



Two Loppets in Larch Hills – Both Resounding successes

If the School PE curriculum has anything to do with strength, endurance, balance, co-ordination, exhilaration and pure joy, then X-country skiing is the ticket!

The School "Pirate" Loppet took place at the Larch Hills on Friday, January 20th and 165 elementary school students from School District #83, Revelstoke, and King's Christian School participated. There were many scary pirates to be seen out on the 5km course. Some of the racers were primary school students who skied with their parents. With the overnight snowfall and our new track setter setting the course, conditions were superb.

Before the race, Allison Marshall, a former Jack Rabbit and Rancho student, and now a BC XC Team member was presented to the kids. School Superintendent Doug Pearson fired the fruit loop gun to start the race. He also presented the Superintendent's trophy to N. Canoe School for having the highest percentage of its school population in the race again this year. Mr. Pearson observed that a race like this gives kids a chance to really see what they can do and how far they can go. All the racers were treated to cookie medals and ribbons along with hotdogs from Askew's and Tim Horton's donated the muffins. We are grateful for their support. Also, thanks go to the staff of Skookum's Cycle and SkiShop for all their help and great rental prices.

We doubled our enrollment of racers over last year. In January it was common to see school groups up at Larch Hills, learning to ski in preparation for the Loppet, so the sport is growing. So many volunteers, and especially the Committee of Eileen MacDonald, George Zorn, Pat Hutchins and Tom Peasgood, gave generously of their time and that made it all possible. Carl Cooper, the Principal of MV Beattie School expressed his appreciation and said that he would be back next year with a lot more kids!

Submitted by Brian Smith - Loppet Coordinator

The 22nd Reino Keski-Salmi Loppet was a great success. Thank you to all the volunteers who turned out in the hundreds to put on such a wonderful event. Thank you also to every one who signed up and skied the loppet - without you there would be no point. We feel very fortunate to have the support of the whole Salmon Arm community. Businesses, service organizations, individuals and skiers all pull together to create a fantastic event that celebrates our healthy sport of cross country skiing. The Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC and Yukon received over \$10,000 in pledges. The tradition continues thanks again to all!!!



More pictures of the "Pirate" loppet on pages 4 & 5

Please note that **the Valentine Lantern Ski** has been canceled and that the **Saturday, March 4 Pot Luck Social** will be at the Scout Hall on Auto Road.

President's Message

As I look out the window and see snow on our lawn, I realize it certainly is an advantage to have winter *almost* return to Salmon Arm again. With a bit of the white stuff in town, it gets skiers thinking about the Larch Hills trails where winter is present in its entire splendor. We have had some magnificent skiing conditions lately, which are being enjoyed by a good number of skiers.

The recent snowfalls have showcased the advantages of the track setter with a one-pass capability that is now stored on our hill. During my most recent trip to Larch Hills I was amazed at the amount of perfect track available for my enjoyment, even though we arrived early after a heavy overnight snowfall. As our track setters become familiar with the new machine, both the efficiency in setting tracks and the conditions on the trails only seems to improve. The advantages of 'Project 2005' are becoming more evident. I'm mostly receiving positive feedback on the changes we've incorporated this year, and my confidence is growing in the belief that the Society has moved in the right direction.

As well as deciding on the track setter purchase and storage shed construction, both the LHNS facilitated meeting in February/05 and AGM in March/05 directed the executive to begin study on changes to the chalet. There seemed to be a general consensus amongst the membership that a change from its present location would increase usage of the chalet and be an overall improvement to the facility. With this in mind, the newly formed Chalet Study Committee has done some research and presented its initial findings at the December membership meeting. The members present gave approval to proceed in gathering more information regarding feasibility and to work on a conceptual design. There was discussion on how major chalet changes could potentially have far reaching implications for our Society with its active volunteer base. Discussion led to the decision to seek input from as many interested members as possible. This important discussion will be one of the items on the agenda of the **March 7th, 2006 AGM** (7pm in room #1 at the Community Centre). Additional information will be available and I would like to encourage all to attend.

Your executive has met throughout the winter and, aided by guidance from individuals who were able to attend our general Society meetings, we have attempted to work through issues that have arisen. All of the executive realize the value of input from LHNS members and again encourage anyone who has any ideas or suggestions as to what should be happening at Larch Hills to speak up at meetings or to contact any one of us. I hope to hear from you at the AGM next month.

Sincerely,

Chris Letham

Junior Race Team update:



The Larch Hills Nordic Junior Race Team has been very active with training and races. BC Cups #1 & #2 brought out more than 20 racers to each event. Our own Reino Keski-Salmi loppet included 26 race team members. This weekend racers will test their sprint technique at the BC Sprint Championships hosted by Overlander Ski Club at Stake Lake trails. Congratulations to Adriene Underhill and Andres Pike for selection to the BC Winter Games. Any club members interested in supporting the junior race team by purchasing Askews grocery vouchers can contact Ellen Underhill @ 832-6178.

Our Membership Fees in Perspective

911 people registered as Members of the Larch Hills Nordic Society (LHNS) in 2004/05. Last season our Club was the third largest in its number of Members among the approximately 50 Clubs registered with Cross Country BC (CCBC).

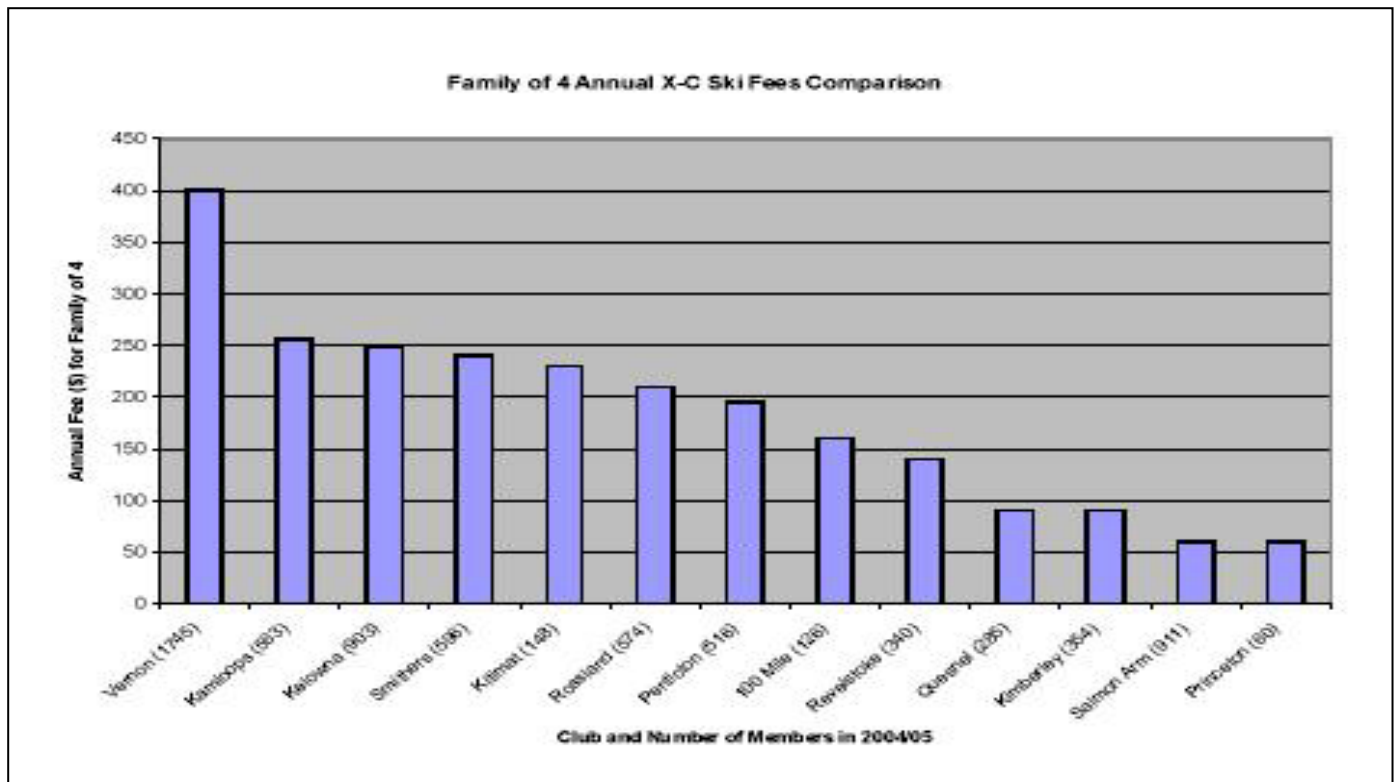
Among those 50 CCBC Clubs LHNS' Member Fees are close to the lowest. The graph below shows this for 13 selected CCBC Member Clubs. What a deal!

From time to time your LHNS Board Members consider if our Member Fees are set appropriately to cover our operating expenses and to allow us to save for future improvements. Over the years our Club's philosophy has been to hold Member Fees low to encourage people to join and enjoy skiing. As one long time member has said, "We want to make sure we don't become a rich person's sport." Out of that philosophy has grown a strong sense of Community and Volunteerism that makes the Larch Hills skiing experience very special.

Are our Membership Fees set appropriately?

Recently LHNS benefited from BC Gaming Commission Grants and other Government Grants. We have also received generous donations over the past two years toward the Tracksetter Replacement Fund from half of all Member Households. Our Membership Fee Structure allows people to choose between "Regular Use" and "Frequent Use" fees. This season and last season 70% to 80% of Members chose the lower "Regular Use" Fee. More info. on Membership Fees is on our website's Bulletin Board: <http://larchhillsskiclub.bc.ca/bulletin.htm> Click on "Membership Fees – 2006"

Please share your thoughts about our current Membership Fees with the Board by mailing them to LHNS, Box 218, Salmon Arm V1E 4N3 or emailing them to info@larchhillsskiclub.bc.ca. The Board will be discussing our current Membership Fees later this month and we'll bring our recommendations, based upon your input, to the March 7, 2005 Annual General Meeting for you to consider. We would appreciate your written comments to be received by February 24 and look forward to a discussion at the Club's March 7 AGM.



Society Executive Contacts

Chris: 832-8676, George: 832-9335, Clint: 832-7921,
John: 832-2946, Eileen: 832-7167, Dave: 832-7740, Mark: 832-6460

Jackrabbit News

The children's Cross Country Ski Program had a great season on the hill, the early snowfall gave us an advantage, and made for a long ski season. Rabbits, Chipmunks, Polar cubs, Alligators, and Bunnies and many more were seen all over the hill. Saw lots of fun and , games , making snowangels, and sliding through the trees, it truly was a fun season. This year, there were over 125 children skiing with JackRabbits. Some as young as three years of age, are making tracks--they're playing games, taking part in treasure hunts, and racing in relays. Lots of children took part in the Loppet. A great time was had on the hill, swimming in the pool, and dancing the night away at the evening celebration.

Many thanks to Blaine Carson and his crew for making sure the snow was always nicely groomed. We want to thank parents for being leaders and group helpers. And we wish to thank all the parents who contributed their time and effort to warm up the children in the chalet and serve hot chocolate. Without the wonderful support and encouragement of parent volunteers, this program wouldn't be possible.

We are in need of more leaders for next year as the club is growing. With more leaders, ski groups can be smaller. If you are interested in being a leader next year, please call Anne @ 832-8625.

Don't forget the SKI TOURNAMENT, Saturday March 4th, 2006 . All the children are invited to participate in games and relays, Tee shirts will be given to all the children who take part.

The last ski lesson is February 11, 2006. There will be a wind-up at the chalet. Hope to see you there!
Keep on Skiing ,,, lots of snow in the forecast.
Anne Nakagawa - Co-Ordinator.



2 views of our new PB 200 which in the hands of our dedicated tracksetters is providing those wonderful silky tracks.

Larch Hills Ski Tournament

Saturday March 4 Registration 9:00 – 10:00 am

Start 10:15 am

Cost: Free

**Individual Sprints- Obstacle Course – Biathlon
Team Game - Snowman on Skis race Ski Jumping**

This ski tournament is open to all skiers. Participants will be put on teams of mixed ability and age. There are prizes for the sprints in A and B divisions by age groups. There are also prizes for the top three teams.

Please phone ahead to Phil at 832-5125 or Donna at 832-1362 to let us know if you plan on attending as we would like to start formulating the teams in advance.

There will be barbecued hot dogs and hamburgers for sale for a nominal charge, please bring your own drink.



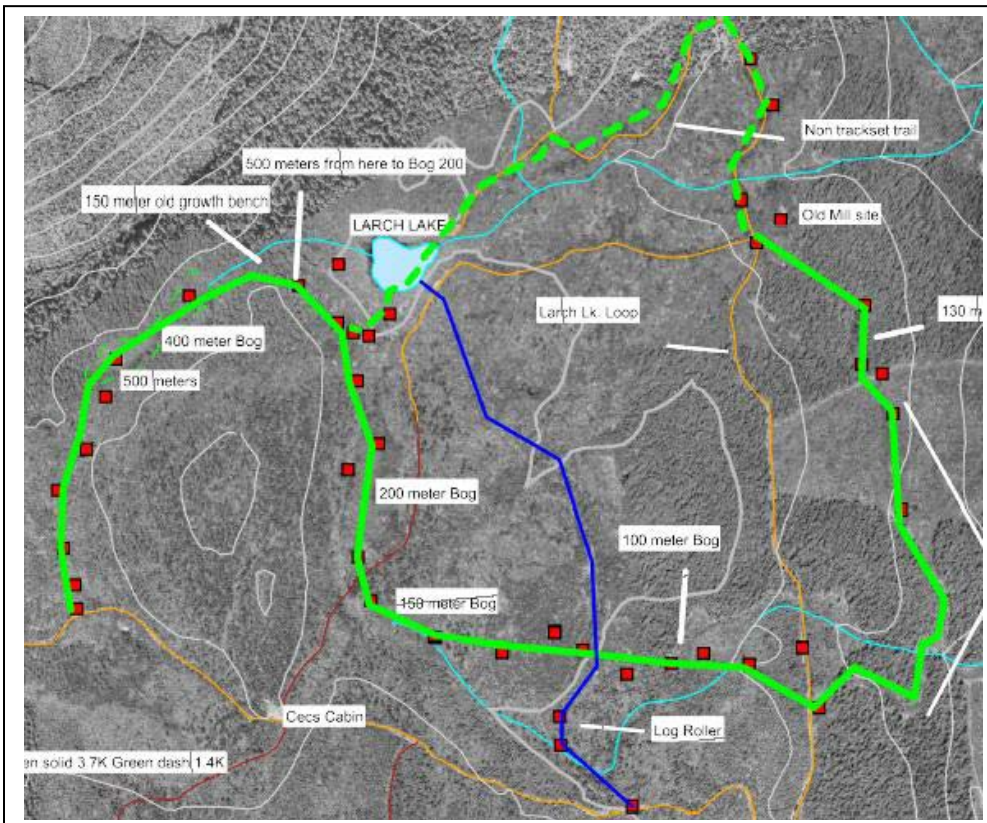
Cookie Medalists – School Loppet



Pirate Loppet 2006

Proposed Larch Hills Snowmobile Trackset Ski Trails Update – Feb. 2006

A short presentation and discussions took place at the December and January Members' Meetings. Follow-up discussions are planned by the Trails Committee later this season. Exploratory work last October included hanging ribbons and gps points gathering. Have a look at the maps of the three proposed trails, photos taken of features along the proposed routes. This information is located on the Larch Hills Nordic Society website at: www.larchhillsskiclub.bc.ca, on the Bulletin Board page, under the heading: "Proposed Snowmobile Trackset Ski Trails"



At Left is one of the proposed routes: a trail in the area of Cec's Cabin. To orient yourself, look for the yellow line running from the bottom right to the left past Cec's Cabin. This is *Larch Hills Road*. *Larch Lake Loop* is shown first as a red line then yellow going up from Cec's cabin then turning right at Larch Lake and right again (south) to join Larch Hills Road just off the bottom of the picture.

Please see the website for an expanded version of this map and 2 others.

Please mail your comments to LHNS, Box 218, Salmon Arm, B.C. V1E 4N3 or email them to:

info@larchhillsskiclub.bc.ca

Larch Hills Nordic works with other Alliance partners on trail development

February 2, 2006 - The Shuswap Hut and Trail Alliance is growing. What started just over a year ago as an ad hoc group of interested partners is now a committed cluster of supporting individuals and organizations committed to sharing their knowledge and leveraging the benefits of working together. Members of the **Larch Hills Nordic Society** have been involved in the project from its beginning 14 months ago.

"The hut-to-hut trail and waterway initiative, by linking many small groups, provides us with an opportunity to present a wider community based presence when negotiating for grants, tenure, rights of way, etc. and through sharing such costs as management, equipment and maintenance," remarks Clint Smith.

"There are many very important challenges ahead of us," adds Clint. "I believe that by working together we will ultimately accomplish more than we would with many small groups replicating each other's mistakes, learning and expenditures of time and energy."

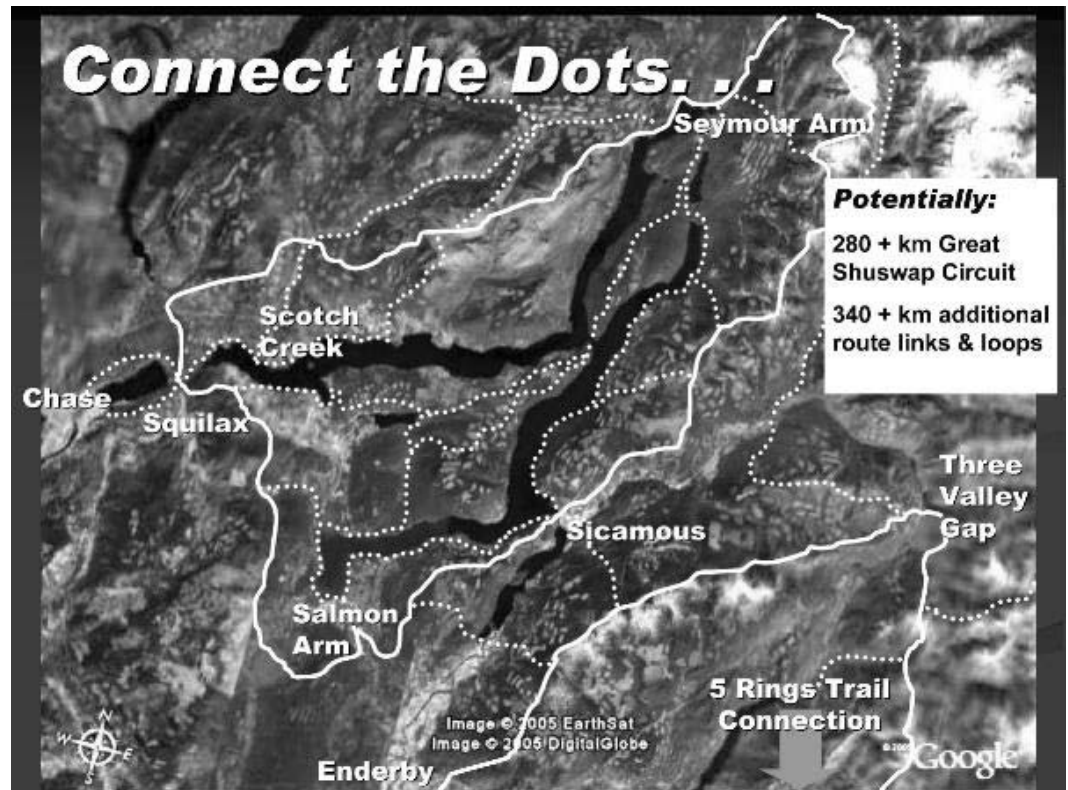
And to help move the discussion forward the quest for an extended network of trail routes throughout the Shuswap has gone online with the launch of the Shuswap Hut and Trail Alliance's new website at: <http://www.shuswaptrails.com/huttohut.htm>.

We needed an easy way for people to connect and contribute to the growing story of routes and proposed huts. When Jim Maybee offered to host us on his Shuswap Trails website we jumped at the offer. Jim's own commitment to local trail development make his understanding of what is needed an obvious fit with the initiative. (Note: Jim is the same guy behind the LHNS website.)

Visitors to the site can view overview concept route maps, consider the first in a series of bulletins profiling proposed routes, and comment on the initiative directly online. Also posted are upcoming consultation dates and news items. It's a work in progress, just like the unfolding creation of the trail system, so people should keep checking in to see what's new.

Watch for a photo gallery of images taken from recent route explorations to be posted soon.

Public Hut and Trail Forums: Sicamous and Area E residents are invited to a public "Connecting the Dots" forum on the Hut to Hut Trail project on Thursday, February 9th, 7:00 pm at the Sicamous Seniors' Complex. The program will also include an opportunity to meet Roger Beardmore, parks planner with the CSRD, and provide input to the regional parks plan currently underway for the area. All are welcome.



For information on the Sicamous forum call Lori at 250-836-2671 or email lorisw@cablelan.net.

For information on the upcoming North Shuswap forum call Nicholas at 250-833-8980 or email info@adventureshuswap.com.

The Shuswap Hut-to-Hut Trail and Waterway Initiative is a multi-partner effort promoting extended non-motorized trail routes throughout the region.

For further please contact:

Phil McIntyre-Paul - 250-832-9509/(cell) 250-804-1964 - luminous@jetstream.net

Tom Peasgood and Greg Scharf - Skookum Cycle and Ski - 250-832-7368 - info@skookumcycle.com

Dave Andrews - Community Futures Development Corporation of the Shuswap - 250-803-0156 - dandrews@futurshuswap.com

Editor's note: **Many thanks to all those who contributed to this newsletter in words and pictures**