

Ski Trails

The monthly newsletter for Suburban Ski Club

June 2022

Website: <http://www.suburbanskiclub.org>

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Suburban Ski Club Members,

It's official. Contracts for our Western trips to Steamboat Springs and Sun Valley are signed and flyers for you to make your reservations for these two wonderful trips will be coming to you soon via a special email. Current Suburban Ski club members will get first dibs on signing up for these trips before we open it up to the skiing community.

Please read the update on the three major trip later in this newsletter. That is followed by another report from **Judi Fordyce**. In her report you will hear about the new way to make your reservations for the two western trips.

Now that we have dates secured for our three major trips, **June Kelley** is at work planning our day-trip schedule. For the last couple of years, many clubs, including Suburban Ski Club, have had difficulty filling the bus for the one-day trip. To ensure we can continue to offer a robust ski schedule, we are looking at running some joint trips with our friends at Lewis Ski Club. More on that later as our plans develop.

We are happy to announce two social events for this month of June and we are delighted to tell you that one of them is the resurrection of our EAT dinners. **Patty Costigan** has sent up an evening for June 20th. See the details later on page 3. In addition, we begin our summer activities with a camping expedition to Punderson State Park. **Melinda Kellerstass** and **Robin Spooner** give you the details on page 6 and invite you to join them.

After that, on page 7, there is an informative article by **Cliff Lewis**. Cliff provides us with some very useful information about using credit cards to pay for your major trips.

This year, contract cancellation penalties have gotten stiffer. As such, we had to revise our trip policy to match up with today's reality. Bottom line, if a major trip is cancelled for any reason, the club will refund to you 100% of the amount we are refunded, which could be less than the amount you paid for the trip. But please know that we will take every step within our power to ensure that planned trips are a go. However, we've all learned with our COVID experience that sometimes it is out of our control. Please take a moment to read the revised policy in the final pages of this newsletter. The revised paragraphs are highlighted in **green**.

Finally, I want to be sure to thank the members of the Executive Board for all their work these past months and I also want to cite some individuals who have made significant contributions. New member of the Executive Board, **Judi Fordyce**, has done an incredible job in organizing the major trips. **Beth Silverman** has been of great assistance to Judi and has contributed her expertise in creating the trip flyers. **Ann McBrian** has put together pricing worksheets for the trips which have been very helping in arriving at a price point for each trip. Melinda Kellerstrass has volunteered to lead our trip to Steamboat Springs. In addition to his article in this newsletter, **Cliff Lewis** authored the text for the revised Trip Policy Statement which the EB approved. **Robin Spooner** and **Melinda Kellerstrass** have invited us to begin summer activities by organizing a camping trip. And, after the Covid hiatus, **Patty Costigan** has started us back on the tradition of monthly EATs by scheduling one for this month of June.

SSC is grateful to you all.

Sincerely,

Tracy Blake

president@auburbanskiclub.org

JUNE BIRTHDAYS



Happy Birthday to the following members born in June. Our database of birthdays is far from complete. Please remember to enter your birthday when you renew your membership so we can include you in our birthday wishes.

Tom Bartlo (6/16), Susan Billow (6/19), Michele Boim (6/22), Sherry Clifton (6/3), Greg Glova (6/5), Miklos Gratzl (6/18), June Kelley (6/29), Mary Kay Krenn (6/28), Angela Matousek (6/18), Kathryn Porcen-Robinson (6/5) and Joe Sullivan (6/21)

CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

- ***CAMPING:*** Tuesday, June 7 - Friday, June 10: Punderson State Park (see article later in these pages)
- ***EAT:*** Monday, June 20, 5:00 PM: Dos Coronas Mexican Restaurant (see following article)

Monday, June 20, 5:00 PM: EAT at Dos Coronas Mexican Restaurant

Hallelujah! We are finally able to announce to resumption of an EAT event which we hope will begin a new series of monthly EATs. Patty Costigan has set up an evening at this highly-rated Mexican restaurant and we hope you can join us.

Patty picked a Monday because Dos Coronas features “Margarita Monday.” We plan to assemble at the bar at 5:00 PM for some socialization and attitude adjustment. Then, at about 6:30PM we will move to our tables and order dinner.

The address of Dos Coronas is 419 Aurora Road, Northfield, OH 44067. Their phone number is (330) 836-0381. You can check out their menu and directions on their website at www.doscoronas.com

Please contact Patty at (330) 836-0381 or pcostig@gmail.com by Monday, June 13th to make your reservation.

MORE ON THE MAJOR TRIPS FOR 2023

As you know, we have three major trips on our skiing agenda for next season. In January we travel to **Steamboat Springs (Saturday, January 21 – Saturday, January 28)**. The Eastern Trip is scheduled to go to **Killington, VT (Sunday, February 5 – Saturday, February 12)**. The final major trip will be to **Sun Valley (Saturday, March 11 – Saturday, March 18)**.

You read in Tracy Blake's President's Message that the two western trips to Steamboat Springs and Sun Valley are in contract and we are within days of sending you an Email with flyers for those trips and details on how to make your reservation. You will see that there is a major change from past years in the way you sign up for those two trips. You will no longer send your reservation form and payments to the trip leader but will now do that via a special website set up by our tour operator. Below you can read another report from **Judi Fordyce**. In her article, Judi explains how this new system will work.

Details for the Eastern Trip to Killington are still in process but we hope to have them finalized later this month. We have a block of rooms reserved at the Killington Mountain Lodge and, as we go to press, we have just learned that prices for lift tickets have been released by the Killington Resort. Killington is an Ikon resort but the pricing for our package will also include group lift tickets. The final piece we are still waiting for is the lodging package and, as we have done for past eastern trips, this package will be all-inclusive with five hot breakfasts and six dinners.

A word about pricing: As we researched our major trip options, we learned that prices have increased substantially for 2023. This was confirmed by what we heard from tour operators at the Cleveland Ski Show on May 7th. They told us that both the resorts and the airlines are increasing their prices by 20 – 30%. And we don't expect the eastern trip to be exempt for these increases. So, be prepared for some sticker shock in the coming days when you will see the costs for our major trips.



Hi All,

I hope everyone is getting excited about our 2023 ski trips and is eager to sign up! Our tour operator, Sports America, is working diligently to get the online registration set up so that we can begin registration. We expect this to happen in just a few days.

So, to review, unlike past trips where you sent in your registration and payments to the Trip Leader, you will use a link to Sports America's

registration page for our trips to Steamboat Springs and Sun Valley. You will be led through several tabs where you will first be asked for various information about yourself and will be able to select certain options (e.g., flying on your own or with the group, lodging options etc.).

Then there will be a tab that gives you an option to sign up for trip insurance using the company that Sports America has worked with in the past. We strongly recommend you purchase trip insurance. There are also payment options (check or credit card).

Finally, there is the completion page where you will be asked to agree to the terms and conditions and finish your registration. Note that if you are signing up as a couple or family, there are options to enter information for multiple people.

When your registration is complete, you will be sent an email with your trip "choices" and instructions on how to pay by check, if you chose that option.

If you have any questions, concerns, or issues with this online registration, please feel free to contact me: by phone (440) 289-5511 or email: juditravels@icloud.com

Thank you and look for an email in a few days with the flyers for the two western trips and a link to the Sports America registration page.

Judi

SUMMER FUN BEGINS AGAIN

Check out this camping group from last year at Punderson State Park.



From the left: Donna Stefano, Colette Gschwind, Brad Carleton, Kim Sanders, Melinda Kellerstrass, Sue Kohout and Robin Spooner.

They are at it again this year and they want you join them for a camping adventure to begin our outdoor season. We hope to follow up in the coming summer months with more outdoor events featuring biking, paddling, kayaking, hiking and more... Here is the invitation for this adventure from **Melinda Kellerstrass** and **Robin Spooner**:

You are invited to join us...

The weather is turning warmer and it is time to get out and play. Last year several of us met at Punderson State Park for some camping, hiking, biking and paddling fun. We decided to do it again and would like you to join us.

Where: Punderson State Park. You can tent camp, trailer/RV camp, stay in a cabin or the lodge. Make your reservation by phone calling (866) 644-6727 [Ohioparks] or online <https://www.reserveohio.com/OhioCampWeb/> Don't forget to use your Golden Buckeye card for 50% off (this is a weekday deal for those 60 and older!).

When: We are checking in **Tuesday, June 7** and checking out **Friday, June 10**. Feel free to join us for all or some of the time. You can even come out just for the day or for an evening campfire.

This will be an impromptu event and plans will be made during the evening campfires. We will be on top of the hill around sites 150-153. You can access the map from the website and, hopefully, you can find a site close to us. We plan on doing some hiking on the many wonderful trails in the park and close by. If the weather is good, we will also be paddling. LaDue Reservoir is close and Punderson Lake is also fun. Both places offer rentals. Yes! Of course, we will have some evening campfires and libations. Bring some wood to share, your favorite drinks and a camp chair. Feel free to book your favorite type of abode: campsite, cabin, lodge.

Hope to see you there. Let one of us know if you plan to join and we will make sure you are aware of our plans.

Contact: Robin or Melinda for questions or to let us know if you will be joining:
Robin Spooner. spoonerchico@aol.com
Melinda Kellerstrass. Melinda@suburbanskiclub.org

CLIFF SHARES SOME USEFUL INFORMATION ON USING CREDIT CARDS FOR SKI TRIPS

New this year, we will be taking reservations for our western trips through our tour operator, Sports America. You will be able to reserve online and pay with a credit card. A surcharge will be added for credit card payments to cover the fees charged by the credit card companies. As with past trips, you will be able to pay in two or three installments.

You will still be able to avoid the surcharge by mailing in your reservation with a check. However, there are a few reasons you might want to pay the extra fee to use a credit card.

You could use your card to pay for the trip with money you don't have. Make the minimum payment each month and let the interest build up over 20 or 25 years. In the end the interest will be several times the price of the trip but, who knows, you might die before you have to pay it all. I know some people do this, but it is not recommended.

You might want to use your credit card to get the miles, points, or whatever. Depending on the card, you might get enough to cover the surcharge. I have one card that is currently offering \$75 worth of bonus points if I spend over \$1000 this month.

That same card also currently has an interest-free financing option for 18 months on purchases over \$549. That means I could spread out payments for the trip over 18 months. A word of warning, though: They hit you with the full amount of back interest if you come up even a penny short of the full amount after the 18 months is up. When I have used this offer, I use my bank's bill-pay service to schedule monthly payments adding up to the total over 18 months.

Those payments are made automatically. If I use the card for other purchases, I make an additional payment each month to cover those charges, so there are two payments each month. (And I do use the card. That same card is currently offering an insane 15X bonus points on groceries, gas, and restaurants—purchases I would make anyway.) The math can get a little complicated to make sure I stay on top of the payments, though.

Yet another reason to use a credit card is that some cards offer a travel insurance benefit when the full amount is charged to that card. I have two cards (unfortunately not the one I described above) that automatically provide coverage for lost or damaged luggage; trip cancellation or interruption due to injury, illness, or death; and rental car insurance if applicable. Sports America has informed us that charges made on their site are posted as travel purchases, so there is every reason to believe the card benefit would apply the same as if you made your own air or hotel reservations directly or through a travel agent.

We highly recommend travel insurance. We get cancellations on nearly all our major trips, and some members have lost money due to non-refundable reservations. You should review the coverage offered by your credit card and compare it with coverage offered by Sports America or other providers.

Cliff Lewis

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CLEVELAND SUBURBAN SKI CLUB

TRIP POLICY

The purpose of SSC's trip policy is to facilitate trip administration and to emphasize the responsibilities of individual members. We encourage early reservations and prompt payment to avoid having to cancel any trips. Our policy is also designed to encourage participation in our trips in a safe and efficient manner.

General

Only members of SSC and other CMSC affiliated ski clubs are permitted on trips. All others are required to join SSC to attend any of our trips.

Children and minors are permitted on some trips with adult supervision. Thus, anyone 17 and under must be accompanied by an adult who will accept full responsibility for their behavior and well-being.

Everyone registering for a trip must fill out and sign an agreement form. In the case of one or two day bus trips, this form will be at the bottom of each trip flier. For week-long trips there will be a separate, more extensive Trip Application & Agreement Form. In either case, each participant agrees to be bound by the terms of SSC's Terms of Participation stated in the Membership Application. All trip participants must sign a form and include it with the initial payment for the trip.

No Preference for Members

Current members have the advantage of receiving advance notice of future trips in the monthly newsletter, at membership meetings and via periodic Email notices. All trips will be open to members and others on a first-come-first-reserved basis.

Reservations

A reservation will not be held for anyone without the designated deposits and payments being made as established by the trip flyers. Your check is your reservation.

Bus Trips: Reservations for seats on bus trips are guaranteed only by payment-in-full for the trip. The maximum number of people per bus on each trip will not exceed the seating and luggage space available. Checks received after the bus has been filled will be applied to a waiting list for a possible cancellation or a second bus.

An initial deposit in the amount listed in the trip flyer or as announced by the trip leader at an SSC meeting is due with the reservation. The balance of payment is due by the specified date(s) listed in the trip flyer. Missing any of the payment dates forfeits the reservation guarantee until it is specifically reinstated by the trip leader.

Cancellation

General: All cancellations carry a minimum \$5.00 service charge whatever the reason or timing of the cancellation. A major trip may impose a higher cancellation fee and specify that in the Trip Agreement Form.

SSC reserves the right to withdraw or change trips at any time due to inadequate number of participants, weather conditions, and/or circumstances beyond the control of SSC. We will cancel only in the event that proceeding with a trip would result in significant financial losses to the club or risks to the safety of our members.

Recent changes in the travel industry have led to cancellation fees that are part of the contracts SSC must agree to when booking trips. Because SSC operates on a minimum mark-up and passes our group savings on to members, we believe trip participants need to share in the risks SSC takes in booking these trips. SSC will endeavor to minimize any cancellation fees by complying as much as possible with terms of travel contracts, but some cancellation fees may be unavoidable. In the event SSC would cancel a trip due to the aforementioned reasons, SSC will refund to our trip participants 100% of the amounts returned to us.

One-Day Trips: Individuals not showing up on time for a trip, or in the judgment of the trip leader, not giving reasonable notification of cancellation, will forfeit the cost SSC is unable to recoup.

Weekend & Multi-Day Trips: When an individual cancels and a replacement is found, the individual canceling will receive a full refund, less a \$5.00 service charge. If a replacement is not found, the canceling individual will receive a refund only to the extent that SSC is able to obtain a refund or to find a replacement because of the cancellation.

Western & Eastern Ski Trips and Other Trips Involving Airfare: Any monies received from an individual for airfare, lodging, lift tickets, etc., will be refunded in accordance with the airline policy, lodging site policy, and the management of the ski area, if and when SSC receives the refund. SSC will pass on to the individual any penalties that are assessed regarding the cancellation.

Revised May 18, 2022