

GRAND MESA NORDIC COUNCIL

IF YOU LOVE TO SKI YOU'LL LOVE GMNC

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

New Map and Trail Names

The new GMNC ski map is here! The map features some new trail names that should make things less confusing. Gone are most of the loop numbers, and what was formerly called "loop 3" is now broken into sections with separate names, to make it easier for our ops crew to communicate which section of a trail they're referring to in their grooming reports. Likewise, the Vista Loop is now Vista Ridge and Vista Valley. The map also shows our new snowshoe trail at Skyway as well as the new ski trail we hope to open before we run out of maps. (See next item.)

Recent MSC grad Amanda Moore volunteered her time to work with board member Tom Ela to add topography markers and elevation information to the map. Amanda also used GPS to verify the distances of all trails, and the new map marks steep down hills with a caution symbol.

A big, big thanks to our Map Sponsors:

Delta County Tourism Cabinet; Thuunder Mountain Lodge; Summit Canyon Mountaineering; Jeans Westerner; Board & Buckle; Rocky Mountain Orthopaedics; Grand Mesa Lodge; Bill Heddles Rec. Center; Galaxy Sports and Bikes; Dufford, Waldeck, Milburn & Krohn LLC.

Summit Trail

We've been working with the US Forest Service for years to add a new trail at Skyway, and we hope that a timber sale this summer will finally make way for this long-awaited new route. When completed, the Summit ski trail will add about 4km to our Skyway network. The Summit trail goes from Sunset to the far corner of Vista Valley and will provide more skiing in the trees for those days when the wind is blowing snow. The route also provides some nice hills, but they're worth the effort, since the trail passes several scenic overlooks.

County Line parking lot

The situation at the County Line trail head is an ongoing source of concern. The number of users wanting to use this trail head exceeds the lot's capacity on our high use days, and visibility is poor getting in and out of the parking lot. Add to that the high speed limit on that section of highway, and we've got a dangerous situation on our hands. We are working with the US Forest Service and Mesa and Delta Counties to proceed with a project to expand the parking lot and move it further from the road to improve safety. Unfortunately, in these hard economic times, money for the project has proven hard to come by. You can help. If you're concerned, please write to:

Connie Clementson, District Ranger Grand Valley
Ranger District Grand Mesa cclementson@fs.fed.us

Bruce Hovde, Delta County Commissioner
bhovde@deltacounty.com

Steve Acquafresca
Mesa County Commissioner
Steve.Aquafresca@mesacounty.us

Tell them that this is a safety issue that demands prompt attention.

In the meantime, please carpool and park as tight as you can to help us maximize the space. Use extreme caution when exiting the lot.

Membership

As of the beginning of February, GMNC had 475 members. Our goal for this season is 550. If you're reading a paper copy of this newsletter, but if you're lurking online and haven't paid yet, please do. We depend on your support. We are grateful for your donations at the trailhead boxes, but each paid membership is a data point we can take to decision-makers when we ask for funding for new trails and parking lots. Join today.

Do you have questions or concerns? Contact me at: grandmesanordic@gmail.com

Happy Skiing!

Christie Aschwanden

President

About the GMNC:

The Grand Mesa Nordic Council is a group of people who love to ski. We're a not-for-profit volunteer organization dedicated to the safety, fitness, and fun of cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. We operate under a permit from the U.S. Forest Service, and we groom 54 Kilometers (32.4 miles) of trails at three trail networks on the Grand Mesa: Skyway, County Line and Ward Creek Reservoir.

Meetings:

The GMNC board meets the first Tuesday of every month, alternating between Grand Junction and Delta. All members welcome. Call 856-6783 for details.

Board members:

Christie Aschwanden, President
grandmesanordic@gmail.com
Annie Murphy, Vice-President 623-4424
Dave Knutson, Secretary 527-3969
Tom Ela, Race Director 434-9753
Denis Reich, Newsletter 201-8467
Joe Ramey, 241-6581
Anita Evans&Richard Hypio 872-1168
Jerry & Suzi Evans 243-7143
Bob Kretschman, bobki70@gmail.com
Winslow Robertson 464-0675
Christina Stark 323-3314

Confessions of a Dog Lover

I'm sure a lot of you love to bring your dogs up to County Line or Ward to ski with you. My dog, Peaches, loves it as much as I do. When we arrive she is ready to jump out of her skin with excitement and rolls in the snow first thing! I don't have Peaches on a leash when I ski and I thought other skiers appreciated dogs as much as I do, until....

Last week the GMNC Board got an e-mail from one of our skiers describing a dog bite while training on the trails. The owners claimed the dog was great with people and friendly, but in this case the dog bit hard enough to break the skin of our fellow skier. One suggestion was to limit dogs to the dog loop only. Knowing how many of us are used to going longer distances with our pets, this solution would really restrain our fun.

I confess that I've been projecting my love of dogs on all of my fellow skiers. I now realize that not everyone likes to see Peaches running up to them with her little tail wagging like crazy. After reading about his incident, I'm planning to train Peaches to sit as skiers pass and not approach them. We use this with pedestrians around our home and when cars go by. Why not with skiers? If the training doesn't stick, I'll be putting her in a skijoring outfit or a leash.

Please join me in maintaining control of your dog at all times while on GMNC trails. This is especially true when skate skiers are approaching they can take a nasty fall when a dog interferes with their stride.

P.S. please also toss dog waste well off the trails or, better yet, pack it out. We have dog bags available at County Line, please do not leave your bags there. We have no volunteers who will clean these up and are not willing to pay our groomers to do this instead of grooming. Thanks!

Dave Knutson, Board Member

Operations Update

Skiership and enthusiasm continue to be strong as we reach toward Spring. I'm confident we'll see some big snowfall amounts on a re-occurring basis ala Grand Mesa as we head into March.

The Double Track Classic set that we spread around the system over Valentine's Day weekend was a huge success, if you go by the comments from couple's and families out on the trails as well as the dollar figures from the donation boxes. It was largest amount we've seen for a three day period so far in 2011. I'm certain the weather helped also, and we really lucked out with bright sunny days for all special events in the past month. Look for this set again on occasion as we finish out the year, and please share your feedback.

Having some condition updates at the trail heads would be a tremendous improvement. Not all users check the website or receive our grooming updates, and with so many folks coming in from outside Mesa and Delta counties, information regarding the sets and when it was last done would be beneficial to all. In conjunction with this, an enlargement of the new map would be appropriate also. The next step is financing as the pretty picture has already been drawn. I would think getting some business sponsorship to cover some of this would be an excellent approach, but we'll need to work with the Forest Service regarding what type (if any) of exposure we can extend to potential donors.

Back to skiing – I know that many of you get the opportunity to ski elsewhere over the season. Please do not hesitate to share your experience and observations with myself or the board members. All too often we keep walking though the back door, and loose touch with the perception of a first time user entering from the front.

See you on the trails-

Doug Conant, Operations Manager

Mesa State Ski Team

The Mesa State Nordic Ski Team competed well in its final Rocky Mountain Conference races of the season held in Leadville, Colorado on February 26th and 27th. The team competed in a 1km skate sprint race on Saturday that included qualifying rounds and finals, and a 7km classic race on Sunday.

Mesa State skier Brooke Bosman entered the weekend as the conference champion wearing the yellow race bib. She won the women's sprint race with a substantial gap ahead of the second place finisher, and placed 2nd in the classic race. In the men's sprint race first year skier Dustan Wanstrath let the Mavericks, finishing 5th. Tre Anastasia finished close behind Wanstrath in 7th Place.

Bosman held on to her title over the weekend and finished the season as the Rocky Mountain Conference Champion. Maverick Kelsey Follett also ended the season well ranked in 4th place within the RMC. The women's team finished the season ranked second in the conference, behind the University of Wyoming by only 7 points. The team has also built a strong men's team this season that has increased from only 1 athlete last year to 6 this year.

The team's final event for the season will be competing in the USCSA National Championships. The team has qualified 5 women and 5 men to race at USCSA National Championships, which means that there will be a full men's and women's team competing. National Championships will be held March 8th – 12th in Sun Valley, Idaho, and will include sprint, classic, and skate ski races.

It has been a very successful year for the team. We are grateful for all of our supporters and fans that have helped us work towards achieving our goals. Thank you!

Christina Stark, MSC Ski Team Coach

Gliders

This year, we had thirty-two children complete our January ski program. The young skiers showed great improvement from the first lesson to the last. A big thank you is owed to our incredible coaches. Kenton Shaw coached the J4 and J3 skiers, Callie West, Sarah Shaw, and Tom Lambert coached the J5 skiers, and Dave Knutson, Kristian Hill, and Annie and Chris Murphy coached the J6 skiers. We celebrated the end of the lessons with ski races on January 30th.

Three of our Grand Mesa Gliders traveled to Aspen from February 12th through 13th to compete in the Junior festival races with other teams from all over Colorado. This was Quinn Baker's second year at the J3 races, and his skiing has improved tremendously. A hearty effort was seen by Casey Crawford of Montrose in the J4 races. Both Casey and Quinn skied a 3K classic race on Saturday and a 3K freestyle race on Sunday. Jordan Miner of Mesa represented the GMG in the J5 classic race on Saturday. Jordan skied strong, placing sixth in the race.

Annie Murphy, Gliders Coordinator

Skis for Kids

The season is in full swing and many kids out there have been sliding away on SFK equipment! Due to the high use during February and March, please make sure you call or email us well in advance of your planned outing with local youth. Here's what we need from you: Number of skiers in your group; Date(s) you wish to ski, with an alternate date to back it up; First names of skiers with shoe size, height and weight of each skier. Contact us as soon as possible to line up your trip!
Email: arvn@tds.net, Phone: 872-1168

Thank you for sharing your love of the outdoors with children!

Anita Evans and Richard Hypio, SFK Volunteers

Grand Mesa Gliders Winslow-Lions Loop (Classic) Results:

J3 (ages 12-13)

Quinn Baker, Palisade, 11:47

J4 (ages 10-11)

Casey Crawford, Montrose, 17:08

Kacy Henwood, Olathe, 17:30

J5 (ages 8-9)

Will Ela, Hotchkiss, 18:05

Jordan Miner, Mesa, 18:15

Baxter Waltermire, Hotchkiss, 18:30

Nadia Hill, Hotchkiss, 19:10

Andy Nyikos, Paonia, 20:50

Karsen Henwood, Olathe, 20:51

Grand Mesa Race Series

Vintage Ski Race: Jan 29th, 2011
Skyway, Grand Mesa

***** Newsletter Idea? *****
If you have a story idea for the newsletter please send it to our editor,
Denis Reich: reichdenis@gmail.com

On January 29, the Mesa State Nordic Ski Team and GMNC hosted the First Annual Vintage Ski Race. Participants turned out in classic ski attire and old fashioned skis. It turns out, lots of people had wooden skis in their garage awaiting just such an occasion. Bamboo ski poles and handmade knickers and sweaters were also on display. Skiers paraded around the sprint course for one lap, then MC Mike Trecker led the crowd in a group vote for the coveted prizes—wooden plaques that Mesa State team members created especially for this occasion.

Competition was fierce. Here are the winners.
Grand Champion Best in Show: Polly Pulver
Best Vintage Ski Attire: Dominic Schiavone

Grand Mesa Classic 10K: Race Results

1	Chris Lange	M WSC	0:32:35
2	Tre Anastasia	M MSC	0:33:33
3	Nick Brown	M Carbondale	0:33:44
4	Tom Sunderland	M WSC	0:33:59
5	Stefan Zavislan	M USAFA	0:34:17
6	Ansel Schimpff	M WSC	0:34:28
7	Dominic Schiavone	M Durango	0:34:33
8	Patrick Rodgers	M UW	0:34:36
9	Terry Daley	M Ridgway	0:36:23
10	Zach Bochanski	M UW	0:37:03
11	Dustin Wanstrath	M MSC	0:37:46
12	Brooke Bosman	F MSC	0:38:09
13	Adam Englehardt	M USAFA	0:38:31
14	Corey Landis	M USAFA	0:39:45
15	John Horn	M Grand Junction	0:40:33
16	Doug Johnston	M Grand Junction	0:40:46
17	Winslow Robertson	M Palisade	0:42:10
18	Helen Carlsen	F Basalt	0:42:34
19	Tom Morrison	M MSC	0:43:29
20	Brian Bentz	M USAFA	0:43:30
21	Tom Suplizio	M Grand Junction	0:43:33
22	Louis Hotchkiss	M MSC	0:43:47
23	Christina Stark	F Grand Junction	0:44:11
24	Amanda Moore	F MSC	0:44:41
25	Stoney Molina	M MSC	0:44:48
26	Kelsey Follett	F MSC	0:44:49
27	Kenton Shaw	M Grand Junction	0:45:26
28	Joe Anastasia	M Fort Collins	0:45:59
29	Catherine Schmidt	F UW	0:46:13
30	Dan Schultz-Ela	M Hotchkiss	0:46:41
31	Ken Pill	M Grand Junction	0:46:45
32	Sam Rinaldi	M USAFA	0:47:00
33	Elizabeth Eikelberger	F UW	0:47:13
34	Steve Ela	M Hotchkiss	0:47:36
35	Laura Abbott	F USAFA	0:48:39
36	Brad Burritt	M Hotchkiss	0:48:48
37	Bill Tiernan	M Grand Junction	0:49:07
38	Jessica Laucher	F USAFA	0:49:57
39	Chris Murphy	M Palisade	0:50:47
40	Ava Bell	F UW-DEV	0:50:48
41	Chuck Bodie	M Grand Junction	0:52:24
42	Tom Ela	M Grand Junction	0:53:43
43	Doug Jones	M Grand Junction	0:54:00
44	Kara Rechar	F UW	0:54:14
45	David Strong	M Cedaredge	0:54:17
46	Megan McGrath	F MSC	0:54:18
47	Courtney Berg	F MSC	0:54:23
48	Ann Carlin	F MSC	0:54:30
49	Janie Duffy	F Grand Junction	0:55:46
50	Laura Johnston	F Grand Junction	0:57:30
51	Susy Ellison	F Carbondale	0:59:52
52	Quinn Baker	M Palisade	1:00:28
53	Dave Herz	M Paonia	1:02:29
54	Dave Poling	M Grand Junction	1:02:50
55	Jeff Holt	M Crested Butte	1:04:43
56	Rich Cardwell	M Fruita	1:06:03
57	Stu Krebs	M Montrose	1:06:10
58	Sarah Shaw	F Grand Junction	1:10:00

Grand Mesa Classic 10K: Jan 30th, 2011 Skyway, Grand Mesa

Chris Lange of Western State College was both the collegiate and overall winner of the Grand Mesa Classic 10K ski race. He was followed by Tre Anastasia of Mesa State College and the first citizen racer, Nick Brown of Carbondale. Mesa State College dominated the collegiate women's division taking the first 3 places led by Brooke Bosman, also the overall female winner. The top citizen female was Helen Carlsen of Basalt. Univ. of Wyoming and Air Force were the other colleges competing. As usual, a wide range of citizen racers participated, ages 13 into the 70's.

It was brisk waiting for the race to begin but once we started moving down the course the temperature felt comfortable. And we really didn't care anyway, since it was such a treat to be skiing in the hard fast tracks set by our crack groomers Doug Conant and Jon Canty. You can tell it was fast by checking the top times. Thanks as always to our volunteers Shirley and Bill Ela, Nilam Hypio, Anita Evans and Mike and Angela Classen. We had some great door prizes, too!

Thanks to our sponsors:

REI Palisade Brewery
Summit Canyon Mountaineering Clif Bar and Luna Bar
Peach Tree Distillers (makers of Goat Vodka) Justin's Nut Butters (available at Vitamin Cottage)

59	Steve DeFeyer	M Purdy Mesa	1:10:08
60	Virgil Carnage	M Grand Junction	1:10:52
61	Bill Meehan	M Valdosta	1:12:49
62	Tom Jones	M Grand Junction	1:12:57
63	Anky Von Schnoplau	F Hotchkiss	1:14:05
64	Chris DePuy	M Montrose	1:19:16
65	Ken Watson	M Montrose	1:21:45
66	Jean-Jacques d'Aquin	M Montrose	1:28:00
67	Ralph Wahlers	M Grand Junction	1:30:09
68	Shannon Raborn	F Paonia	1:32:42
69	Gisela Koplin	F Rifle	1:32:53

Tom Ela,
Race Director

Save Us a Call!

Are you skiing this year? Did you forget to renew your membership? Time sure flies when you're having a good time. Help us keep the good times coming by rejoining now. You can go on our website and click join or pick up one of the envelopes at the trailheads and send us a check.

During February, GMNC volunteers will be calling lapsed members to invite them to renew their memberships this year. Please save us a call and rejoin now.

As of the end of January, we had 463 members compared to a total membership last year of 519. Can we bust through the goal of 550? You can help us by renewing your membership. If you are already a member, ask your fellow skiers if they are members and encourage them to join. Together we can all donate to keep up our fantastic level of grooming.

Each year's donations are used for the next year's grooming season. This way GMNC never runs into a deficit.

web: <http://gmnc.org>
news: grandmesanordicnews.blogspot.com
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