



SKI FOR LIGHT BULLETIN

Fall 2009

News and Information about the People and Programs of SFL International

Skiing. Sharing. Learning.

The mission of Ski for Light is to enhance the quality of life and independence of visually or mobility-impaired adults through a program of cross-country skiing.

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President's Message

By Marion Elmquist

Oh, no! I hear it again. My Nordic Track is talking to me, just as it did at about this same time last year. It's that time again. Time to think about skiing and getting in shape to do it. Not only has my bike grown cobwebs from lack of use since late in the summer, but so too has the Nordic Track. It's time to clear the cobwebs from our training equipment and start getting ready to enjoy those wonderful Soldier Hollow tracks and trails.

Members of the Planning Committee met at Provo and Soldier Hollow the first weekend in October and all the plans are falling into place to celebrate the 35th Anniversary of Ski for Light. When we were there, the fall colors were at their peak, but the crispy air reminded us that there will soon be snow for us to play on.

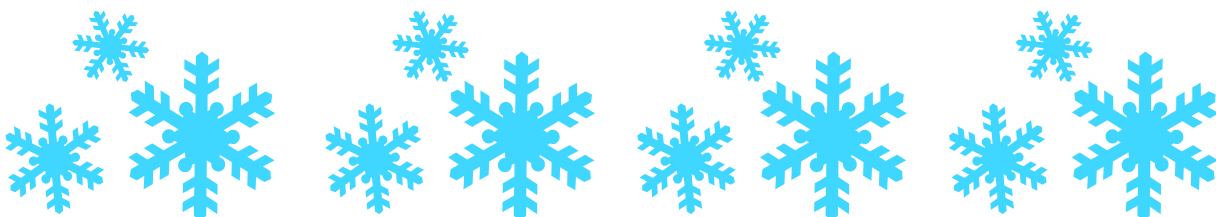
Soldier Hollow is very excited to have us back again this year and I'm looking forward to getting in a lot of skiing so I can enjoy the great lunches that will be back this time around. The caterer promises more of his wonderful soups, cookies, and everything in between. The Marriott, too, is looking forward to seeing us again, and they plan to do all they can to make our stay as pleasant and comfortable as possible.

In other places in this Bulletin, you'll hear more about the plans for the International Week, the 2010 Ridderrenn, and other happenings in the SFL community.

This also is an election year for Ski for Light. You will read more about the elections and the process in Scott McCall's article later in this issue, but I would encourage anyone who is interested in getting more involved in SFL to consider running for the board. It takes an assortment of talent and skills, energy and ideas to keep the organization current and vibrant. Please consider nominating folks you think can be an asset to SFL—or nominate yourself—to keep us strong for the next 35 years.

Elections for officers of the Board will be held at the Annual Meeting of the Board during International Week. There are six officers of the SFL Board: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and two Directors-at-Large. Each officer's term is for two years.

I look forward to seeing many of you this winter. Okay, Nordic Track. Here I come!



No Tricks, Just Treats!

By Cara Barnes, Event Chair

There was a dusting of snow – just a hint and promise of what’s in store - on the mountaintops surrounding Provo the first weekend in October, as members of the Event Planning Committee (Team 2010) arrived for the annual Planning Meeting. The temperatures were in the 60s and the frost was definitely not on the pumpkin.

Nonetheless, spirits were high as team members rolled up their sleeves and got down to the details of Ski for Light’s 35th Annual Event, to be held Sunday to Sunday, January 31 through February 7, at Soldier Hollow – the 2002 Olympic Nordic ski venue. As a first time event chair, I have already begun to learn a great deal from this very competent all-volunteer planning team. From skier and guide matching to meals and transportation to evening events with dancing and entertainment - there was plenty to work on. As you might imagine, there were some lively discussions, a great exchange of ideas and some hearty laughs. In the next three plus months, the many details involved in planning the 2010 event will continue to fall into place and set the stage for another memorable week of skiing and sharing.

Ski for Light 2010 will be a week full of great treats. Be prepared to reconnect with old friends and meet new ones. First-time skiers and guides will thrill to discovering new strengths on the trails, new communication skills and a whole new family. Anticipate great skiing on challenging, expertly groomed trails. Salivate over wonderful lunches prepared by our friends Steve and Ginny at Kumbaya Catering. Wondering what to do with that hat left over from Halloween? Just bring it to SFL, of course, and help put some fun into Friday by wearing your wildest and craziest hat.

Back at the hotel, fill up your bag with a few special treats at the SFL Store or the Silent/Live Auction. You’ll get inspired instead of spooked at the special learning sessions given on everything from dog massage to skiing at Norway’s historic version of Ski for Light, the Ridderrenn. Haunt the hotel bar or

even a Provo hangout, and participate in a great array of evening programs from Norway Night to the crowning final banquet and awards ceremony.

Stay tuned for more details and watch your email for program planning updates!

SFL Silent Auction Extravaganza!

By Marie Huston

Did you know that Christmas morning does come more than once a year?

Prior to your arrival at Ski for Light, the planning committee gets to open boxes and crates of items that end up in our Silent Auction. It’s so much fun. I can’t wait to see what you are going to send or bring for us to turn into hard cold cash, which helps us in financing our Ski for Light events.

Please help us by donating items new, crazy or handcrafted. Show off your talent in the arts, bring with you a gift card to your favorite place or an item that celebrates your hometown with us. I was thinking maybe a case of Polygamy Porter (Utah beer with the slogan "Why have just one") may bring in some decent money. Start thinking now; I'm happy to talk with you about what you might bring.

This exciting event begins quietly with the preview of the items in the dining room and culminates in a ROAR the evening of the Auction as we bid for our favorite items. I still wear the Native Eyewear sunglasses I fought Amy Brannan for every day!

Your items should be sent to the following address:

Ski for Light Silent Auction

c/o Provo Mini-Storage

472 East 500 South

Provo, UT 84606

Contact me with any questions:

Marie Huston

E-mail: mtn9000girl@aol.com

Phone: (970) 351-8652



Ridderrenn 2010

By Marion Elmquist

The dates for the 47th Ridderweek are April 11 to 18, 2010, with the actual 20 kilometer Ridderrenn race on Saturday, April 17. It's a bit later than usual, so there should be some great Spring skiing at Beitostølen, Norway.

As many of you know, the Ridderrenn and Ridderweek are what the Ski for Light International week is based on.

The skiing is fantastic on a set of trails that is part of a wide network of trails that cover many parts of Norway. Much of the skiing is done at or just above tree line. The scenery, if it could be compared to anything, is reminiscent of the scenery at Snow Mountain Ranch in Colorado.

Join the "official" team that SFL sends each year to this event and be part of the Ski for Light group. The week is full of activities similar to SFL week, with entertainment, a talent show, awards ceremonies after each of the week's competitions - complete with drumming and trumpeting from the King's Guards. In addition to the 20-kilometer race on Saturday, there is a biathlon and a 5-k or 10-k race. There is also a downhill alpine race on Friday, and spectators can feast on hamburgers or on hot dogs wrapped in lefse while cheering the racers on. There's also an auction with more things auctioned off than you can imagine, including each year a hand-carved chair. And, there is plenty of time to socialize and meet participants from a number of other countries.



The main event hotel is a mile or two from the ski trails, and just outside the hotel is a small downhill ski area. In the little village down from the hotel are some ski shops, restaurants and bars, and a small grocery store.

After the excitement of a week of cross-country skiing, the group tours some of the outstanding sights in Oslo, led by a good Norwegian SFL friend who is an official Oslo tour guide.

You will want to plan to arrive in Oslo no later than Saturday, April 10, which means leaving the U.S. no later than Friday, April 9.

I will lead a Special Interest session on Ridderweek during SFL International Week if you would like to learn more about the trip to Norway. Or, if you can't wait, please contact me via e-mail at mlelmquist@gmail.com or by phone at 515-279-3681.

Blind Grandmother Goes Backpacking with Llamas in the Colorado Rockies

By Judy Presley

Upon hearing of Trekk for Light, a weeklong hike for the blind in Colorado's Rawah Wilderness, I imagined it to be the ultimate adventure and challenge. Each blind hiker would be paired with a volunteer who would serve as a sighted guide, and a pack llama. Because I love the feeling of empowerment I gain from such an adventure and challenge, I applied right away.

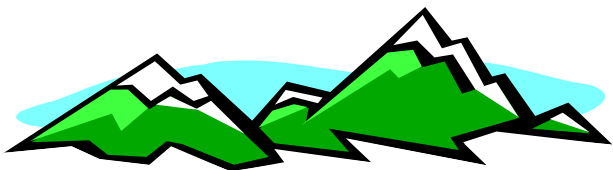
After gaining acceptance, I immediately enlisted the services of personal trainer, Mark Wilkes of Clarksville. I followed his instructions to the painful letter. I realized that my enjoyment of the trip depended on my level of fitness.

On August 7th I met my sighted guide, Kathleen Bennett, and the other fifteen participants at the Quality Inn in Fort Collins, Colorado. The next morning we were off to the llama ranch for training with our llamas. At the ranch, we learned the proper care of a llama as well as the proper way to cinch on the saddle to equally distribute the weight of the saddlebags. We then drove to a campground to learn how to set up a tent and other camping skills. The next morning we took a four hour hike up a mountain trail so as to determine if all hikers were physically fit for the trek. After many treks, the organizers have perfected a technique of guiding with a short dowel rod and hiking sticks and having the llama rope draped over the hikers' opposite shoulders.

The next morning we were driven ninety miles to the Rawah Wilderness trailhead. This first day proved to be the most difficult of the trek. It was an uphill climb all the way. We got a late start and did not arrive at our designated campsite until seven in the evening. We were cold and hungry but we first had to haul water from the stream and purify it before cooking dinner. We did not have dinner until nine o'clock that night. The next morning we had a leisurely breakfast of blueberry pancakes. My sighted guide and I went to the meadow to check on our llama whose name was Little Brown Jug or L.B. J. We found L.B.J. happily munching on the lush grass along with the other llamas. That day we took a day hike up to beautiful Crater Lake. The next morning we started our ascent to Grassy Pass at 11,300 feet. At the beginning of the trek, we were divided up into two groups of eight people. The plan was for groups one and two to meet up at Grassy Pass on Wednesday afternoon and have lunch together at the Pass. Group two did not arrive. After a leisurely lunch in the lovely mountain sunshine, we proceeded down the other side of the mountain. We camped twice more before heading for the trailhead. Later we were told that someone in group two had gotten altitude sickness and they made the decision to do only day hikes at a lower altitude before heading back to the trailhead.

After leaving the trailhead we drove back to the Quality Inn for a glorious hot shower. That night we had a celebratory supper together. The next morning we departed to our different states with a feeling of exhilaration from a unique experience.

I will never forget the calm serenity of that wilderness. The only sound was the wind, the babble of mountain streams and the roar of waterfalls. I also enjoyed the lovely fragrance of juniper and lodge pole pines and the fun and laughter around a crackling campfire. One does not need sight to experience the exhilaration and beauty of hiking in the Rockies.



Upcoming Elections

By Scott McCall, Chair of Board Development and Elections Committee

Are you interested in running for election to the Ski for Light Board of Directors?

Ski for Light is governed and managed by an elected Board of Directors made up of guides, participants and others. The Board is a working Board, with each member expected to take an active role in some aspect of the work we do.

Approximately twelve of the seats on the Board will be up for election in January 2010. If you are interested in knowing more about the duties and responsibilities of Board membership, and more about the election process, please contact Scott McCall, chair of the SFL Board Development and Elections committee, by December 10, 2009:
E-mail: scottmccall3@comcast.net.
Phone: (404) 702-5739.

SFL Family News

Jack Willhaven, a life member of Ski for Light, died last August. He is survived by his wife, two children, two grandchildren and one great-grandson. Jack was a very active member of his community; among many affiliations, Jack was a charter member and past President of his Sons of Norway Lodge. He was a loyal long-time supporter of Ski for Light, and his support continues even now; his family asks that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to Ski for Light. Thank you, Jack, for a life well-lived!

Regional Round-Up

The following is a list of winter events hosted by Ski for Light's nine regional affiliates. These regionals offer you the chance to experience the great outdoors in some interesting local and intimate settings. You will note that some of the regionals are still finalizing details for their winter activities, so we encourage you to check our web site for the most updated information: www.sfl.org and go to the regional round-up page.

The regionals are an important part of the SFL experience, and we encourage you to take advantage of them and to support their efforts in whatever way you can. Happy dreaming and planning!

Black Hills Regional Ski for Light

Dates: January 25-29, 2010

The cost for the event is \$250, and it will be held in the historic Old West town of Deadwood, SD.

Connections to Salt Lake City from Rapid City are very easy, so plan on spending a week with us prior to the International SFL event.

For more information, go to www.bhrsfl.org



Colorado Regional Ski for Light Winter Weekend

Join us January 22-24, 2010 at Snow Mountain Ranch, near Fraser, Colorado for a weekend of cross-country skiing at one of the premier Nordic centers of Colorado.

For info and application, contact: Brenda Bertrand

Email: bbertrand@craighospital.org

Phone: (303) 789-8342



Kid's Day

Join us in early February, 2010 at Frisco Nordic Center, Colorado for a day of guided cross-country skiing. We are working to get the next generation of Ski for Light participants involved. This is for kids 10-17 years old. Check the website for the exact dates.

For applications and more information, contact:

Becky Myers

E-mail: becky@rebeccamyers.com

Phone: (719) 578-9268

Trekk for Light

Trekk for Light 2010, a summertime activity of Colorado Ski For Light, will take place August 7-15, 2010 in the Rawah Wilderness in northern Colorado. Trekk is a week-long llama supported hiking trip that has been enjoyed by VIPs and guides alike over the past decade. Trekk is not a race nor an endurance contest; rather, it is an exhilarating and challenging

mountaineering adventure!

Application deadline is May 1, 2010.



To receive complete information and your application form, please contact:

Vicki Caldwell

E-mail: caldwellvicki@comcast.net

Phone: (970) 556-3852

For applications and information on all our events, visit our web site: www.cosfl.org.

Michigan Regional Ski For Light

Dates: Friday, January 15 to

Sunday, January 17, 2010

Held at the Ralph McMullen Recreation Center, Higgins Lake, Michigan

Contact Kevin S. Ridsdale

E-mail: ksridsdale@yahoo.com

Phone: (248) 210-3154 or 734-377-2670



Montana Regional Ski for Light

Dates: February 28 to March 3, 2010

Yellowstone, Montana

Lodging is available at West

Yellowstone Holiday Inn. The

cost is \$340, which includes room

and food. For more information go to our web site at www.sflmt.org.



New England Regional Ski for Light

New England Regional Ski for Light will host two winter ski and snowshoe events: in January, and late February or early March 2010.

Dates: January 8 through 11, 2010

Craftsbury Outdoor Center, Lost Nation Road,

Craftsbury, Vermont

Lost Nation Road says something

about the remoteness of this site,

which NERSFL has been enjoying

for several years now. Craftsbury is in the

southwest corner of Vermont's "Northeast

Kingdom," the most rural region of this mostly rural

state. Rolling hills, open fields, woods, streams,

farms and snow are the main features of the

landscape from November through April. Our

weekend begins Friday, January 8, with dinner in

Craftsbury's dining hall. If you arrive early, you can

ski or snowshoe on Friday - no extra charge.

Lodging, nine healthy, hearty homemade meals and

all the outdoor activity you can handle are included

Friday to Monday. The weekend ends after lunch

Monday, January 11, but you can keep skiing if you

need more. Skiing, snowshoeing, sauna, weight



and exercise room (for the truly obsessive exercisers), common room and kitchen are all included. There are a full-service ski shop and a gift shop on site. The skiing! 85 kilometers of Pisten-Bully-groomed trails! From easy practice loops and long, flat lake trails, wonderful for stretching that classical glide, to blue trails that seem more down than up, to the 23k Grand Tour, you are certain to find terrain to your liking. The snowshoeing! Winding trails through woods and fields, where wildlife from snow fleas (*Hypogastrura nivicola*, if you must know) to chickadees, fishers and moose are at home. Another great feature is that once you arrive, there is no driving between lodging and skiing. Put on your skis or snowshoes right outside the lodge door. Everything is right there. All this for \$255 before December 1, 2009; \$275 December 1 or later. Limited to 28 attendees, unless more rooms become available. Craftsbury web site: http://www.craftsbury.com/skiing/nordic_center/home.htm. By the way, Craftsbury reorganized in 2008 as a non-profit. One of their first acts was to reduce the price of a day pass by 50%.

To join us, or for more information, contact:

Marie Hennessy
 Phone: (781) 321-1071
 E-mail: cnppr@earthlink.net

Late February or early March: New Hampshire's White Mountains or Lake Sunapee region
 Skiing and snowshoeing at Bretton Woods, Bear Notch, Great Glen or Norsk/Dexter's. Location and dates to be determined. Arrive Friday evening, depart Sunday afternoon. Details will be available soon on the New England Regional Ski for Light web page: <http://nersfl.org>



Northeast Pennsylvania Regional Ski for Light

Land of the Vikings, Sherman, PA
 Dates: January 17 - 24, 2010
 Cross country skiing, snowshoeing, tobogganing, hiking and other activities.



Cost: \$535 double occupancy, \$655 per person, single occupancy.
 Contact: Bjørg M. Dunlop
 310 All Peat Beds Rd
 Earlton NY 12058 Phone: (518)731-8741
 E-mail: bjorgmd@aol.com



Puget Sound Regional Ski for Light

Ski for Light Puget Sound has six ski days planned this winter: Saturdays, January 9 and 23, February 13 and 27 and March 13 and 27, 2010.



A chartered bus takes us to the ski area at Stampede Pass in the Central Cascades, about an hour from Seattle. We have about 7km of nicely groomed trails, beginner to intermediate. If you'd care to join us please contact me, Doug Sundberg, President, SFL Puget Sound: Phone: (206) 297-7579.

Sierra Regional Ski for Light

Eighteenth Annual Three-day Event

Truckee, CA
 Dates: Saturday, March 13-
 Monday, March 15, 2010
 Skiing at Tahoe/Donner Cross
 Country Resort



Lodging at Best Western Tahoe/Truckee Inn
 Cross country skiing, snowshoeing, great food, and great fun!

Cost: \$200 double occupancy
 Extra costs: \$40 if you need skis
 \$129 for single room
 \$39 double occupancy for Friday night lodging for out-of-towners.

For applications and more information, contact:

Vicki Post
 Phone: (415) 928-2711
 Email: vickipost@earthlink.net
 Information is also available on the web site: www.srsfl.org.

Wisconsin Regional Ski for Light

January 15-17, 2010 at the Wisconsin Lions Camp, Rosholt, WI
 For more information, contact:
 Bev Helland
 Phone: (608) 516-6784
 E-mail: bevhelland@yahoo.com



Again, for the most up-to-date information on regional activities, including SFL Canada and SFL Japan, visit our web site: www.sfl.org.



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If you wish to change formats, please send your request to:
bulletin@sfl.org

For future Bulletins, remember that your contributions and feedback are always most welcome. You may submit articles as e-mail or as a word attachment; if you do not have e-mail, you may send a typed article through the mail. Send all items to:

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E-mail: vickipost@earthlink.net
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The deadline for the spring Bulletin is March 15, 2010. We look forward to hearing from you.

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Many of these companies have stood behind us for years – and we're grateful.

Be sure to think of our friends when you're gearing up for your next adventure.

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