

April 2008 NEWSLETTER

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If you are willing to serve on the board in any of the vacant positions, (vice president, publicity) please contact Eric Fiore or one of the other board members.

Thanks!



In Memoriam

Thomas Scott Meckelnburg

Feb. 25, 1962 - Mar. 9, 2008

All of us were greatly impacted by the sudden, untimely death of our friend & fellow skier, Tom Mecklenburg. Tom died doing what he loved most – flying down a black diamond run with friends. He passed away on the slopes of an apparent heart attack. His enthusiasm, tenacity & devotion have long been a driving force which all of us recognize. As current president & webmaster, annual trip leader extraordinaire, and wearer of so many hats in the club, he has promoted & supported us tirelessly. We will all miss his kindness, his infectious smile, his boundless energy & his friendship.

To read the touching eulogy delivered by his family at the memorial service, you may visit www.mccomasfuneralhome.com. Type “Meckelnburg” in the search box. From there you can read the memorial & the memorial tributes sent in by friends & family. There is also a video tribute to Tom.

Contributions may be made to the Thomas Meckelnburg Memorial Fund, Kennedy Krieger Institute, Attn: Development Department, 707 N. Broadway, Baltimore, MD 21205 or to the Meckelnburg Children, c/o Freedom Federal Credit Union, 2019 Emmorton Road, Bel Air, MD 21015 for an educational fund established for the children.

SnowTime has now moved to their new location. Be sure to stop by & check out their new store at **2203 Commerce Dr in the Forest Hill Air Park.**

INTERLAKEN – NICE 2008

TRIP RECAP

Undaunted by an ice storm that threatened the Mid-Atlantic region, twenty six HSC members set off on February 22nd, bound to conquer the Swiss Alps and then enjoy the Mediterranean charms of the French Riviera. Those on the bus from Abingdon and Columbia rendezvoused with the rest of the group at Dulles Airport in mid-afternoon, with plenty of time to enjoy a few Friday afternoon cocktails at a lounge there prior to departure time at 6:00pm. We got the first trip delay out of the way early, as the United flight was delayed over an hour due to some reported problem with an oxygen mask. **Robert Martello** took the opportunity to make friends with all the flight crew, though his requests of free beverages for all went unheeded. We finally got underway later that evening, leaving rainy Washington behind as we headed nonstop across the Atlantic towards sunny Switzerland. When we arrived early the next morning, we found Spring had arrived early in the Swiss Alps, with sunny skies and surprisingly warm temperatures. Following a 2 hour bus ride on curvy mountain roads that wound past cute little villages and deep blue lakes, we arrived in our base camp for the next week—Interlaken. Our arrival on Saturday was a day ahead of the other three Blue Ridge Ski Council clubs meeting us there, so we had run of the gorgeous 4 star Victorian Royal St. Georges Hotel all to ourselves. **Jim Twigg** and **Marlene Manning** wasted no time in hitting an outdoor cafe overlooking the big central park there to soak up the sun, and many from the group soon followed their lead. There were a few hours at leisure for everyone to eat, unpack, nap or check out Interlaken prior to our Welcome Party at the hotel starting at 4:00pm. Here the hotel manager and staff along with a ski shop rep went over the essentials of the town and skiing the Jungfrau. Afterwards there was time to begin using our discount drink tickets (but NOT the blue ones!) at the hotel bar prior to dinner at 7:00. Time to get used to eating pork every day! That night most everyone retired early but one group headed across the street to a cute little pub run by a Viennese chap named Michael, who kept everyone well-supplied with the local Rugenbrau beer. **Shereen Jahed** got to hear her requested Bon Jovi, while **Bill Shewchuk** was among those who closed the place, as par tradition.

The next three days were beautiful, warm days of Spring skiing across the Jungfrau, with even a few butterflies spotted flitting over the slopes. Time to shed the extra layers and head high into the mountains for the best snow, via the network of trains which connect Interlaken to the ski villages dotting the dazzling peaks above. All of the group took full advantage of the great weather, whether skiers or not. **Michelle Horton** and **Donna Nemec** enjoyed the shopping in Grindelwald, while **Evelyn Simpson** got to do a bit of hiking around there too. A large group of skiers headed to the Mannlichen slopes above the village of Wengen to begin their ski week. Once the ski legs were established, a network of trails and lifts led up to the Klein Scheidegg crossroads, where trains from Wengen, Grindelwald and the Jungfrauoch all meet. But the real attribute of the place was that it was the most happenin' party spot on the mountain! Several large, multicolored teepees cranked out music, a large outdoor oven supplied pizzas and other baked fare, and there were a series of wooden bleachers set up for everyone to soak up the sun, take in the view and watch all the trains and people come and go. A man in native costume periodically blew one of the traditional Alpine horns, sending its melancholy notes floating down the valley far below. People shed whatever unnecessary ski clothing they still had on and partied down with lots of cold beer a flowin'. **Bill Martin**, **Deb Hannon** and **Jim Agosti** were among those there that first day, but most of the skiers and even a few non-skiers got to enjoy the vibe there at least once during the week. Once properly libated, the long Lauberhorn World Cup run led everyone eventually back to the car-less village of Wengen and then the train back "home" to Interlaken. **Cara McCord** instead skied at the First area and was detoured by an avalanche. That evening the final member of our group arrived: **Peter Keller** who was an old friend of **Paul Brown**. Peter drove in from his native Germany to spend the week in Interlaken with us. He seemingly had an endless pocketful of little Jagdbitter liqueur bottles on him at all times! Also arriving that evening were the remaining Blue Ridge Ski Council clubs from Richmond, Washington and Columbia (including the ever-present and ever-friendly Dave). Following dinner, a number of the group were entertained by the soothing piano sounds of "Umberto" in a nearby hotel lobby bar before venturing downstairs to the Black and White Disco, where tireless social leader **Jim Haney** performed the "Haniac" for the first of many occasions on the trip. Monday's weather was a sunny repeat, and everyone headed back outdoors again to either ski or explore Interlaken some more. **Jim Twigg** went exploring in "Old Town" Interlaken. **Joe and Diane Carabetta**, **Bart Pierce** and **Marlene Manning** were among those who took up the challenge of skiing down the steep expert run from the top of the 10,000' Schilthorn Piz Gloria peak, the highest ski-able terrain in the Jungfrau. But they weren't done then nooooo..... since the way down involved another long, steep and switchbacked trail cutting down the mountain's flank. Combined these runs made up part of the esteemed Inferno downhill run, a 10 mile long, 7000' vertical race that attracts some 1800 daredevils each January in a competition held most years since 1928. It is considered the world's longest downhill race. Happily, everyone survived their experiences on the Schilthorn, though no new time records were set! For those who wanted to go even higher, there was the Jungfrauoch. Billed as the "Top of Europe", at 11,300' it is indeed Europe's highest train station, reached in 4 segments up from Interlaken. Though you can't ski from up here (at least not sanely), the views are endless and the ice caves and early 20th century engineering awe-inspiring. **Francis Neuberger** and **George Dobbs** were among the handful of the group that made the trip during the week. That evening there was a Blue Ridge Ski Council happy hour in the hotel bar area. The HSC were definitely out in force with **Jim Haney** once again at the center of it all, though he almost got taken out by a falling girl from one of the other clubs. **Doug Halverson**, **Bill Martin** and others made short work of the 50 Hooters (yes, there was a Hooters down the street!) chicken wings brought in for the affair, though **Eric Fiore** was less than pleased when the remnants ended up hanging outside his door.

So after 3 days in Interlaken, it was on to Phase II for many in the group—the Blue Ridge Ski Council side trips. The die-hard skiers in the group, **Robin and Brett Lively** and **Cara McCord**, would have none of this however, and kept skiing throughout the week although the weather conditions deteriorated after Tuesday as rain/snow and low visibility moved in across the mountains. But for many others, the side trips were an integral part of their vacation and a way to see and experience many of the unique and beautiful areas around central Switzerland. All three trips were virtually sold out and the HSC was well represented on each, despite the early wakeup calls. On Tuesday, it was off to see the scenic old cities of Bern and Lucerne. There was a big market going on in Bern, and people got to do some shopping there before heading off to see the famous Town Hall clock and the bear pits with their less-than-lively furry denizens. Then in the afternoon it was on to Lucerne to explore that beautiful lakeside city with its big churches, ancient covered bridges, and medieval pedestrian center. And yes, **Robert Martello** did manage to get his backpack back, after all. On Wednesday it was on to Zermatt, the home of the Matterhorn on the Italian border. The journey there involved loading the 2 buses onto train cars for a ride through mountain tunnels. The car-less village of

Zermatt is a great ski town in a spectacular setting. Just watch out for the electric carts running you down at every turn! Fortunately, the clouds and rain of the morning dissipated and there were several cloudless views of the magnificent Matterhorn peak high overhead. Some members of other clubs did do a bit of skiing there, but the HSC were all in it for the sightseeing, eating and drinking. There was plenty to explore too, including the mountaineering museum, lots of picturesque old wooden barns, a big Irish bar complex, fondue restaurants and of course a myriad of shops. **Shereen Jahed** found her perfect Swiss hat in record time, while **Robert Martello** made friends with a herd of goats. **Steve Andrews** revisited his favorite après-ski venue the Papperla Pub following a 10-year absence. But the big news of the week occurred in Zermatt when **Deb Rice** and **Doug Halverson** got engaged in the church there! Warmest congratulations to you both!!! The Friday tour to Gruyeres, Montreaux and Lausanne was not nearly so successful due to bad weather, delays, and problems with the bus. Still, it was interesting to explore the medieval castle in Gruyeres perched high atop the tiny cheese-making village and the tour of the famous Castle de Chillon on Lake Geneva represented the day's highlight. **Deb Rice** sampled the exceedingly thick Gruyeres cream, while **Michelle Horton** mimicked the aliens at the HR Giger café. And everyone thought **Peter Keller** was himself taken prisoner at the Chillon dungeon when he disappeared for a long while. On Thursday a number of the group also took a train to the lakeside town of Thun on their own to visit its castle, cathedral, and charming old town area.

That Thursday was also the Blue Ridge Ski Council Dance Party, held in the bar area at the Royal St. Georges. This venue was really too small for all the assembled people, and many were disappointed that it was held here, and also that the scheduled DJ was canceled. Still it was nice to meet and mingle with skiers from the other clubs and discuss/brag about the week's exploits. The Harford Ski Club group got primed for it with a wine, cheese and munchies party held beforehand in a stylish old parlor room off the main lobby. I won't relate here how many bottles of wine were consumed, but let's just say there were amazingly no leftovers and everyone including **Brett Lively** did their part! As the Dance Party was winding down, a number of the group led by **Jim Haney** (of course) headed over to Johnny's Dancing Bar down the street for some dancing on a real dance floor. Unfortunately **Shereen Jahed** never made it there, ending up instead in the hospital with a sprained ankle due to a sidewalk mishap. She made the best of the situation though, as the entire visit to the emergency room was well documented on cell phone camera! On a couple of the other nights during the week, **Jim Haney** presided over poker games in another parlor room at the hotel. **Bill Shewchuk** and **Doug Halverson** were regulars at these matches, though it seems **Eric Fiore** usually came away the winner with a little help on the side from **Lisa Logsdon** the dealer☺. On our final night in Interlaken, a group decided to close down Michael's pub across the street one last time. Here **Donna Nemec** found out what ringing the bell meant (buying a round for the entire bar) and everyone else was duly thankful.

Early the next morning it was time to depart Interlaken and head either back to Washington or on to Nice, France. Pouring rains and very strong winds whipped the region and caused many flight delays. Those headed back to Washington fared okay, but the Nice group ended up delayed and then split in half due to a scheduling error. Many thanks to **Bill Martin** for leading the second group down to Nice, where they arrived an hour or so after the first. The French Riviera didn't disappoint weather-wise, as it was sunny, warm and beautiful for our entire stay there. We arrived in the midst of the final big weekend of the famous Nice Carnaval (think Mardi Gras with a bit less drunkenness and a real French accent). The elaborate float parades on Saturday night and Sunday afternoon passed right by our hotel, the seafront Mercure Marche aux Fleurs. Capitalizing on our warm Franco-American relations, **Bill Clinton aka Jim Haney** made his second appearance of the trip. He was warmly received by a few members of the parade, but ultimately attacked with masses of silly string by **Bill Martin**, **Shereen Jahed** and others. Jim also made sure "the Haniac" made its way to the dance floors of France just as it had in Switzerland previously. **Jim Agosti** and **Deb Hannon** were in charge of closing the clubs with him, while **Bart Pierce** managed to have a Kilkenny Ale in nearly every bar in Old Town. When not drinking or taking in the Carnaval parades, the days in Nice were spent shopping at large outdoor markets, wandering the serpentine alleys of Old Town, hanging out on the beach, or taking in the view from the Parc du Chateau high above the city. Many in the group also headed over to nearby Monaco for a day. **Joe and Diane Carabetta** took a formal guided tour, while **Frances Neuberger** and **George Dobbs** took on some gaming in the famous Monte Carlo Casino. **Doug Halverson** followed the trail of the Monaco Grand Prix racecourse, while others followed the ill-fated storybook tale of Prince Rainier and Grace Kelly in the Cathedral where they were married and are now buried. Monaco is an amazing little place, where mountains are tunneled and seas reclaimed to make space forever more high rise buildings and yacht moorings. The train station lies a half-mile below ground. Lush tropical gardens cling to the sides of sheer cliffs, and the roofs of buildings are utilized for public parks and swimming pools. Ruling over it all is the Grimaldi family, who have kept medieval invaders and present-day tax collectors at bay since the 13th century.

Following one final beautiful Mediterranean sunset across the Bay of Angels, it was all too quickly time to pack up once more and head States-ward. We departed our Nice hotel extremely early in the morning, this time all-together on one proper-sized bus. The reports of a snowstorm in Frankfurt proved to be unfounded (there were just a few flakes), but we did endure a most bumpy flight back across the Atlantic. For a majority of the flight we were kept in our seats as the wings of the big jet flapped crazily up and down, luggage bounced around overhead, and more than a few prayers were uttered. But eventually we all arrived safely back at a balmy Dulles Airport, plenty tired and a bit beat up but with a new cache of European memories to last a lifetime. With one engagement and a new romance or two in place, we'll look ahead to hopefully doing it all over again in a couple years' time. Thanks one and all for helping make this trip one successful, fun-filled adventure.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Andrews/Trip Leader

Greek Islands Cruise with Baltimore Ski Club: If anyone is interested in cruising around the Greek Islands this October, check out the trip being organized by BSC. Contact Christopher Pukalski at Christopher_usa@msn.com or (410) 292-6656 cell, or <http://www.baltimoreskiclub.com/activities/greece08.pdf>

Harford Ski Club, Inc.

Upcoming Events Spring & Summer 2008

Sunday April 20th – Picture Party at Fiore Winery

1pm-5pm Enjoy a day in the country & share your pictures from the past ski season. The club will provide beer, wine & Italian food.

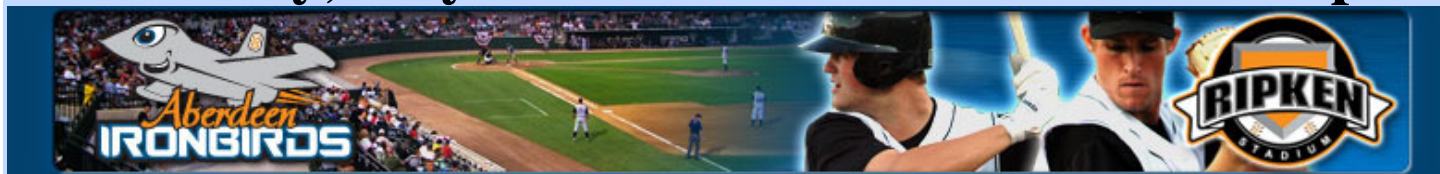
This event is free for members & \$ for guests.

Fiore is located at 3026 Whiteford Rd in Pylesville.

<http://www.fiorewinery.com>



Wednesday, July 30th – Ironbirds Baseball 7:05 pm



Come out for an evening of fun under the lights. This is becoming an annual event for the club & is a great way to advertise the club. Wear a crazy ski hat so we stand out in the crowd! Dennis Rosas has 50 tickets at only \$9.50 each. Unsold tickets must be returned by April 30th. If interested,

Contact Dennis at: 410.838.5392 home or 443.504.3107 cell.

dennisrosas@verizon.net

Saturday, Aug 9th - Pool Party 2pm

Bring your towels & swimsuits as well as a side dish to share at our summertime pool party. Once again, Mike & Carole Zullo will graciously host us at their home, located at 3231 Canterbury Lane in Fallston.

Burgers, dogs, sodas & beer will be supplied. Join us for some fun in the sun!



Saturday, Sept 13th – Shrimp & Beef Feast 4pm

Bart Pierce will once again host the annual event at The American Legion Post Pavilion in Havre de Grace, 501 Saint Johns Street. The cost includes pit beef, crab soup, salads, snacks, beer & sodas. Steamed shrimp will be sold by the pound, at cost. Tks: Adults \$15 Age 12 or under \$7 payable at door

Contact Bart for tickets or info: 410.306.0762 wk or 410.939.0821 Home
pierce@arl.army.mil.