ANCHORAGE: New season offers new opportunities and favorite established events

STATEWIDE: Alaska’s biathletes shine on state and national stages

EAGLE RIVER: Building a bridge to better skiing

FAIRBANKS: Meet the fun folks who fuel our super ski club

Mallory Conger of Nome Nordic hits the trails during this summer’s U.S. Biathlon Rollerski Nationals.
OUR HILLSIDE ADVISORY COMMITTEE CONTINUES TO LOOK AT WAYS TO ENHANCE SKIING IN THAT AREA. TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS AND MAINTENANCE AT HILLSIDE ARE ONGOING AND THIS SUMMER BENEFITED FROM SEVERAL DAYS OF VOLUNTEER TRAIL WORK FROM THE ALASKA WINTER STARS. SEVERAL OF THE BEACH LAKE SKI TRAILS RECEIVED MUCH NEEDED DRAINAGE AND SURFACING WORK THIS SUMMER, AS WELL. WE FEEL INCREASINGLY CONFIDENT IN OUR ABILITY TO MANAGE THE VOLUME OF TRAILS AND PROGRAMS FOR OUR MEMBERS AND COMMUNITY.

OUR STAFF, BOARD AND VOLUNTEERS ALSO INVITE YOU TO JOIN OUR MISSION OF SUSTAINING TRAILS YEAR-ROUND AND PROVIDING NORDIC SKIING PROGRAMS THAT ENCOURAGE HEALTHY ACTIVITIES AND LIFESTYLES FOR ALL ALASKANS. WE HOPE TO SEE YOU AT OUR ANNUAL MEETING ON NOVEMBER 3, AT A RACE, COMMUNITY SKI EVENT, JUNIOR NORDIC PRACTICE SESSION OR OUT ON THE TRAILS HAVING FUN!
A ROUND THE BOWL
Continued from Page 2
February 22 — Ski 4 Kids: Orienteering, sit-skis, biathlon laser rifles, and the storybook ski course are just a few of the fun activities offered at the annual Ski 4 Kids! The day is co-hosted by Anchorage Parks & Rec. and Healthy Families and aims to introduce kids and their families to a plethora of outdoor winter activities. anchorgenordicski.com/events/ski-4-kids/
February 27–29 — ASA State Championships
March 7 — Last day of Junior Nordic
March 8 — Tour of Anchorage: It’ll be hard to beat the skiing, fat biking and festivities from last year’s race, but 2020 is looking to be another epic year! Whether you’re classic skiing the 25k or fat biking the 50k, this race is one of Anchorage’s most beloved trail events! anchorgenordicski.com/tour-of-anchorage/
March 14 — Ski Train: Chugach-chugchi choo-choo! Spring skiing in Curry should be at the top of your list for March — get your tickets today! Watch the website and Ski Train Facebook page for costume announcements! anchorgenordicski.com/events/ski-train/

2019-20 AMH Anchorage Cup series
An exciting new season of the AMH Anchorage Cup citizen races, brought to you by NSAA & AMH, is coming soon! The event committee is piecing together details and courses to bring you five fantastic races for the entire family to enjoy. We are excited to welcome the newest race co-host, Sons of Norway. They will join Alaska Winter Stars, the APU Nordic Ski Team, Junior Nordic and Movic’s Tooth as race co-hosts. Keep up with race details at anchorgenordicski.com/amh-anchorage-cup-series/.
December 15 — Freestyle
January 12 — Classic
January 26 — Classic
February 9 — Sprint Relay
February 16 — Sven

For more events and details, visit the NSAA calendar at anchorgenordicski.com/calendar.

Fun photos fill this year’s NSAA Calendar
The 2018-19 NSAA Photo Contest received dozens of beautiful, awe-inspiring and even goofy photos from members. Members can vote for their favorite photos and winners will receive gift cards from AMH! Photos from the contest are also used for the upcoming NSAA season calendar. The dates for your favorite events can be found in our local calendar, so make sure to grab one from the NSAA Office, Hoarding Marmot or AMH.

Cozy cabin experiences are yours year-round through NSAA
Have you spent a night in the cozy Hope cabin or the rustic Wetzel Cabin on Nancy Lake? We are happy to offer cabin rentals as a special perk to our members! The Hope Cabin is a car-accessible getaway in the charming town of Hope and a great destination for anyone looking for a weekend advent-ure. The Wetzel Cabin is a short paddle, trek or ski from Nancy Lakes Parkway. Nordic skaters take note: it is a great jumping off point for skating at Nancy Lakes, too! The NSAA Cabin-ins are open for rental year-round; make your reservations at anchorgenordicski.com/cabin-rental/.

The season of Junior Nordic skiing is coming soon; register now!
The NSAA Junior Nordic program offers a unique opportunity to get kids outside and active on the trails in a fun environment. The first session runs December 2, 2019-January 11, 2020, with a focus on outdoor fun, regardless of how much snow is on the ground. Hiking, jogging, games and more keep kids coming to the outdoors while also focusing on skill work. Once the snow hits, kids will roam and ramble the trails in like-skilled groups to learn classic and/or skate technique and play on our beloved trails.
The second session of Junior Nordic is set for January 13–March 7, 2020. Spots fill fast, so make sure to register early! There is a $30 discount for families that register for both sessions! Second session carries momentum from the first session and finishes out the spring as the temperatures get warmer and the sun shines longer.
The Junior Nordic program hires approximately 100 part-time coaches per season. If you are interested in coaching, please visit the Junior Nordic website for an application and more information. Program details can be found at anchorgenordicski.com/junior-nordic/.

Old gear, new gear — it’s all at the swap on Oct. 27!
The NSAA Ski Swap is the place to go for finding the best deal on Nordic skis and other outdoor gear! October 27 marks the annual swap, which is a fundraiser consignment sale — 20 percent of sales proceeds go to NSAA. Volunteers get a 30-minute sale preview, so consider volunteering to help with gear check-in, arrangement or gear checkout. If you need to clean out your garage or are looking for a new setup, the NSAA Ski Swap is the place to go! See you at the Kincaid Bunker! Learn more about the swap and volunteer opportunities at anchorgenordicski.com/events/ski-swap/

NSAA Season Kickoff Party on November 3
Join NSAA staff and volunteers, along with fellow skiers and community members, for the annual party to ring in the new season! The NSAA Season Kickoff arrives Sunday, November 3, at the Kincaid Park Chalet. The expo runs from 2:30-4 p.m., followed by the potluck and 4 and the kickoff at 5. Grab an adult beverage as you check out local businesses and ski programs at the expo, peruse items at the silent auction, and enjoy the always delicious smorgasbord potluck. Thank you to Moose’s Tooth for donating beer! Learn more about the event and volunteer opportunities at anchorgenordicski.com/events/annual-celebration.

Light up the loop with holiday spirit, Solstice celebration
2019 marks NSAA’s 8th annual Winter Solstice celebration – the Solstice Tree Tour! December 15 is a one day only opportunity for foot and ski traffic to tour the Kincaid Park Mizi Loop together. Sponsors decorate trees along the 2.3k route, some with stations sharing s’mores and hot cocoa. It’s fun for the whole family!
Welcome back to Solstice Tree Tour’s Event Sponsor, ConocoPhillips — we appreciate their dedication to Anchorage’s trails!
Watch the NSAA Facebook page for specific details, especially the updates regarding the new and more efficient event parking plan. Check the website for details if you’re interested in sponsoring a tree or volunteering at anchorgenordicski.com/solstice-tree-tour/

NSAA Backcountry Tours are back!
Stay tuned for another fun-filled touring season with NSAA’s Backcountry Tours team. We are offering several overnights, exciting day tours and some new tour leaders! Do your snow dance! We’ll see you at the kick-off meeting in November!
Due to changing weather patterns and variable snow conditions, the past few years, we sometimes have to make last minute changes to tour locations, so please double check the website (anchorgenordicski.com/programs/backcountry-tours/) and/or the hotline (907-258-6800, press 3) or call the tour leader the day before the tour.

© 2019 Articles, letters and advertisements are welcome. Please ensure all names are correct and information is accurate. Submissions may be edited for clarity, content and space limitations. Deadline is the 15th day of the prior month. E-mail nordicskiereditor@gmail.com.

On the cover — Mallory Conger of Nome Nordic hits the trails during this summer’s U.S. Bartlett Rolston National. Photo by Weymouth Photography
NSAA Partner Spotlight: ConocoPhillips

The name ConocoPhillips has practically become synonymous with skiing in the Anchorage community and across Alaska. From large, national events like 2018’s U.S. Nationals to perennial programs like NSAA’s Junior Nordic, ConocoPhillips has a hand in Alaska’s most exciting ski events and Anchorage’s most beloved ski traditions. NSAA extends our most sincere gratitude to ConocoPhillips for being such steadfast and enthusiastic partner to the Nordic skiing community. We recently spoke with Natalie Lowman, ConocoPhillips Alaska’s Director of Media and Advertising, to learn more about their organization’s dedication to Nordic skiing.

Why does ConocoPhillips support Nordic skiing in Anchorage?

ConocoPhillips Alaska has proudly sponsored Nordic skiing events in Alaska for over 25 years. Our support of these programs fits seamlessly into our core values, which include supporting the communities where we live and operate, and a commitment to health and wellness. Nordic skiing is one of the numerous ways Alaskans stay active through the long and snowy winter months and the many ski events and races are a great way to have fun together as a community. We are proud to contribute to these events throughout Alaska that enrich the quality of life for all Alaskans.

How did ConocoPhillips initially get involved in Anchorage’s Nordic skiing community?

One of the reasons we got involved was because we had, and still have, many employees who enjoy Nordic skiing, and whose families and children were participating in the sport. Our employees believe strongly in being involved in Alaska’s communities; therefore we try to support those community events and activities that are important to them.

What types of Nordic events and programs is ConocoPhillips most excited about supporting?

We love how uniquely Alaskan events like the Tour of Anchorage and Ski for Women are. Events like the Ski for Kids are so important in teaching Alaskan children how fun it is to be outdoors and active, even when the temperatures drop. It’s always a good day in Nuiqsut when Skiku comes to town to do ski clinics with the community, and we love being a part of that. We are pleased to support the relatively new Solstice Tree Tour and celebrate Winter Solstice with the community. We are always in awe of the junior athletes that compete in the Besh Cup and love cheering them on. And we were honored to be the premier sponsor of the 2018 U.S. National Cross Country Ski Championships. Each type of event is so distinct and inspiring in its own way, and so it’s difficult to focus on just one.

What hopes/goals/aspirations does ConocoPhillips have for Anchorage and its Nordic skiing community?

Whether it’s a first-time skier or a competitive athlete, we always just want everyone to enjoy themselves and be safe in all they do.

Is there anything else ConocoPhillips would like NSAA’s membership to know?

We are proud to be a long-standing supporter of NSAA and proud of the relationship we have with the Nordic ski community. We are looking forward to the 2019-2020 season and all that it promises to bring, and wish you all a safe and snowy winter!
Reflecting on the Summer Solstice

BY ADAM LOOMIS

As we pass the Equinox and head towards the Winter Solstice, I want to take a moment to reflect on our Summer Solstice. Always a highpoint, this was definitely the pinnacle of our summer of Ski Jumping in Alaska.

This year we ran a USA Nordic Junior Flyers camp in the week leading up to the big day, which culminated on the Solstice with our second-ever Midnight Sun Jump-a-thon. Led by USA Nordic Sport Development director Jed Hinkley, coach Chris Lamb and myself, the camp was a huge success, with 45 participants including our own club members and junior athletes from around the nation. By the end of the week, all the athletes – many of whom did not know each other before – were now close friends and ready to celebrate the longest day of the year as one group.

Our 12-hour Jump-a-thon began with a fun competition where athletes competed in teams in a skills-based format that broke the mold from a traditional competition. After that, some of the athletes took a quick break for a potluck BBQ at the base, but many of them hardly stopped for more than a few bites, eager to keep the jumps rolling. Most of the athletes had worked hard to earn pledges for each jump in order to raise money for their clubs (especially our athletes!). With this in mind, some of them met and surpassed goals of 20, 25, even 30 jumps!

Just before midnight, I let Jed step in for me and took a few jumps myself. I’ll never forget this moment of ski jumping – under a Midnight Sun, with the athletes I’ve been coaching, and in the middle of one of the most exciting and unique “marathons” you’re ever going to find.

Our most resilient athletes kept going into the wee hours of the morning – with the last flights under dawn twilight at 4 a.m. At this point, we were long past worrying about coaching technique, and exhaustion was waning. But I’m sure that these Solstice jumps will be treasured by the kids as much as by me as they look back over their years. Without a doubt, this will be an annual event. Put it on your calendar and come watch next year!

For more information about the NSAA’s Ski Jumping Program, visit anchoragenordicski.com/ski-jumping/.

PHOTO BY COOPER DODDS

Hiking to view the Portage Glacier with the Junior Flyer’s Camp.
Volunteer Spotlight: Dave Lucey and Chris Turletes

You may have seen their pictures on NSAA’s social media feed over the past year – Dave Lucey and Chris Turletes (among others) have put in many volunteer hours over the past year getting the new wayfinding posts installed at Kincaid Park. The bases were installed in October 2018, using a modified cement mixer mounted on the back of the NSAA flatbed truck. The NSAA Operations team rented a skid steer with hydraulic auger and volunteers helped set the bases and pour concrete. This spring, posts had to be hand-milled to install the specific tops and then this summer they were installed into the bases this summer. Finally in September, the directional signs were installed! Dave and Chris spent many afternoons pouring concrete, routing posts, setting posts into bases and then finally installing the directional plates. We cannot thank them enough for their time, energy, and enthusiasm!

Alaskan biathletes shine at U.S. Biathlon Rollerski Nationals

Seven Alaskan biathletes participated in the 2019 U.S. Biathlon Rollerski Nationals held at hot and humid Jericho, Vermont. Making the podium with first-place finishes the Mass Start include Travis Cooper of Kenai and Everett Darrow of Fairbanks, both representing the U.S. National Guard Biathlon Team.

Helen Wilson and Maja Lapkaas raced for Anchorage Biathlon Club (coached by Marine Dusser-Bjornsen) and made the podium with third place finishes in the Sprint Race and Mass Start, respectively. Other Alaskans participating in these races include Marion Wood (U.S. National Guard Biathlon), Mallory Conger (Nome Nordic), Konrad Renner (Anchorage Biathlon Club) and Maxine Germain (Anchorage Biathlon Club).

2019-2020 NSAA Membership

Levels of Support

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* Monthly payment option available

Select the following:

☐ Decal How Many? ____ (☐ I’ll pick up my decal at the NSAA office, AMH, Trek Bicycle Store, Skinny Raven or The Hoarding Marmot)
☐ Trail Pin How Many? ____ (☐ I’ll pick up my trail pin at the NSAA office, AMH, Trek Bicycle Store, Skinny Raven or The Hoarding Marmot)
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Join online at www.anchoragenordicski.com

About NSAA

For 55 years, Nordic Skiing Association of Anchorage has maintained Anchorage’s world-class trail system, promoted Nordic skiing through events and programs, and encouraged healthy lifestyles for residents of Alaska.

NSAA does not receive any tax payers dollars, so winter grooming and year-round trail maintenance are only possible because of individual giving from trail users like you!

Thank you for supporting NSAA!

Spouse/Partner: ____________________
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Biathletes from across Alaska learn from legends at summer camps

Alaskan biathletes were busy this summer with many statewide camp opportunities. Two camps were held at Anchorage’s Kincaid Biathlon Range with over 30 participants. The first camp was led by four-time U.S. team biathlete Tim Burke and had biathletes from Nome, Galena, Unalakleet, Fairbanks, Anchorage, Eagle River, as well as Methow Valley, Washington. A second camp was held at the end of summer and was led by Jean Paquet, former Canadian National Biathlon coach, U.S. Biathlon Development Coach, and Olympic biathlete. These camps provided high quality instruction for all skill level biathletes. Biathlon camps were also hosted by the Fairbanks Biathlon Club and Nome Nordic Club.

Alaskan biathlete Lapkass represents U.S. at Youth Olympic Games

Alaskan biathlete Maja Lapkass made Team USA and is going to Switzerland to race at the Youth Olympic Games (YOG). YOG 2020 will be held in January 9-22 in Lausanne, Switzerland. The event is open to athletes 15-18 years old. Maja, 16, trains with Anchorage Biathlon Club and is coached by Marine Dusser-Bjornsen, and does ski training with APU, as well. The biathlon qualification featured eight races over the nine months – six on snow and two on rollerskis. Each athlete counted his or her best four of eight results (with a maximum of one rollerski result). The eight-race series was one of the most competitive in U.S. biathlon history. In the final edition of the series, the U.S. Summer Nationals, more than 40 athletes filled out the youth field – by far the most participants in that category, ever! The team selections of six American athletes were made following the completion of the final two qualification events August 17-18 in Jericho, Vt. The Youth Olympic Games Lausanne 2020 will be the third winter edition following events at Innsbruck in 2012 and Lillehammer in 2016. In biathlon, there will be two individual events for men and two for women, plus two mixed gender relays.

“This was a remarkably competitive qualifying series to qualify for the Youth Olympic Games,” said U.S. Biathlon High Performance Director Lowell Bailey. “We want to extend our congratulations to the Team and good luck this January!”

Alaska’s Maja Lapkass in action at the 2019 World Junior Championships in Orsible, Slovakia.

PHOTO BY JEFFERY LEOPOLD

Anchorage Biathlon Club coach Marine Dusser-Bjornsen interprets shot results to Nora Hulse.

PHOTO BY JIM PASEK / NORDIC SKI CLUB OF FAIRBANKS

Anchorage Biathlon Club coach Marine Dusser-Bjornsen interprets shot results to Nora Hulse.

PHOTO BY JIM PASEK / NORDIC SKI CLUB OF FAIRBANKS
AROUND EAGLE RIVER

Life’s a beach during Eagle River trail work

The Beach Lake Trails got a facelift this summer thanks to the combined efforts of NSAA, Parks and Rec, and Chugiak Eagle River Nordic Ski Club (CERNSC)! Parks and Rec arranged to have a large stockpile of fill material delivered to Beach Lake park. The first project was contracted to NSAA to revive Meander Loop, a short .6K trail off Mama’s Cutoff. They realigned the trail, brought in fill, graded, and set abutments for a new bridge. CERNSC volunteers, led by Bob Stehn, cleared brush and added the new bridge deck. Considerable fill material was also added to low spots on the Old Lighted Loop to remove swampy areas and fill numerous puddles.

Jr. Nordic energy, enthusiasm is in the air!

Fall is here and the temperatures are finally cooling off enough for those of us anticipating winter and SNOW! We are so excited to kick off another spectacular Jr. Nordic season and signups are just around the corner. Online registration will open September 25 and we kickoff with the Ski Swap and Ski Rental on November 9 at Birchwood ABC from 9 a.m.—1 p.m. In other exciting news, we have jazzed up our website with “how to” videos for every Jr. Nordic level. This not only shows you what your kiddos are learning, but also shows how you can help out by being a coach—hint hint, we need coaches! Finally, new this year, parents must ski with their kiddos if they are 6 and under. If you have any questions and to check out the new videos, check out our website at www.cernsc.org.

CERNSC calendar

• Jr. Nordic signup starts Sept. 25 online
• Rental Ski Wacing Day, Oct. 20, Noon-3 p.m., TBD

Food for the Entire Team!

For over 10 years, South Anchorage residents have been coming to locally owned and operated Firetap Alehouse and Restaurant for its signature pretzel sandwiches, gourmet pizzas, hearty salads and a great selection of appetizers. Firetap Alehouse has 36 different beers to choose from, the majority made in Alaska, and you can even get them to go at the growler bar in the liquor store. There is something on the menu for everyone on the team and plenty of space to accommodate large groups.

Firetap Alehouse is a strong supporter of our community athletics including Nordic Skiing, Soccer, Wrestling, Football, Volleyball, Basketball, and Baseball. Firetap also supports numerous charities and participates in school-business partnerships with many South Anchorage schools.
A Round the Bay

Ongoing

November

November 1-March 15 — Kachemak Women’s Nordic (Co-ed Masters’ Ski Program) - Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from noon-2 p.m. http://kachemakwomensnordic.com/.

January 26-February 22 — Junior Nordic Program — Saturdays, first session on Jan. 25, Lookout Mountain Recreation Area, 1-2:30 p.m. Other locations TBA.

Mountain Recreation Area, 1-2:30 p.m. Other locations TBA.

November 6 — Ski and Winter Gear Swap — 5:30-8 p.m. @ Homer High School Commons. Find great gear; sell your gear; get your skis waxed, and register and pick up skis for Junior Nordic.

November 16 — Annual Meeting, Dinner, and Auction — 6 p.m., Homer Elks Lodge.

December

Groomers Clinic and Refresher — Date and time TBA @ Lookout Mountain Maintenance Building. This is an important review/refresher for all KNSC groomers and an opportunity for those interested in becoming a groomer to sign up and learn the basics. Questions? 235-6018 or homebrann@gmail.com.

December 26 — Ski Your Age — Lookout Mountain Ski Area.

January

January 11 — Beginner skate & classic ski clinic — 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Lookout Mountain Ski Area. Register on KNSC website.

January 11 — Intermediate skate & classic ski clinic — 1:30-4 p.m., Lookout Mountain Ski Area. Register on KNSC website.

January 24-25 — Friday Night Lights tech light ski and candle making – Lookout Mountain Recreation Area.

January 25 — Junior Nordic Program — Saturdays, Jan. 25-Feb. 22. First session on Jan. 25, Lookout Mountain Recreation Area — 1-2:30 p.m. Other locations TBA.

February

February 1, 8, 15, 22 — Junior Nordic Program — Saturdays at Lookout Mountain State Recreation Area 1-2:30 p.m.

February 2 — Ski/Walk/Run for Women — Lookout Mountain State Recreation Area Backcountry Film Festival — 7 p.m., Homer Theatre. Date and Details TBA

February 9 — Wine and Cheese and Wooden Ski Tour — Noon-4 p.m. @ location TBA

March

March 14 — KNSC Nordic Ski Marathon — Lookout Mountain Ski Trails (starting line)

March 29 — Sea to Ski — Location TBA, based on snow

More information and updates for these events can be found online at kachemaknordicskiclub.org or on Facebook @ Kachemak Nordic Ski Club

Brimming the best skiing in the world back to Alaska

BY JEANNIE WOODRING

Imagine the best Nordic skiing in the world: Hundreds of miles of groomed trails, running through pristine birch forests and up challenging alpine vistas. Temperatures are moderate and the snow is deep. You can't get lost because signs along the trails point out directions, the warm-up huts and country inns. You meet friendly people on the trails who help if you have trouble. Everything is clean, everything is working, and everyone and everything is devoted to skiing.

Yes, your corner of Alaska may have a few of these features. For Steve Soistman of Homer, however, “Norway has the best skiing in the world.”

He should know. During the three winters of 2016, 2018 and 2018, he spent six weeks each year skiing in Norway. It’s his “itch.” For decades, Steve has traveled the world seeking new horizons in outdoor adventure. Growing up in Florida, he spent most of his time outdoors diving into everything related to water ... sailing, fishing, surfing, teaching fly-fishing. He followed these sports to the Florida Keys, both coasts of Central America, and Hawaii. As a young adult, he left Hawaii for a Florida reunion – and his life shifted from warm climates to cold.

A friend convinced him to come to Chicago for six weeks of work in recreational outdoor sales. That job lasted 6 years. And Steve found snow. “I decided I wanted to live somewhere with snow,” he says.

See NORWAY, Page 10
The president is looking forward to another great season supported by the members and indispensable volunteers of the Kachemak Nordic Ski Club (KNSC).

Keeping 80 kilometers of trails at three trail systems groomed to the high standards we have come to expect requires an extensive array of machinery. KNSC maintains eight snow-machines, four tracked ATVs, four snowanners, four Ginzu groomers, and numerous rollers and drags at three buildings. Construction of the third building, overseen by Board Member Jason Neely at Sunset Loop, is nearing completion. Thank Jason for his hard work and expert guidance in coming in well-under budget and on time – helped with equipment – to the baycrest maintenance crew a place to work on and store machines out of the elements.

After a few expensive years, KNSC finally had a season of below-average repair costs. Costs were well below average until the club needed to replace the transmission on one ATV last month. The savings helped us tremendously, because costs were higher and revenues a little lower in other areas, especially from outside grant support.

The work of the club’s president slows down during the summer, but things happen. This summer, one of the more interesting issues to arise was that of an old application for a permit to the Alaska Department of Natural Resources for use of the Hayfield trails at the Lookout Mountain Recreational Area. It seems that back in 2007 the DNR had decided that an easement would be more appropriate than a permit, but because the decision came at the beginning of the summer, it fell between the cracks and KNSC never proceeded with any action. Another reason may be that the easement process is expensive, requiring an up-front fee of $1,200 with no guarantee of success. The Board of Directors has decided to proceed, and the first step is to get a “DMLW-approved-as-built survey” tied to monuments, which can be expensive. However, the Hayfield Trails are so important to so many of us and to KNSC’s programs and events, that we must prioritize protecting it in perpetuity.

Double-super-extra thanks to all of you for making 2018-19 the best-ever year for membership contributions! Keep those memberships and contributions coming so that KNSC’s hard-working volunteers can continue to provide the high level of service we have come to expect! Many hands make light work!

Think snow, and ski you out on the trails!

Norway

Continued from Page 9

And then there was the itch that had no cure – “to always go for more.” Following his friends to the extreme, Steve came to the Kenai Peninsula to visit an old friend. He camped at Crescent Lake on September 22, 1991. That night, two feet of snow fell. “This would be a good place to live,” Steve thought. Though he hasn’t seen that much snow fall in September since 1991, Steve stayed in Alaska. At first, he and his friend spent a lot of time fishing and exploring rivers. Then he started working at an outdoor equipment store in Soldotna from 1994-1999. During his residency in Soldotna, Steve found an adventure partner, Linda, with whom to share outdoor passions.

And the itch for adventure still stirred. During the week, “when the family would come home after a day of work and school, we would ski together every night,” Steve says. Most evenings, the family skied the Tsalteshi trails in Soldotna to end the day. On time off from work, Steve drove to Homer and skied on the early trails at McNeil Canyon and the top of Baycrest.

In 2000, he came to Homer and stopped Ulmer’s Drug and Hardware on a friend’s recommendation. As luck would have it, he was hired at the spot.

For nearly two decades, Steve has been a fixture in the winter sports and fishing departments at Ulmers. He can wax your skis for any snow, point out the best equipment to fit your individual needs, and give you tips for improving your skiing. For the entire time he has worked at Ulmer’s, Steve has donated hours of his time – helped with equipment – to the Kachemak Nordic Ski Club, and even schools around Alaska.

He and family skied whenever they could. His kids grew up on skis. And Steve still had the urge for more skiing. He got the idea for skiing in Norway from years of watching the Olympics. A great majority of the Nordic medals go to Norwegians. He read about Norwegian skiers in magazines. At work, he talked to everyone and learned where they were from. “Probably half of the world’s successful skiers, including the Olympians, are from Norway,” he says.

In his search for knowledge, Steve found some interesting facts about Nordic skiing in Norway:

• Oslo, the capitol, has nearly 1,600 miles of groomed trails
• Probably 30 percent of the Norwegians ski at least 5 times a week
• Norway’s ski features include former Olympic sites like Lillehammer. That means trails and infrastructure to support skiing.
• In the terrain around Lillehammer, Steve learned why so many people went there to ski. The site sits on a plateau 3,000 feet above sea level. Mountains rising up another 1,500 feet surround the plateau. Steve notes, “You can ski up big hills and then back to town, or you can ski to little villages up on top, birch forests, etc. There is lots of infrastructure along the trail systems, from signs to warm-up hut to inn.”

Steve made his first trip in January 2017. He flew on Icelandic Air from Anchorage to Oslo. At the Oslo airport terminal, he went to a kiosk and bought a train ticket to Lillehammer. Without any other tickets or reservations, he walked around Lillehammer. “Not knowing how to speak or read a word of Norwegian, Iluckily found a hotel next to a ski shop and bus station,” he says. “Everyone speaks English and the trip got better at every step.”

Steve also discovered:
• Honesty: You can leave your ski gear in the basements of hotels without cramming them in you rooms. No one steals your skis – or anything • Free breakfasts! And a packed lunch to keep you going! • Free advice. Ski shops (which are literally everywhere) will tell you what wax to use and show you maps of where to ski, depending on what you want.
• More free advice: A website, Skisporet.no, shows live grooming conditions for a couple of days before taking the train north to another site, Venabu. Each of these locations offers a vast Nordic trail system with the support-infrastructure.

From his three winters skiing in Norway, Steve has learned some important lessons:

• You’ll meet all kinds of great people skiing in Norway. He recalls a 94-year-old woman skiing past him who was several kilometers ahead of her sons, who were in their seventies.

• You’ll meet skiers from all over the world in Norway. Not surprising, some are also from Alaska.

• Everybody is respectful of each other. Everything works. Everything is clean.

• Skiing in Norway is challenging. On his second trip, Steve had an unfortunate fall coming down a steep trail. Thankfully, the kind Norwegian skiers on the trail helped him find shelter and safety.

• And of course, “it’s the best skiing in the world,” he adds.

An extra plus to skiing in Norway is how well Steve got to know some of the people where he stays. “They make you feel like family,” he concludes. “Staff in hotels, shops, etc., recognize you from prior visits and are always curious about Alaska. I have met friends in several parts of Norway who all share the same passion for skiing.”

For now, Steve is spending his time, including winters, skiing in Homer and taking care of everyone who walks into Ulmer’s seeking ski advice. And whenever it snows, he grins. He is home. But there still is some place, far away, where the snow glissens and the vista opens up to reveal mountains, forests, valleys . . . and Nordic trails – always more trails.
AROUND THE VALLEY

Mat-Su Ski Club rolling on (just slightly slower than the speed of light …)

The Mat-Su Ski Club planned on taking a break from the ski trail expansion and improvement work over the past several years. Well, that was the plan …

Then in April we realized that we could have several homologated race trails with a few “minor” trail improvements. Then we had to deal with the beetle killed spruce along the trails. Then we needed to deal with some erosion issues on the new trails and broadcast another 750 pounds of grass seed on the new trails. Then there was routine trail maintenance and a lot of other small projects done by club volunteers. Then we found out that there was a “gently used” Pistenbully 100 for sale in the Lower 48 for a very good price.

Our club and the Board of directors discovered that the “break” was only a brief pause. After a lot of volunteer hours, all the above are done or rolling along towards completion. The ski club had been planning on purchasing a replacement groomer this summer and after crunching the numbers, and doing a lot of research, the board decided to purchase the Pistenbully 100. We will use it to groom the ski trails at the Government Peak Rec Area. This purchase has strained our finances but we are still in healthy shape. We still need a truck and trailer capable of transporting the new groomer. If you are a Mat-Su Ski Club member, ski or plan to ski at GPRA, or are a Nordic skiing supporter please consider making an online donation to the Mat-Su Ski Club. Thank you!

A big month ahead leading into an even bigger season!

The ski club has a lot of great things going on this month:
- **Membership Year** started Sept. 1 along with Junior Nordic signups. Go to the club website.
- **Trail Improvement Work Day:** Saturday, Oct. 12, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., GPRA
- **Annual Meeting:** Saturday, Oct. 19, GPRA chalet, 6:30 p.m.
- **Junior Nordic ski issue:** Saturday, October 26, GPRA, 10-11 a.m.

Back Country Bike and ski will be there to rent ski boots for those that need them.

Some other big things down the road include a change to our Northern Lights Wednesday night race series. We will have a three-race series on Sundays at 1 p.m. January 12 and 26, and February 16.

We will also recognize our returning and new race volunteers with handsome, insulated, blue jackets and will forever be known as the “Blue Crew.” Go to the ski club web site to sign up and give us the size you need. The ski club is always looking for new groomers to train up and share the work load. Almost all our grooming is done between 8 p.m. and midnight. If interested, call Ed Strabel at 745-4190.

The ski club is seeking a race director and a head timer for the Northern Lights race series as well as four high school races. Apply at the ski club website.

Finally, there is a new flagpole in the stadium area at GPRA and we have the American and Alaska flag but we want to have a Mat-Su Ski Club flag. Junior Nordic families are encouraged to submit a design for the club flag. Turn in your proposed design at the ski club building before practice by January 28, 2020.
Birch Hill Weather Station gets a revamp

The NSCF weather station at Birch Hill Recreation Area is back up and running. The instruments are now mounted on a new pole in the stadium that is much easier to access, even in winter. Hopefully, adjustments made this summer will stop the dropouts we had last winter. But if we do have problems, we should be able to make adjustments much easier. Thanks to John Schauer, Alan Delamere, Eric Troyer, and Tom Helmers and his trail crew for their work on this project.

Fairbanks skiers in FasterSkier

FasterSkier featured two Fairbanks skiers on its website over the summer. “Although it’s Hard to Do, Catching up with Kendall Kramer” was run on August 22 and includes a long interview with Kendall. “Wednesday Workout: Mitigating Risks in Mountain Running Races with David Norris and Jessica Yeaton” was run on August 21. Fairbanksan Norris is the current record holder of Seward’s Mountain Running Races with David Norris and Jessica Yeaton was run on August 22 and includes a long interview with Kendall. “Wednes-

The Birch Hill weather station instruments are now mounted on a pole with a hinged base so that the instruments can be accessed much easier.

NSCF seeking adult lessons instructors

Want to share your love of skiing with people new to the sport? Help them gain confidence and skills? Share in-depth techniques and training strategies? The NSCF Adult Lessons program is looking for instructors and substitute instructors.

Instructors need to be NSCF members and need to undergo a background check. Instructors get paid $45 per hour for group lessons and are covered by club insurance for those lessons. Instructors need to be First Aid and CPR certified. The club will provide an opportunity to gain these certifications. The club also provides instructor training alongside the Jr. Nordics program instructors.

For more information and to sign up as an instructor, please contact Shelly Soderstrom at adultlessons@nscfairbanks.org.

Help NSCF by going shopping

Help the Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks simply by shopping at Fred Meyer or Amazon. If you have a Fred Meyer Rewards Card you can link it to NSCF through the store’s Community Rewards program. Fred Meyer makes donations to participating non-profits based on the spending of the customers linked to each non-profit. Amazon donates a portion of its profits through its AmazonSmile program. Find out more about each program at: nscfairbanks.org/support-nscf > Affiliate Programs.

Skiing Info from Your Smart Phone

Use your smart phone’s browser and go to the NSCF website. For weather: in the menu (top right corner) choose Weather. Scroll down to Mobile Weather. Click on that link. (iOS users can get the Birch Hill Weather App from the App store.) For grooming: in the menu (top right corner) choose Trails. Then scroll down a bit and you’ll get the latest grooming updates. Scroll down farther to get to the grooming chart. Turn your phone sideways for easier reading.

NSCF volunteer opportunities

Interior Alaska is one of the greatest cross-country ski communities in the country! We have an amazing group of dedicated volunteers who help make Fairbanks skiing great. The NSCF has several volunteer opportunities. If you want to volunteer or have questions see nscfairbanks.org/support-nscf > Volunteer or send an email to president@nscfairbanks.org.

The Alaska Nordic Skier in your inbox!

Get your Alaska Nordic Skier online and the links below are just a click away. To get only a PDF version, or both a PDF and printed version, please send an email request to nordicskiereditor@gmail.com. You can also get PDF versions at anchor-agenordicski.com/newsletters.htm.
A Summer of FXC Nordic skiing training

BY TOBIAS ALBRIGTSEN

The summertime is a huge chunk of the year for athletes to get quality training in. Successful winters are followed by big summers. For the NSCF-FXC programs, our summer training starts in late May, after a nice month of rest and recovery. This summer, we had three main programs for our ability levels and ages. We have a DEVO (development) program for beginner skiers, ages 10-15, a COMP (competitive) program for our advanced skiers, ages 15-19, and a COMP BRIDGE program for those athletes making the transition between the two.

The beginning of this summer started with plyos, minibands, and ski technique which directly strengthens the foundation of the skier and allows them to support a winter season balancing on skinny skis. However, the summer is not just a training grind. We get to do a lot of really fun trips throughout the summer. On weekends, we like to spend much of the day outdoors, enjoying the 24 hours of light Alaska offers. We do monthly team-wide hikes, one of them being up Mount Healy. With the windy ridge and cool air, it is a nice reminder of the crispness of winter and motivates us for the winter season.

Unfortunately, the forest fires in July kept us inside and left more training to be desired. We were forced to reduce training to protect our lungs and decrease the risk of problems later in the season. During the low-intensity practices we did hold, we focused on balance, coordination, and technique.

When the smoke cleared, it was time for our summer testing. If you found yourself walking into our gym during this time, you would see not just max repetitions of pullups, pushups, box jumps, dips, and sit-ups but our athletes pushing the envelope and encouraging each other to be their best.

My favorite trip over this summer was a two-day backpacking trip on the Pinnell Mountain Trail, two hours north of town. Everyone brought their own food and camping gear but shared in the fantastic sunset, misty sunrise, sideways rain and sleet, and fair weather. We hiked about 15 miles each day with plenty of stops for snacks, drinks, and meals. We laughed to ourselves as we saw the many desirable caribou just 4 miles from the trailhead, full of August hunters who stay within 1 mile of the road.

Our summer came to a bitter end as the program head coach, Alasdair Tutt, left to pursue international ski coaching, in the ski hub of Davos, Switzerland. FXC has seen major progress this past year and we have all become better from his leadership. Thank you Tutty!

As the fireweed has passed her bloom, we look back and find ourselves stronger, faster, and more balanced as athletes. Our athletes’ next challenge is to get back into school mode and continue their pre-winter training.

Tobias Albrigtsen is an assistant FXC coach.
Holding many great skiing events requires many wonderful volunteers

**BY CHRIS PUCHNER**
President, Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks

Welcome to another season of skiing with the Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks! I hope the season of snow is long and deep (but not too deep). We are already busy planning club activities for you to enjoy, including races, tours, lessons, and social events (on snow and off).

We hold many events throughout the season and need help from many volunteers. Please consider volunteering for one or more of our programs. You’ll surely have fun doing so and you will also help bring the joy of cross-country skiing to others.

We need help with everything from races to helping kids learn to ski to putting on events. Please see the list below for some of the many volunteer opportunities. If you’d like to help out, please contact the program director (see About > Contact at nsclfairbanks.org) or send an email to: fbxskierpartners@gmail.com.

**Races:** It takes a lot of people to put on a race, and we have a lot of races!

We need both experienced volunteers as well as those who are brand new to ski racing and even skiing. To help out contact our Competitions director at competitionevents@nsclfairbanks.org.

**Junior Nordics coaches:** Help kids from 5-14 years old learn to love skiing! Junior Nordic sessions last one hour and are held on Tuesday and Thursday nights and Sunday afternoons. Help one, two or three days a week. Or offer to be a substitute.

**Senior Nordic discounts:** Are offered for coaches who have kids in the program. Please contact our Junior Nordics coordinators at: jnordics@nsclfairbanks.org

**Biathlon:** Do you love skiing? Our biathlon program would love your help. Please contact our Biathlon coordinator at: biathlon@nsclfairbanks.org

**Touring:** Do you know one or more of the skiing trails around town? Want to show them off to other cross-country ski enthusiasts? If so, please offer to lead a tour. You choose the place and time. Contact our Touring coordinator at: touring@nsclfairbanks.org

**Trail maintenance:** Before the snow flies our trails need some TLC so that they are ready for ski season. Work mainly involves brushing, raking, and helping haul away downed trees. Contact the Trails and Grooming coordinator at: trails@nsclfairbanks.org.

**Spring Gala:** The big season-ending social event for people interested in Nordic skiing and other winter outdoor activities. It combines music, dancing, food and drink, a silent auction, and some outcry auction items. Contact the FXC Volunteer coordinator at: fxcski@gmail.com

**Backcountry Film Festival:** A night of short films celebrating human-powered backcountry activities, usually held on a Saturday evening about the third week in January.

**Ski for Women:** A spring social ski and potluck luncheon to benefit the women’s shelter in Fairbanks. It is usually held on a Sunday in early April and includes door prizes and a silent auction. Costumes are encouraged! Skiing distances up to 5 kilometers. (This hasn’t been held for the past couple of years. We would love for one or more people to step up and coordinate this.)

There are lots of other ways to help, including to serve on our Board of Directors and its various committees. Please consider volunteering in some capacity and helping us put on a great winter season of skiing.

Hope to see you at a NSCF event this coming season!

Change of seasons brings changes of NSCF personnel

**BY ERIC TROYER**

We may not have had snow on the ground over the summer, but the club was quite active, including several NSCF personnel changes.

**New administrator**

Roy Earnest has been hired as the new club administrator, taking over from John Estile, who is retiring from those duties but still keeping others with the club. The administrator handles the club’s books and other administrative duties for the board of directors. Roy is a longtime Fairbanks skier who has a Master’s degree in Business and many years in management. He also coached middle school skiers for four years. John is staying on as the club’s Competition Director, a position he has had for many years. He is gradually reducing his responsibilities with the club as he inches toward retirement.

**Junior Nordics/Adult Lessons**

Shelly Soderstrom is taking over as Junior Nordics Coordinator. Shelly is also taking on the Adult Lessons Coordinator duties from Andie Levesque. Shelly is a lifelong Alaskan skier and a long-time Jr Nordics coach and race volunteer.

**Sponsorship**

Chel Ethun is taking over from Rebecca Heaton as the club’s Sponsorship Coordinator. Chel has been the Volunteer Coordinator for FXC. Rebecca is remaining as the club’s Data Coordinator.

**FXC coach**

Nick Crawford is the new FXC Head Coach and Director of Skier Development, taking over from Alasdair Tutt. Nick’s coaching resume spans high school, club, and collegiate skiing and running coaching. He started his coaching career in Fairbanks under the direction of then NSCF-FXC head coach, Pete Leonard. After two years in Fairbanks as the FXC assistant coach and the Lathrop High School head coach, Nick went on to Bogus Basin in Boise, Idaho, as the head coach and program director for four years. Nick returned to Fairbanks as head coach for the UAF Nanooks cross country ski and running teams. In addition to his ten years of coaching experience, Nick raced at the junior and collegiate level.

Alasdair left to take a job in Davos, Switzerland, coaching cross country skiing and biathlon at a sports school for teenagers. Alasdair served as FXC head coach for a year, after spending a year as an assistant coach.

**FXC volunteer coordinators**

FXC parents Kari Baurick and Susan Harry are taking over the FXC Volunteer Coordinator duties from Chel Ethun and Jen Delamere.

Roy Earnest
Chel Ethun
Nick Crawford
Junior Nordics mostly the same, but with a few changes

Junior Nordics starts the 2019-20 season with a new coordinator and a few changes from previous years.

Shelly Soderstrom, a lifelong Alaskan, skier and longtime Jr. Nordics coach and race volunteer, is taking on the coordinator position.

“The biggest change that parents will notice this year, is that we are having a preseason orientation the week before lessons start,” Shelly said. “This is an opportunity for everyone to meet their coaches before the first day and have time to get any questions answered without rushing out the door to get on skis.”

The orientation will also give coaches a “better opportunity to communicate to their kids and parents what to expect over the season.”

Shelly hopes to hold some extra Junior Nordic events this season. “So be sure to keep an eye on the emails and the club Facebook page for a special fun day(s) for the kids,” she said.

Shelly is also hoping to get more coaches, so anyone with an interest in having fun on skis with a bunch of energetic kids should contact Shelly at juniornordics@nscfairbanks.org.

Finally, prices will be going up just a bit. There will be an additional $15 charge on each registration fee to account for USSA membership that will be required for all Junior Nordics volunteer coaches.

To make the season go smoothly, Junior Nordic parents are encouraged to list the helpful tips below:

• Families with multiple kids, take a notebook to the store and jot notes on boot, ski and pole sizes needed for all children.
• Visit ski swaps to look for your specific needs before shopping at stores for retail prices. The kids grow so fast and you might find that they grow out of their equipment during the season.
• Make sure if your child has never skied before to try on all the equipment inside on your living room carpet. Allow them the space to move around and find their balance a few times.
• A sense of humor on the days when it is really cold goes a long way in creating the steadfast attitude that all things are possible with the right attitude.
• Always carry extra mittens, handy heated and a neck warmer on days when it is cold. You can reuse them multiple times if you seal them in a jar before they lose their heat.
• Your car should be stocked with an extra bag containing socks, hats, mittens etc. You will need them at some point for your children or others who may be skiing with you.
• Label everything! Lesson days get crowded with excited kids who may not be paying attention when they pick up their belongings. Take a moment to be sure they have theirs.
• A warm snack before Jr. Nordics lessons along with water in the car afterwards they really do work up a sweat! Goes a long way in making your experience a good one.
• Enter the Town Series races! They are family oriented and give your child a chance to strut their stuff no matter what level they are at.
• Show up and ski – even if it is just once. Nothing reinforces the fun more than seeing mom or dad out there with them.
• Take a day and ski with you kids when they are not at Jr. Nordics. Pick a lovely Saturday and ask your kids to take you for a ski at the UAF or Birch Hill trails. That little bit of interest goes a long way and makes for a great family outing.
• Remember that hour once, twice or three times a week is also your hour as a parent. Enjoy the time.
• Sometimes the bundling and getting out the door process takes longer than the actual skiing time. Try to be OK with this! Eventually the time spent skiing exceeds the preparation time. There will be many weeks when you never make it out of the stadium or the terrain park. Before you know it, you won’t be able to keep up with your kids!
• Listen to your child. There’s a difference between needing a bit of encouragement and gently prodding your child when they’re not excited about skiing. Don’t ever force your child to participate.
• Building relationships is an extremely important element in the life of the child. Know your child. If you have an introvert and your personal- ity is an extrovert, be sensitive to that. Give them the adequate space to form their own bonds. Stay after the session and speak with some of the other parents so that it creates a space for the child to develop relationships with the other kids.
• A lot of work goes into parenting in general but specifically, creating the desire for healthy exercise is part of our job. Being intentional with the activi- ties to promote a healthy lifestyle is one way to do it. Children aim to please their parents. If parents make it a habit to exercise daily, kids learn by imitation and it becomes a part of their daily lives. Whether kids decide to ski as part of a competitive club or not, shouldn’t matter. The ultimate goal is to have children moving and enjoying the sport of cross-country skiing.

Fairbanks Nordic Ski Patrol needs volunteer patrollers to help keep skiers safe

BY ERIC TROYER

Want to help keep skiers safe at NSCF races? Considering joining the volunteer Fairbanks Nordic Ski Patrol. The FNSP is “always looking for potential candidates interested in patrolling,” according to Patrol Director Nancy Hanneman.

The FNSP has volunteers at most of the major competitive events of NSCF, including coordinating with Birch Hill Alpine during the Sonot Kozoot. It has served the NSCF since 2015. The group is an offshoot of the Fairbanks Ski Patrol, which patrols the Ski Land alpine ski area, and has many mem- bers who patrol both. It also has members from the Moose Mountain and Birch Hill Alpine ski patrols.

Last season the FNSP had 46 patrol- days spread out over 13 different races. The patrol had three patient contact events, including one in which a skier injured her leg on the Roller Coaster Trail during an evening Adult Lessons class. No FNSP patrol was present, but several skiers, including a local physician, scrambled to help out. While one person called 911, the physician-skier went directly to the injured skier. A few others borrowed a sleeping bag and sled from the storage room that houses FNSP equipment and brought it to the woman. They draped the sleeping bag around her and used the sled to transport her to the Birch Hill Cross Country Ski Chalet, where an ambulance was already waiting.

“It sure was nice to have the sled available,” said one of the volunteer rescuers.

So even when no patrollers were available, the FNSP still helped out! Hanneman said she is happy the sled and sleeping bag were available for use. “Having adequate rescue equipment on-site” is important, she said.

For people interested in joining the patrol, the FNSP will probably have an Outdoor Emergency Care (OEC) certification course soon. People with EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) training can try to challenge the OEC course. To volunteer or find out more information contact Nancy Hanneman at akplacer@alaska.net.

Eric Troyer is Fairbanks editor of the Alaska Nordic Skier.
Meet the Board: Flaharty spreads the joy of skiing

I was born and raised in Fairbanks. Being the daughter of Bad Bob and Sharon Baker, I grew up Nordic skiing, running and cycling and enjoyed racing from an early age. I have always felt that Nordic skiing is especially important for Fairbanksians to embrace because it gets so cold and dark – what else do you do?

I remember my sister teaching me how to skate ski at our cabin. In the springtime there is great crust skiing out there and you can ski anywhere, springtime there is great crust skiing how to skate ski at our cabin. In the dark – what else do you do?

I skied and ran for the University of Alaska Anchorage on an athletic scholarship. I married Tyson, former University of Alaska Fairbanks then Alaska Pacific University skier. After earning my BA in Art we moved back home to Fairbanks, still skiing and running competitively.

My career has been 10 years with Alaska Biological Research, as well as an artist. Currently, I work my own business from home in the health and wellness industry while raising our young daughter and son – both love to ski and bike!

Meet the Board introduces the Board of Directors of the Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks to NSCF members and the general public. If you are interested in serving on the board of directors, please send an email to fhsxskierparent@gmail.com.

Davya Flaharty competes during the World Masters 2018 in Minneapolis.