

Andover Outing Club Gets Ready For A White Winter

By Hallie Southworth
Andover Outing Club

The Andover Outing Club had its open house this year on November 12 at Proctor's Blackwater Ski Area. We all played Capture the Flag, tag, and all the games that people wanted to play. We also play these same games on our skis during the winter when there is snow.

Everyone brought some food, and after a couple of Capture the Flag games, all the kids raced in for the food. The Open House was also an opportunity for the club to welcome new families and skiers into the club.

Rib Eye Roast Dinner

For three years the Andover Outing Club has hosted a Rib Eye Roast Dinner. This year's was on November 18. All of the skiers – the kids – cleared the tables and made sure that our guests had everything that they needed. The parents

cooked the meal, and the adults and kids cleaned dishes in the dish room at the Cannon Dining Hall at Proctor Academy.

The Rib Eye Roast is a whole club fundraiser, with kids working just as hard as parents. The skiers drew pictures of people, chickens, dogs, cats, and even an occasional ostrich, all on skis. We used these drawings for place-mats so our guests had something nice to look at while they were eating.

Before the guests arrived, all of the skiers gathered and talked with an adult to find out what it takes to be good waiters and waitresses. We learned that when you pour water in someone's cup, you hold it away from the table so as not to drip on the people. We also learned not to reach over people when clearing their dishes.

Then the kids ate their dinner of hot dogs and salad. After that we all had to hustle around making sure that everything was in place. We were so excited when the first of the 90 guests arrived. For an hour and a half we were clearing dishes from the tables to the dish room.

All of the waiters and waitress got sweaty working so hard, but in the end we came up with a good profit for the club, and that pays off for the hard work.

By Al Herschlag
AOC Cross Country Coach

The Andover Outing Club's Bill Koch League is a cross country ski program for those seeking fun-filled activi-

ties to fill their winter months. Our program combines learning to ski for new skiers all the way up to race instruction for our most advanced members in a fun, safe, and supportive environment. Our program prides itself on providing activities that meet the needs and desires of all our participants.

Last winter started off with a real bang. Some of our club skied at Bretton Woods on Thanksgiving weekend, and just prior to Christmas we had two of our older skiers – Story Southworth and Jackson Bicknell – head up to Canada, outside Quebec City, to Mt. Ste. Anne for a long weekend of skiing with members of the Lebanon, New Hampshire and Woodstock, Vermont high school teams. We had a blast skiing with over 50 like-minded Nordic enthusiasts on over 100 kilometers of freshly-groomed packed powder.

After Christmas the weather was not very cooperative. However, because of our north-facing trails at Blackwater Ski Area and awesome grooming from Garry George and his crew, we only missed one week of skiing all winter.

Young Skiers

Last winter we had 21 young skiers participate in our program. They ranged in age and ability from 5 to 12 years old and from never-before-on-skis to seasoned racers. The common thread that binds us together as a club is the joy of winter outdoor activities in New Hampshire, specifically cross country skiing.

Thanks to an active group of parent volunteers, we were able to break our members into appropriate age and ability level groups. Our youngest skiers, Willy Cox, Annika Johnson, Katelyn Kinson, and Cope Makechnie challenged our older skiers to sprint and downhill races when they had finished with the hard work of snowmen construction and scavenger hunts in the woods. Of course they were also around at the end of our practices for a rousing game of soccer or British Bulldog on skis.

Kelsey Allen, Thaddeus Bicknell, Amina Hughes, Michaela and Maddie Trefethen and Hallie Southworth, made up a mixed age group with a variety of experience. The common thread with this group was their unabated joy in be-

ing on snow and finding ways to improve their skiing. Whether it was paying attention to Coach Al (hardly ever), charging through the woods (almost always), skiing down the terrain park one more time, or challenging each other to some zany made-up games, they always left practices with big grins on their faces.

The next older age group was Patrick Allen, Elizabeth Chesley, Ben Cox, Will Henriques, Damick Kinson, Maddy Pfiefer, and Andrew Young. Again they brought a wide range of abilities. Some of these club members have been skiing with us for many years, while a number of them were new to our club last winter. Some hope to race in high school and others are having fun just learning to ski. While we saw some very impressive performances from our long term skiers, our first year members made incredible progress and surprised themselves (but not the coach!) as to how well they were skiing at the end of our season.

Our two co-captains, Jackson Bicknell and Story Southworth, have been skiing with us almost as long as I have been coaching with the AOC. Not only are Story and Jackson great role models for their team mates, but they both have a desire that leaves them always wanting a little more. Most important is the joy they get from skiing and of course from exciting games of tag or capture the flag at the end of our practices.

Bill Koch Festival

At the end of each ski season our club attends the Bill Koch Festival. This event brings hundreds of youth skiers together for a fun weekend. This past winter Thaddeus, Willy, Hallie, Kelsey, Ben, Maddy, Elizabeth, Jackson, and Story traveled to Bethel, Maine to participate. It was windy and cold, and the snow was thin, but nothing could dampen the enthusiasm of our club members. It was a great weekend of skiing with hundreds of other kids from throughout New England.

This winter we welcome back all our old club members and put out the welcome mat to all of you who would like to participate in the greatest winter sport ever devised, at the greatest little ski area anywhere. If you are interested, contact Peter Southworth at 735-6811.

Pine Hill Nordic Ski Club

Pine Hill Nordic Ski Club in New London is sponsoring "Robb's Hut Ski/Walk" on Saturday, December 9. Those interested in cross country skiing or snowshoeing can meet at our trail head on Mountain Road, New London, at 1 PM to check out our trail system.

Visit PineHillSkiClub.com or contact us at 735-5000 or info@KayakCountry.com.

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