



Minutes of the Spring 2013 Blue Ridge Ski Council Meeting

Date: May 4, 2013
Location: Maggiano's, McLean, VA
Host Club: Ski Club of Washington DC (SCWDC)
Attendees: The [attendance list](#) is available on this link.

Call to Order

Bill Schrodel, president called the meeting to order at 8:45 am.

Bill welcomed delegates from 16 member clubs including newcomers from The Fund Bank Ski Club and Black Ski Inc. The following tour operators were also present: Dan Ellis of Winter Ski and Sport; Judy Miller of Group Trips Unlimited; Effie Rubinstein of Sportours of New Jersey; and Bob McErland of Holiday Ski Tours.

Special guests: Tommy Geary, new regional sales representative for Vail Resorts, and Simon Diggins representing Snowbird/Alta ski resorts.

Presentation on Vail, Colorado – Western Carnival 2014

Tommy Geary from Vail Resorts talked about upgrades at Vail (replacing Chair 4—the Mountaintop Express, a quad chair from Mid-Vail to the top—with a 6-pack) and Breckenridge (adding Peak 6), highlighting the new gondola from Vail Village to Mid-Vail is in place and he congratulated the council for choosing the Vail Cascade Resort & Spa Hotel with its amenities and convenient location (everybody at one place, adequate event space, only a few hundred yards away from Lionshead, dedicated chairlift right by the hotel). Tommy also explained the Epic Pass/Epic Mix features and recommended the Epic Pass to members who are skiing in Colorado multiple times during one season.

Presentation on Snowbird/Alta

Simon Diggins promoted Little Cottonwood Canyon (known for pristine powder snow, and which is only 45 minutes from Salt Lake City Airport) as a possible destination for our 2016 Western Carnival. The ski area, including Snowbird and Alta, offers 27% for beginners, 38% for intermediates, and 35% for expert. The Cliff Lodge and Spa offers rooms and condominiums. There are various dining facilities, mostly high end, but Simon assured the delegates that more affordable options are also available. Simon has the BRSC penciled-in for the week of January 30 to February 6; he said the cost would be

higher if we made the trip any later, as it would push up against the President's Day holiday.

A motion to make a **refundable deposit, not to exceed \$5,000, to Snowbird Resort, for the 2016 Western Carnival** was made by Steve Peirce and passed unanimously.

Executive Committee Reports

Fall 2012 Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes from the Fall BRSC meeting was made by Frank Peñaranda and passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Steve Peirce presented the Fiscal Year report (a balance sheet of annual income and expenses) and the current status of the account (a snapshot from the Fall 2012 to the Spring 2013 meeting). A motion to approve the Treasurer's Report was made by Sonny Short and passed unanimously.

Standing Committee Reports

Website: Frank Peñaranda emphasized the value of the two new webpages in addition to the council information:

1. Tips and Links for general items of interest (insurance, current travel requirements etc.)
2. Images, for posting member videos and pictures

Members should contact Frank at webmaster@skiscouncil.com with requests for linking items to the BRSC website.

Stacy Hickman noted that today's council meeting was not posted on Facebook (the BRSC Meet-Up page, created by Bill Schrodell). In response to Stacy's inquiry, Bill said that we are not Tweeting.

Trip Sanctioning: Frank provided a current [status report](#) of all sanctioned trips. A lively discussion followed about the benefits clubs receive from this option by increasing trip participation and overall advertisement of trips.

Race Report: Dave Olsen reported that there were 279 eligible racers on the Steamboat Western Carnival trip and about 66% of them participated in the Nastar race. The Columbia Ski Club presented the travelling trophy to the Pentagon Ski Club, this year's winner of the Club Team award. Dave mentioned the involvement of Billy Kidd in the Carnival activities. Billy is an Olympic medalist and operates the Billy Kidd Race Camp at Steamboat. He took time to be present at each of the BRSC functions, including the race, always encouraging skiers of all ages to ski like champions. [See Race Results](#).

Dave explained that Vail Resorts had dropped out of the Nastar program and now conducts "Epic Mix" racing at their Colorado resorts. As a result, official Nastar handicaps won't be available for the 2014 Western Carnival race at Vail. This will

present a challenge to scoring our race, as our scoring procedures are based on Nastar handicaps. Dave will propose a scoring procedure and present it to the Western Carnival trip leaders as the trip gets close. He will also pursue a proposed change to the BRSC race rules, offered by one of the clubs on the Steamboat trip, to allow our older skiers (perhaps 70+ ladies and 80+ men) to be discounted from the participation award statistics if they choose not to race. This would be similar to the current rules that discount the statistics for pre-teens and beginner skiers that choose not to race.

Mountain Travel Symposium: Bill Schrodell attended this event at Aspen/Snowmass and encouraged council members to attend the MTS in the future, meeting other councils and clubs for information exchange.

Bill initiated a lively discussion on ski equipment rental options versus travelling with your own skis. Many delegates thought it was a better deal to rent skis at the resort than taking your own, especially considering the typical \$70 round-trip cost to check a 2nd bag. When renting, you usually have the opportunity to demo newer models of skis. Some skiers prefer shipping their equipment ahead of time. It was also advised to take one's own boots.

Fall 2013 BRSC Meeting

The council discussed suggestions for the fall meeting location. Steve Peirce reported on hotel and meeting facility availability at Ski Liberty, MD, and Jim Ferrant reported on improvements at the Wisp Ski Resort, MD, for a future weekend meeting venue.

The group thanked Sue Miller, SCWDC for arranging today's meeting. Members agreed on finding a suitable place in the Washington vicinity for the 2013 Fall meeting with equal driving distance for all delegates.

Stacy Hickman suggested the Fagowees' meeting place at the Springfield Hilton for the BRSC Fall meeting. She will seek approval from her board members for hosting the meeting and will check on availability. Preferred dates are 19/20 October 2013 or 28/29 September 2013.

Subsequent to the meeting, Stacy confirmed a conference room for 40 people for Saturday, October 19, 2013 from 8:00am to 4:00pm at Houlihan's Restaurant in the Springfield Hilton Hotel.

Old Business

2013 Trips

Western Carnival – Steamboat, Colorado, February 11-18, 2013

Noble McClellan, BRSC Trip Coordinator, reported that a group of 290 people from Baltimore Ski Club, Capital Golden Skiers, Columbia Ski Club, Fagowees, Fredericksburg Ski Club, Crabtowne, Pentagon Ski Club, Richmond Ski Club, Ski Club

of Washington DC, and Potomac Valley Skiers participated in the 2013 Western Carnival. Dave Olsen ran a flawless race on Tuesday followed by a Beer Blast Party at the Gondola Room. Two delicious meals at the Steamboat Grande Hotel were included in the trip. At the farewell dinner, the group danced the night away to music played by a DJ Billy Kidd was introduced by Kitty Imdahl. He gave two inspiring talks, one at each dinner, and spent substantial time at the race course during our council race, encouraging our racers and offering last-minute tips. He also signed Steamboat 100-Year Anniversary posters for anyone who wanted one. The group was thrilled by his presence. Noble thanked Bill Schrodell, Dave Olsen, and the trip leaders for their hard work.

Judy Miller, GTU, recognized Bill Schrodell for his presence at the airport in Denver, making sure arriving trip participants boarded the right bus with their own luggage. The clubs had their choice of hotel rooms or condos, and most chose condos. Participants praised Judy for arranging the welcome party and dinner dance at the Steamboat Grand: They had the most delicious meals that they ever remembered having on a BRSC trip.

Eurofest – Chamonix, France, March 2-10, 2013

Inge Lesjak, BRSC Trip Coordinator, and Judy Miller, GTU, reported that six clubs (Peninsula, Columbia, PSC, SCWDC, PVS, and CGS) and 136 club members participated. All stayed in two hotels in downtown Chamonix, the Alpina and the Prieure. Inge thanked all the trip leaders for their work to make this trip possible. She attended three pre-trip parties and arranged for lift passes at a group discount price. GTU had also negotiated a 30 per cent discount on ski rentals. None of the BRSC Emergency fund had to be used, so \$5 per participant was refunded by GTU back to the BRSC. Excellent local food and free wine were served at the three parties (resort orientation, welcome party, and dinner dance). The parties were well organized by GTU, including the DJ at the dinner dance. Inge was able to obtain four \$20 gift certificates from Willi's Ski Shop in Fairfax, which were given away as prizes during a short EuroQuiz at the dinner party. In addition to the tips collected by each club, small American Flags were handed out as mementos for the hotel waiters and pins for some of the hotel staff as Thank You gifts.

Judy reported on the timely bus service from the airport to and from the resort, and for the sightseeing tours. Additionally, to supplement the local town buses, Blue Ridge had its own "people mover" busses to the local slopes on several days during the week.

Both non-skiers and skiers alike enjoyed the option of three sightseeing day trips to the Carnival in Annecy on Sunday), to Lyon on Wednesday, and to Lausanne and Geneva on Thursday—accompanied by Lisa, our very own Tour Guide.

Two full ski buses went to nearby Courmayeur, Italy on Wednesday and to Verbier, Switzerland, on Friday. Judy personally made sure that trip participants received plenty of local food and drinks at the three BRSC sponsored events. Judy was on site and took

care of any issues that occurred. At the Geneva airport on departure, Judy was there to guide all three injured skiers in wheel chairs through customs.

BRSC Trip Emergency Fund.

Ted Dietz moved to raise the BRSC Trip Emergency Fund from \$5 to \$10, starting with 2015 trips. Molly Hochman seconded the motion. During discussion, Steve Peirce emphasized that the additional money built up in the treasury allows for more flexibility, as shown recently when the council was able to provide the \$7500 deposit for Vail Cascade accommodations. The vote passed unanimously.

Bill Schrodel reported on his attendance at the National Ski Council Federation meeting on April 16, 2013, in Breckenridge. He encouraged council members to consider attending the Fall meeting on September 18, 2013, in Wyoming.

New Business

Election of Officers for VP, Treasurer & Secretary 2013-2015

Frank Peñaranda, Election Committee Chair, opened the floor for additional nominees. There being no other candidates, the three incumbents, who had agreed to serve another two-year term, were re-elected by acclamation: Peter Porton, VP; Steve Peirce, Treasurer; and Inge Lesjak, Secretary.

Election of Trip Coordinators for 2015 Eurofest and Western Carnival

2015 Western Carnival – Mt. Bachelor, Oregon

Mike Jones, Baltimore Ski Club, asked to be considered based on his experience as club trip leader and club president. There being no other candidates, Mike was approved by a unanimous show of hands.

2015 Eurofest – Mayrhofen, Austria

Frank Peñaranda and Noble McClellan asked to be considered based on their previous experience as BRSC Trip Coordinators. After members voted and ballots were counted by Steve Peirce and Inge Lesjak, Inge announced Frank as the 2015 Eurofest Trip Coordinator.

Discussion on the Selection of Mayrhofen and Possible Alternative Locations

Mayrhofen, Austria, was chosen by the council, at the fall 2012 meeting, as the destination for the 2015 Eurofest trip. Subsequent to that meeting, some concern was raised by Peter Porton, BRSC Trip Committee chair, whether that was the best choice. Les Arcs and L'Alpe-d'Huez (both in France) were discussed as possible alternate locations. The council decided to request two proposals from the selected Tour Operators:

- One for Mayrhofen, Austria and
- One "wild card" for a top European destination deemed suitable for a council trip by the Tour Operator.

Selection of Tour Operators for 2015 Trips

Dave Olsen moved to request proposals for the 2015 Western Carnival from Dan Ellis of Winter Ski and Sport, Judy Miller of Group Trips Unlimited, and Effie Rubinstein of Sportours. After discussion about the addition of a fourth vendor (Mike Agnew, former Vail Resorts regional sales representative and now employed by Sports America) into the mix, Dave's motion was defeated. A subsequent written ballot, with each club casting votes for their top three vendors, resulted in the selection of WSS, GTU and Sportours.

Sue Miller moved to request proposals for the 2015 Eurofest from Judy Miller of Group Trips Unlimited, Doug Horstman of Encompass, and Dorothea Rasser of Ski Europe. After some discussion, the motion passed on a show of hands.

Update on 2014 Trips

Western Carnival – Vail, Colorado: Steve Peirce, Trip Coordinator, reported that 220 spaces have been reserved at Vail Cascade Resort, with about 150 already sold by the participating clubs. Effie said that the property's management is more flexible now than during the earlier proposal stage, now that the tour operator has been selected and the clubs are successfully marketing the trip. She addressed the convenience of lodging and BRSC events being under one roof with easy access to town via the hotel's shuttle and easy access to the slopes with the dedicated chairlift. She encouraged the undecided clubs to consider participating in this upscale trip.

Eurofest – Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy: Jerry Poley, Trip Coordinator, and Bob McErland of Holidaze presented an overview of the town, hotels and ski areas, including several potential pre- and post- trip sightseeing excursions. Jerry indicated that about 100 participants had shown interest in the trip so far. He gave each club a binder with complete trip information and brochures.

Discussion – How the BRSC Can Better Meet the Needs of the Clubs

Bill Schrodel led the discussion, with several suggestions offered by the delegates:

- Expansion of BRSC ski trip to Eastern resorts
- Making clubs aware of sanctioning their trips
- Advertise the BRSC website – Friends to ski with!
- Offer a Learn-to-Ski Weekend in Vermont

Future Destinations for Council Trips

Several venues were suggested for the 2017 Western Carnival including Whistler, Banff, and Mammoth Mountain, the latter possibly combined with a stay in Las Vegas. For 2018, there's an opportunity to hold the Western Carnival in conjunction with the National Inter-Council Winter Carnival at Breckenridge, Jan 27 – Feb 3, 2018.

Adjournment

The formal meeting ended at 2:30 pm. Some of the delegates then gathered for breakout sessions on the 2014 trips.

Decision Summary

- Approved Fall 2012 meeting minutes
- Approved Treasurer's reports
- Raised Trip Emergency Fund contribution from \$5 to \$10 starting with 2015 trips
- VP, Treasurer and Secretary re-elected for two-year terms
- 2013 Fall Meeting, Saturday October 19 at Houlihan's in the Hilton Hotel, Springfield, VA, hosted by the Fagowees
- 2015 Western Carnival to Mt. Bachelor, Oregon:
 - o Trip Coordinator – Mike Jones.
 - o Tour Operators: Group Trips Unlimited, Winter Ski and Sport, and Sportours of New Jersey
- 2015 Eurofest to Mayrhofen, Austria:
 - o Trip Coordinator – Frank Peñaranda
 - o Tour Operators: Group Trips Unlimited, Ski Europe, and Encompass
- Approved refundable deposit, not to exceed \$5,000.00 to Snowbird, Utah resort for the 2016 Western Carnival.

Inge Lesjak, Secretary
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May 6, 2013