

**BLACK JACK CROSS COUNTRY SKI CLUB
NEWSLETTER
JANUARY 2008**

Remember this information for up to date information about ski conditions and events at Black Jack: **Website:** www.skiblackjack.ca **Phone number: 364-5445** **Wayne and Jane show on KBS.** **To add information to this newsletter:** svanasselt@telus.net

GROOMING

Thanks to Big Red Cats for the great grooming this year. We have received only compliments about the conditions of our trails this year. Our hats off to all of the men in the grooming seat. Early morning grooming is consistently available and night skiing attracts a large number of people as well. Remember to pay for a ticket every time you are skiing. Your pass or day ticket pays for the grooming costs. We are a break even club in that regard and don't make any extra money. All money for new grooming machines, trail lighting and skier development is raised through fundraising and grant applications.

GIBBARDS CABIN

We have received a grant of \$9,300 from Nelson and District Credit Union to go towards building the new Gibbards cabin. Johan Kruus and Tim Peacock are coordinating efforts to build the new cabin next summer. We will need volunteers to help build it. Contact Tim if you're interested.

RED SNOW HOSTS

Thanks to the Red Snow Hosts, central reservations and group sales staff who came over from Red Mountain to sample some fine cross country skiing and instruction from our great instructors Lesley Beatson and Andy Morel. Keep spreading the word about our great cross country skiing.

EVENING CABIN USAGE

There have been some conflicts regarding evening cabin usage. Please be aware that while you are encouraged to sign up when you have a large group using the cabins in the evening, this does not mean that you have exclusive use of that cabin for the night. You must allow other skiers the ability to access the cabins at any time. All skiers who ski at night or in the day must pay with a membership or with a day ticket. Let's keep the grooming costs affordable for everyone.

THANKS

Thanks to HLF images and Interior Signs for all of your for the club. We appreciate it!

KOOTENAY CUP

Please see our website for up to date information on the Kootenay Cup held today at Black Jack

LOPETT

This year's loppett will take place on February 17, 2008. Check the website for up to date information about it and also our next newsletter.

KOOTENAY WINTER QUEST

Kootenay Winter Quest is back in Rossland Feb 9th, 2008. This year's course promises to be bigger and better than last year, and also more manageable for all athletes! If you're planning on racing and have not already done so, registration forms can be found at www.kootenaywinterquest.com You will also be able to sign up online as of next Wednesday thanks to Adventure Engine www.adventureengine.com

Last year we raised \$1000 to assist premature babies through the purchase of equipment in the Trail Hospital nursery and this year things are looking just as bright!

THERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS YOU CAN HELP

- Email this to any friends or family that you feel would be interested in participating
- Sponsor a team or become a sponsor for the race Go to www.kootenaywinterquest.com/sponsors.html for more information
- Call to volunteer on or leading up to race day
- Come out and see the race which starts from downtown Rossland Feb 9th!

For more information contact John Reed johnreed@telus.net 250 362 7599 or 250 368 1828

OPEN LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT KATHY MOORE

I've heard a few comments that Black Jack has become unaffordable. I wanted to make a general statement to the membership to provide a little more understanding of our fees. This year we did not raise the rates beyond what was required to cover the fact that as of Jan 2007 we are required to collect GST on all of our programs, services and ski passes. We offer the early bird rate to make our passes more affordable but it does require that people act before Dec 1. This is a very common practice used by most ski areas and clubs.

All of our capital improvements including the lights, cabins, trail expansion and the new groomer are paid for by funds donated to the club from our fundraising efforts. Membership fees just cover operating costs of the club: insurance, fuel, maintenance on the groomers and facilities, groomer operator hours, kiosk staff, our mortgage and other miscellaneous expenses. \$10 for every single member, old and young, goes straight to CCBC, our provincial sport organization, to cover skier insurance and their operations. Our kid's skier development programs are completely self-sustaining and do not get any

money from membership fees. Skier development is supported by program fees charged to the participating families as well as grants we receive.

As for the groomer itself- it is a definite upgrade from our old machines which were reaching the end of their useful lives (We buy all of our machines previously loved and well used). In member surveys and focus groups done for our 5 year strategic plan 2 seasons ago, high quality grooming was the number one priority of the club. The exec took this very seriously and did some intense fundraising to get a better machine. We have received many compliments from members and visitors on the quality of our trails this year so I believe this was effort and money well spent. And, as I have pointed out, this purchase was not made with members' fees in any case.

Fuel is one of our biggest expenses and as I am sure you have noticed, fuel costs have not gone down or even stayed flat over the last couple of years. We take a huge hit to keep the machines running. Unfortunately we are hostage to fuel prices just like anyone who drives a car. The Exec is committed to running the club with a balanced budget and covering our operating costs from our membership fees. In some past years we have ended the season in debt – this is not a good policy and one that we have managed to avoid recently.

I hope this explains things a bit. Considering what it costs for a day of downhill skiing or a round of golf at a fancy course, \$165 for an entire season of cross country skiing shouldn't seem extravagant. Also, for those who buy day passes and then decide to buy a season's pass, those day tickets can be credited towards a pass. We certainly don't want to lose any members but we are obligated to cover our costs- especially those high salaries of our all volunteer executive board!

Please contact me with any questions. I always appreciate hearing your concerns and comments.

**Kathy Moore
km@2cats.net**

FILM & PHOTOGRAPHY

The Friends of the Rossland Range invites all Blackjack members to drop by the Rossland Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Rossland, Chamber Business Center and Rossland Public Library to view the 1954 National Film Board of Canada short film about the men who lived on top of Old Glory Peak, "Professional Hermits Operate Canada's Highest Weather Station", Richie Mann's video, "The Builders of Red Mountain", and a community photography exhibit of over 200 photographs contributed by about 20 Rossland photographers (including Blackjack members!) of recreation in the Rossland Range. See www.rosslandrange.org for more info.