Rollerski Nationals in Jericho, Vermont.

in both the Junior Men's Sprint and Pursuit. Other sprint podium finishes included Melocik (third), who had the best shooting performance of all Youth Men (0,1), Richardson (second), along with Levi Watson (thirrd) in the Men's U17.

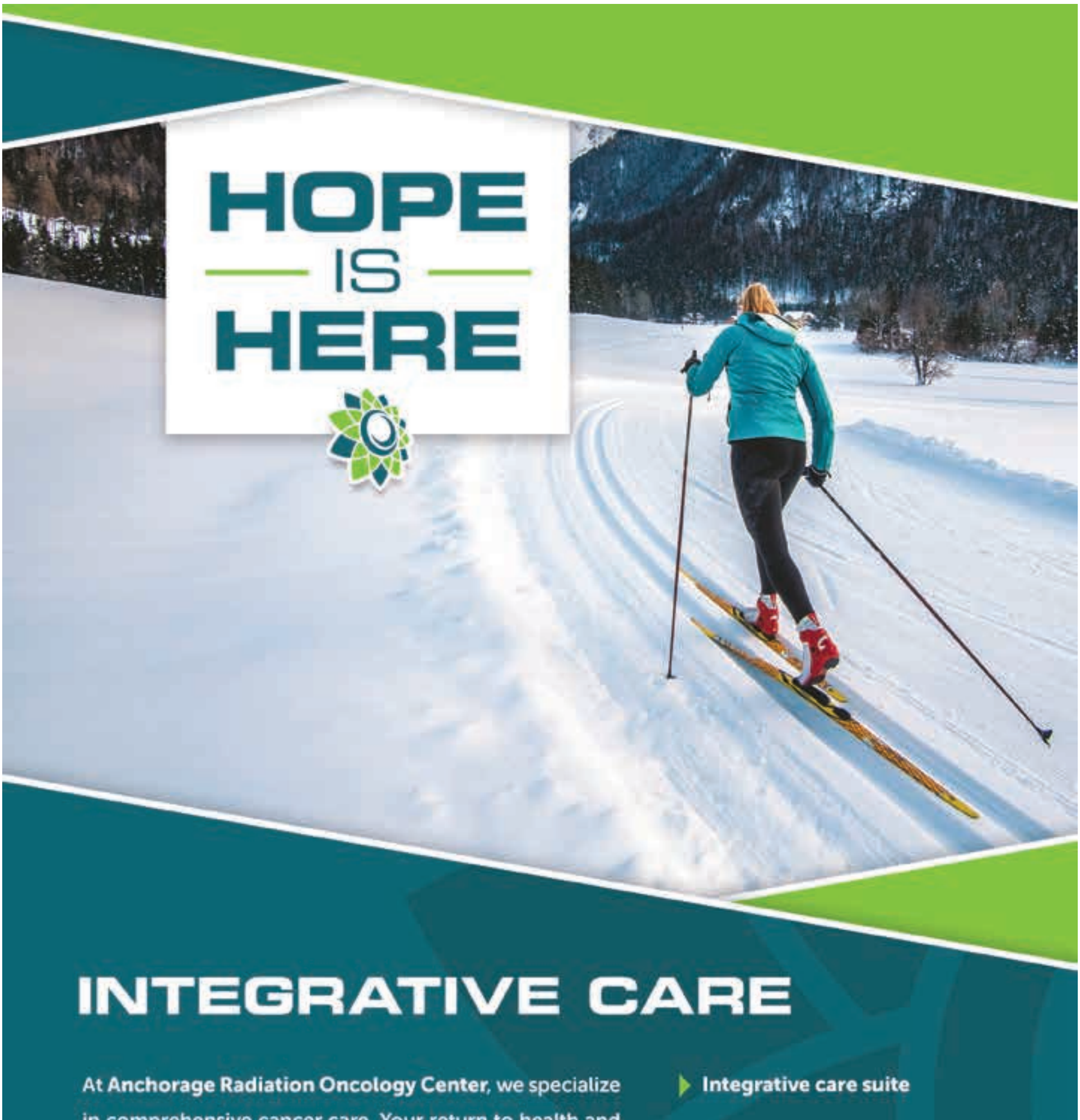
Among the competitive field were impressive Alaska athletes, Travis Cooper (Kenai) who now races on the U.S. National Guard Biathlon Team, and Eagle River's Helen Wilson, who

PHOTO COURTESY **U.S. BIATHLON ASSOCIATION**

Biathletes from across the country, including Alaska, competed in the U.S. Biathlon Rollerski Nationals in Jericho, Vermont.

competes with Team CrossCut from Bozeman, Mont.

Of special note, the National Guard Biathlon program celebrated its 50th anniversary during this program. The Ethan Allen Firing Range is home to the NG Biathlon Team which was first formed at Fort Richarson Alaska Army Base (Arctic Valley Range). There are several Alaskans on the current team, as well as U.S. Olympians.



INTEGRATIVE CARE

At **Anchorage Radiation Oncology Center**, we specialize in comprehensive cancer care. Your return to health and wellness is our first priority with naturopathic oncology, acupuncture and massage therapy complementing our state-of-the-art radiation therapy.

- **Integrative care suite**
- **Convenient Midtown location**
- **Easy, up front covered parking**
- **Flexible scheduling**
- **All insurances accepted**

ANCHORAGE
RADIATION
ONCOLOGY
CENTER

907.562.2002
AnchorageRadOnc.com
188 W Northern Lights Blvd #100