



Schenectady Wintersports Club

Northern New York Paddlers

Mohawk Valley Hiking Club

Newsletters

November 2023

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- Feb 2 - 5 Wintersports Weekend

- Mar 4 North Creek Snow Train Festival
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*****CORRECTIONS**

Warren Miller Movie Crew will be at Clubhouse Nov 19 **NOT** Nov 25 as previously reported

The President's Column

Coming soon. Stay tuned.....

News From the Clubhouse

Clubhouse Confirmation.. I Booked a Room, Now What?

Hey SWC clubhouse fans! Have you booked a room at the house recently? We made some changes to the reservation form that you probably already read about in the newsletter. Thank you to everyone who is cooperating by entering their Membership number. There are a few who need to get with the program, and we hope to see them fill that in on their next reservation.

One thing that is VERY IMPORTANT to keep in mind. After you complete a booking, the system sends you a confirmation email. This email is not only your receipt but it contains the door code you need to get into the clubhouse! Save it somewhere, print it, do whatever, so that when it's time to come to the clubhouse, you are not scrambling or frantically emailing someone.

If you do not receive a Confirmation Email after completing the reservation, please follow these steps:

1. Check your SPAM folder to be sure you did not get the email. (If you do not know what a SPAM folder is or how to find it, Google how to find the Spam folder for your email account).
2. If you still cannot find the email, please let us know at swcbookingstowe@gmail.com.

IMPORTANT: When you book the room on BEDS24, make sure you type your EMAIL address correctly. If you do not enter a valid, accurate email address, the system cannot send you the confirmation email

Off Season Weekly Usage of the Clubhouse

The club is taking reservations for weekly usage of the clubhouse for next year. Here is the info about the “off season” offer, and how to make a booking. All bookings are subject to our cancellation policy based on the start date of the reservation:

- Cancel more than 2 weeks in advance of start date - 100% refundable
- Cancel within 2 weeks to 5 days of start date - 80% refundable
- Cancel within less than 5 days of start date - 50% refundable

As of 10/31/2023, Off season bookings include the whole clubhouse for a weekly period. Below are the conditions for taking advantage of the offer:

- The booking price for 2023 is \$750, subject to change for 2024.
- April 15 to September 15 is considered off season.
- The weekly usage period will be Saturday to Saturday. You can book up to 2 weeks through the Off Season Booking offer.
- All persons staying at the Clubhouse must be members and confirmed before staying at the house.
- You must fill out the Weekly Booking request form found on the website Book A Reservation page to request your stay. The section with guest names and membership number must be completed and accepted within 2 weeks of your stay.

The reason we are defining the stay as Saturday to Saturday period is to maximize availability for all members. (It is also the standard for timeshare bookings). You will be notified if the house is available for the weekly booking within 2 - 3 business days.

This is what the page looks like to find the Off Season Weekly Booking form. You can find it by clicking the menu SWC Clubhouse > Reservations > Book A Reservation. Please fill out the form, even if not all your guests are currently members. We will work with you to have everyone registered before your stay.

[Home](#) » [SWC Clubhouse](#) » [Reservations](#) » [Book A Reservation](#)

SWC CLUBHOUSE RESERVATIONS

BOOK A ROOM

REQUEST OFF SEASON WEEKLY BOOKING

The request form is a Google form that looks like this:

SWC Clubhouse Booking Request - Weekly

Have your Membership ID available before filling out the form.

This form is for use with OFF SEASON WEEKLY BOOKINGS. All off season exclusive rentals are for WEEKS only. If another member books a room for part of the period, then the full house cannot be booked exclusively. OFF SEASON is considered to be April 15 through September 15. The WEEK is considered SATURDAY through SATURDAY.

Please enter your name and SWC Membership ID, along with the information for all guests staying with you at the clubhouse. Membership IDs can be found on the SWC website at swcweb.org using the Member directory lookup. If you do not need all of the Guest fields, enter NA in the field. Be aware that all guests must be active members of the club.

The Reservations Team will review the request and notify you within 2 - 3 business days if the requested dates are available, and to arrange payment.

Questions may be submitted to swcbookingstowe@gmail.com.

Name of Person making the request *

Short answer text

Membership ID of person making the request

Short answer text

Dates Requested *

Long answer text

Name of Guest 1, and is the guest a Member? *

Short answer text

Any questions or other changes to your reservation must be made through:
swcbookingstowe@gmail.com.

Fall Work Party almost here Nov 2 to 5

By the time you read this, we should be deep into demolishing the north chimney. We had problems with it over the years with leaking and failing mortar. So, we had the roofer remove the top of the chimney and now we can make space in the north side rooms by removing the rest of the chimney down to the basement. It runs down through the north side bedrooms and will require repair of the walls and floors when we are done. Photos in the December Chatter.

While we will have a number of teams attacking the chimney, a 160 year old house still requires cleaning and preparation for the winter months. So, there are the filters to change, paint to be touched up, sump pumps to be serviced, bedding to be cleaned, and many more items on the to-do list.

Submitted by Bill Kornrumpf

Total Eclipse Weekend at Stowe

by Ellen Bidell

On Monday, April 8, 2024, a total solar eclipse will cross North America, passing over Mexico, the United States, and Canada. The Burlington/Stowe area is in the path of totality, which means for about 5 minutes in the early afternoon, the area will be in total darkness. The partial eclipse will last for several hours.

Skiing is still great in the area in early April, so put on your calendar to join us for the weekend as John and I host a Total Eclipse party at the SWC Clubhouse. May involve a bonfire, Blue Moon beer and some Bonnie Raitt, but will definitely be a good time!

Ski Trips and Packages

Early Season Ski Clinic at Stowe Dec 7 to 10

Submitted by Bill Kornrumpf

There are still a few rooms available in the clubhouse and possibly a room or two at the Stowe Motel if you would like to participate in the Clinic. Kick off the weekend Thursday Night with a Welcome Party mixer at the Stowe Motel. Friday features a morning free skiing warm-up, and afternoon 1/2 day of instruction, Saturday consists of all day instruction, and Sunday 1/2 day instruction in the morning, afternoon free skiing. There are also many activities in the Stowe area for non-skiers.

For more information, go to <https://www.swcweb.org/event-5397373> You can register for the Clinic through that web page.

The Future of Ski Trips

By Rick Cobello

The following is not a definitive answer, but as I survey the landscape on various issues, it is worth a discussion.

The Weather

Whatever your views on Climate Change, the weather has been getting warmer. Let's go back to the 1980 Olympic Games. I was there for the duration. They were piling snow to have a small hope of having the events. Thankfully, it got cold and snowed for a tremendous Olympic experience.

Skip to a trip to Alaska 8 years ago; Alaska experienced one of the worst snow droughts in its history. We were fortunate to see the Iditarod in Anchorage. The city had to bring in 100s of truckloads of snow and fill the streets because there was no snow there!

These are just snapshots, but the large resorts have yet to turn their back on the changing weather conditions. However, they need cold temperatures and water

to pump out snow. NY is fortunate we have plenty of water; right now, we are in good shape. The Rockies are dry; water is always a concern.

Ski resorts are investing millions of dollars to pump out the most snow they can. Their investment in infrastructure is one of the most expensive projects in recent years. The State of New York has invested millions in improving snowmaking to provide a good customer experience. West Mountain, a small ski resort in NY, can fill the mountain with snow in 24 hours using large turbo stands. If a resort takes investment in infrastructure seriously, it will be safe in the long term.

The Airlines

After the government bailout, airlines are still trying to return to normalcy. This quarter is not helping their cause. All three budget airlines had losses in the hundreds of millions. Southwest had a 30% decline in revenue in the 3rd quarter. I am no airline genius, but this means there will be fewer flights and more expensive tickets. One of the trips I helped coordinate this year had airline pricing that stayed the same. Airline pricing usually improves from the booking date of the trip, from 9 months ago, but this year, the pricing did not budge. The airlines will only offer a limited number of seats for a designated price, thus limiting the number of skiers who may book the trip due to needing more fares at a decent price. The airlines are concentrating on revenue generation rather than filling cheap seats. We can expect continued expensive flights in the ensuing years.

The Lodging

At the large resorts, they want us to plan at least a year ahead of time. Their obligation is to the shareholders! They want to be able to report the resort is mainly filled well in advance of the ski trips in any given year. We prefer ski-in/ski-out accommodations; however, these are becoming increasingly more expensive. A few years ago, a marketing person at one of the large resorts told us they would rather have a family of 4 spend \$10,000 a week than host large ski groups, so ski resorts are moving to limit the weeks for ski club visits. Limiting ski club visits is, of course, all dependent on economic conditions. I am sure the ski resorts will adjust accordingly.

The Price of Admission

\$300.00-day tickets are already on the horizon. This price for day tickets is an unsustainable situation. Mountain resorts will need to be on one of the passes available. This is an opportunity for the smaller mountains to offer a more affordable family product. You do not need a \$30.00 hamburger and a \$5.00 cup of coffee.

One of the more fortunate situations in NY is the number of smaller ski resorts. NY State has the most ski resorts in the country. Colorado ranked as #4. There are plenty of places to ski in NY. There may not be 12,000 ft summits, but there are plenty of mountains that can provide a fun time for little cost.

Time will tell the status of the large resorts in the United States. Europe has its issues that I will not address in this article.

Skiing is in jeopardy as the cost increases and the mean age increases. In 10 years, there will need to be more people to fill the bucket for those who will phase out skiing due to age. The average family of 4 may need help to afford a western trip with ski-in/ski-out accommodations.

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We will continue to search for cost-effective skiing adventures as we move forward as one of the oldest ski clubs in the US.

Enjoy the winter! Your comments are welcome.

Not to Miss

Warren Miller Crew Coming to the Clubhouse

SWC will be helping out at the showing of the film at Spruce peak in Stowe November 19th. The crew will be staying at the house and with it being the final night of the tour, it is fitting the club hosts the end of tour party. Contact johnbidell@yahoo.com if you are interested in attending.

94th Annual Thanksgiving Day Breakfast

7:30 - 10:30 or thereabouts

For the past several years James Schaefer and his family have hosted the breakfast event. Jim is the son of Vincent Schaefer. If you are interested a page has been posted on Facebook events – search under: “94th Annual Thanksgiving Day Breakfast.”

Directions:

Take Route 20 (Western Avenue) west from the Albany area. Approximately 2 miles after the Schenectady County line, turn left on Schoharie Turnpike.. Cross railroad tracks in approximately 3 miles. About 0.3 mile after the railroad crossing, park in designated area on your left.

Follow the blue trail to the Helderhills Lean-to. The lean-to is located on a short spur trail off the blue trail. You won't get lost. Just follow the smells of pancakes, sausages, coffee..

Bring your own plates and cutlery and coffee mug.

You do not need to be a SWC member to attend. Donations are appreciated.

Good to Know

Ski Council Discounts and Stickers

As of 10/24/2023, the ski council has not announced or published any ski discounts. Please hold off on sending SASE envelopes for stickers until there are published discounts.

Skate Sailing Setup Available

Submitted by Bill Kornrumpf

I received this note from George Woodzell offering a skate sailing setup for somebody who is an avid skater who would like to try skate sailing. It does require a large area of clear ice to really appreciate skate sailing. Give him a call or email at gwoodzell@gmail.com. Or, check out an article on Skate Sailing at <https://www.scenichudson.org/viewfinder/the-unlikely-history-of-skate-sailing-upstate/>. The sport started in the US with a Swedish immigrant to Schenectady introducing the sport in 1895.

My father-in-law, Norman Hadley, was a member of the Wintersports Club, and an avid skate-sailor. When he died, part of his equipment came to me and my wife, who can appreciate the sport but would never participate in it. Is there anyone in your club who might be interested in the equipment, which consists of one sail and six or so spars with necessary hardware?

We'd like to put this equipment in the hands of someone who can enjoy it, so we're offering it at no cost.

Please circulate this information to anyone who you think might be interested.

Regards,

George Woodzell (518-527-9468)

Insights from the SWC Admins

Notice.. P.O. Box for the Club has changed

We are in the process of changing over to a new PO Box that is closer to the location of our Membership Secretary who lives in Saratoga Wilton. The new address (below) is also published on the SWC website.

P.O. Box 2072
Wilton, NY 12831

A Few Bits of SWC History

Christman Sanctuary History

The Schenectady Wintersports Club and the Christman Sanctuary in Duanesburg share a common thread which this short history will explain.

The Christman Sanctuary is owned by the Nature Conservancy. The property was acquired in 1970 from the Christman family. Today the land is forested with a network of well-marked hiking trails. A highlight is the Bozenkill, with its 30-foot waterfall and numerous lesser cascades. The Sanctuary is the larger part of the Williams Hollow farm once owned by William and Catherine Christman. Will gained regional notoriety for his poetry in the 1930's, although he remained a farmer for life.

The Mohawk Valley Hiking Club was formed in 1929 by Schenectady native Vincent Schaefer, his brother Paul, and a group of friends. Vincent led the club for the first several years and membership grew rapidly. The Schenectady Wintersports Club was also founded by Vincent in 1932.

The hiking club scheduled dozens of hikes annually. One of their first outings was an exploration of the Bozenkill. A connection was made with Will Christman. Although Vincent was 41 years younger than Will, they shared a common interest in nature and conservation. The Christman's were both self-taught naturalists and were planting trees on abandoned fields. As the relationship

grew stronger the club proposed the development of a wildlife sanctuary on the farm. The Christman's agreed to the proposal and to allow public use. For the next several years club members planted thousands of trees, cleared trails, constructed a lean-to, and publicized the sanctuary.

The club formally dedicated the Williams Hollow Farm as the Christman Bird and Wildlife Sanctuary in 1931. It has been known as the Christman Sanctuary since then and has been visited by thousands of people.

The Mohawk Valley Hiking Club established a tradition when it was founded in 1929. That was cooking an outdoor breakfast on Thanksgiving morning. This breakfast has been held at the sanctuary since 1930. Its popularity was probably never greater than in 1970 when 176 people attended. That was the year that the NYSDOT considered locating the final section of Interstate 88, which was under construction, through the sanctuary. The newspaper reported that 1,200 pancakes and 800 sausages were consumed that morning.

For the past several years James Schaefer and his family have hosted the breakfast event. Jim is the son of Vincent Schaefer. If you are interested a page has been posted on Facebook events – search under: “94th Annual Thanksgiving Day Breakfast.”

Directions:

Take Route 20 (Western Avenue) west from the Albany area.

Approximately 2 miles after the Schenectady County line, turn left on Schoharie Turnpike.

Cross railroad tracks in approximately 3 miles.

About 0.3 mile after the railroad crossing, park in designated area on your left.

Jim Schaefer in front; Bill Gluesing in the back on the right -- 1949



Late 1930s



Sharing the Fire



Lois Perret Schaefer and Vincent Schaefer - parents
Susan, James, and Katherine Schaefer - children



Skiing in the Rotterdam Hills 1927

Jim Schaefer has completed a historical exhibit for one of the display cases in the Rotterdam Town Hall (1100 Sunrise Boulevard, Rotterdam, NY12306) that is located close to the Rotterdam 5 Corners intersection.

The display is focused on ski trails cut on Rotterdam's highest hill, Yantaputchaberg, starting in 1927. It was probably the first designed downhill skiing in New York and following the highly successful Snow Train years, that led to the establishment of commercial skiing in North Creek. Ski enthusiasts enjoyed the state's first rope tow, pulling skiers uphill, ski instruction, ski patrolling of numerous trails from mountaintops and local hospitality -- activities generated by the Schenectady-North Creek Snow Trains. The story is told with historic photographs and traces the chronology of events stimulated by the 1932 Olympics.

Check it out when you have a chance.

Next month in one of the other display cases at Town Hall, He plans to tell the story of Freddie Anderson who in 1950 established the Schenectady Ski School, and who in 1967 set up her program with dozens of highly trained instructors at Rotterdam's Maple Ski Ridge, teaching thousands of local skiers the skills needed to have fun in the winter.

Stay tuned.

Submitted by Bill Kornrumpf from a James Schaefer Ph.D. email



The Northern New York Paddlers

The President's Column

If you happen to stop by The Back Barn Brewery or Wolf Hollow Brewery say hello to Ed. If you've never met him, ask the bartender who he is. Always a good source for descriptions and recommendations on which beer to drink.

Staying Fit During Winter

By Kim Greiner

It's easy to grow lax with our exercise routines when the weather changes. Here are a few tips to keep up your cardio and keep down your weight.

- Continue to eat balanced meals. There's no need to put on fat to stay warm. Put on a sweater!
- Continue to exercise at least three times weekly, outdoors if you can. A few great activities could be: hiking, biking, walking, paddling, skiing, and snowshoeing. A good snowball fight can burn a few calories too!
- If you can't get outside, set up a circuit indoors with a stationary bike or elliptical, rowing/paddling machine, and weights. Yoga and Pilates are great workouts too!
- Be sure to continue using your pre- and post-workout drinks.

Winter doesn't have to be dreary. Get up and get moving!

Paddling Poems and Haikus

By Kim Greiner

Paddler's Haiku

Calm water calls me
to paddle in a canoe
and enjoy the day.

Oops!

hut, hut
switch
SPLASH
wet water



Mohawk Valley Hiking Club

President's Column

By John Bidell

Time for a hike

This time of year is perfect for leaf peeping and getting out on a trail. It also is hunting season, so with much of the public land open to both forms of recreation, always wear some red or pink when moving through multiple use areas.

I enjoy the Lake George area, especially Bolton Landing and the Lake George shore. A number of short hikes are available using Bolton Landing as a starting point.

Amy's park has 6.5 miles of trails with access to beaver ponds. It has trailheads on both Padanarum road and also Trout falls road in Bolton Landing. Nice easy hike with lots of bridges over the wetlands.

Isabel La Roche preserve is adjacent to Amy's park and has a moderate 1.5 mile hike to High Nopit with views of Lake George. The trailhead is also located on Padanarum road.

Ok you have knocked off 8 miles of hiking and now the fun starts. Get back in the car and head up Route 9 along the Lake. When you get to Hague, turn west on Route 8 heading towards Chestertown. Lots of good spots for a picnic break and views of the mountains. Brant Lake is about 15 miles up the road, and if the legs have anything left, on the backside of Brant Lake is a trailhead into Paradox wilderness area. We hike in and enjoy views of some of the ponds and the mountains.. easy walking and at times can be popular.

Done with hiking? Time to head to the Panther Mountain House in Chestertown for a Paradox brew and maybe some chicken wings. They also have pork wings, which are my favorite.

Remember, be safe and share the road and the trail.

SAVE THE DATES

Nov 2 -5 2023 Work Weekend at the Clubhouse

Nov 3 2023 Warren Miller's TIME OUT at the Egg

Nov 19 2023 Warren Miller Crew at Clubhouse

December 7-10 2023 Early Season Ski and Snowboard Clinic

February 2- 5 2024 SWC Wintersports Weekend at Rock and River Lodge

March 4 2024 is the 90th Anniversary of the first Snow Train to North Creek, an SWC excursion that jump started modern skiing as we know it. Activities in North Creek are being planned around this date. More details to follow as they develop.

April 8 2024 Hosted Weekend at the Clubhouse to experience the total solar eclipse.