

Loppet 2005 continued from inside,

Sometime in the middle of the night, with waves lapping over what remained of the groomed trail on Lake Calhoun, the decision was made to cancel Sunday's races. Despite the cancellation of the competitive events, skiers were given the chance to celebrate skiing on the artificial snow that remained on the streets. Over 1000 skiers showed up to enjoy the efforts of the race officials and volunteers, who worked tirelessly until the end in order to make the best of a tough year. Music played, people skied with friends, and parents played in the snow with their kids. Collectively, race officials estimate that he skiers covered over 6000 kilometers on Sunday morning - that's the distance from here to Los Angeles and back. "The atmosphere was terrific. It was just a big party with skis on. I could have skied all day," commented Beckie Alexander, who skied with her sons and her husband, Wallis.

Support for the race wasn't limited to Uptown. Reports of skiers at Elm Creek Park Reserve with City of Lakes Loppet bibs were abundant. Skiers even did some informal racing in the spirit of the day's planned activity.



The day's festivities wrapped up with a party at event sponsor Tonic in Uptown. Skiers gathered one last time to swap tales, enjoy some food, or maybe even drown their sorrows. Door prizes were given out to those in attendance and the Grand Prize was the Middle of the Pack trip to Oslo, Norway for the Holmenkollmarsjen next February. Dan Schuldt, who was registered to ski his third 35k freestyle Loppet, was surprised to here his name called. "I just can't believe I got this lucky. I am really looking forward to the trip. I think it will be a great trip," said Schuldt. Don't try and squeeze in on his trip though. He says he plans to buy his wife a ticket and take her along.

As the last people were leaving Tonic and other Uptown businesses, the snow was being removed from the streets, and plans for next year were already beginning. Hopefully, the weather will cooperate, but be certain everything will be done to ensure a high quality weekend of skiing events in Minneapolis.



P.O. Box 50304
Minneapolis, MN 55405

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

By John Munger

Dear Foundation Members:

I am excited to be writing you for the first time as the Executive Director of the City of Lakes Nordic Ski Foundation. It is an honor and a privilege to serve the community in this capacity.

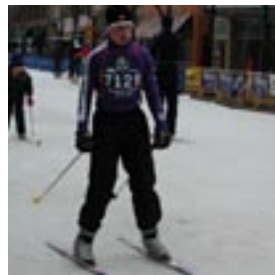
As you probably know, the Foundation has three focus areas – Youth Programming, the Loppet and other activities designed to increase participation in outdoor recreation, and Trail Development. As you will see from the attached newsletter and fundraising brochure, the Foundation has been very busy.

Youth Programming

Last fall we started the Bryn Mawr Skis Program. The Program has been a great success. Foundation volunteers cut new trails through the school grounds and added over six kilometers of new trails total. The Foundation partnered with the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and Loppet sponsor North Memorial Medical Center on the Program.

The Loppet

Despite a horrendous snow year (one of the worst on record), the Loppet had more than 2000 registrants. The Toko/Finn Sisu Sprints was the only citizen race in the country that was used as an Olympic qualifying event. In its first year as an open qualification event, the Sprints had more than 140 registrants.



The Sons of Norway Minne-Loppet was equally successful. Almost 200 kids celebrated "winter" in Minneapolis by skiing on the streets of Uptown in 50+ degree weather. Over twenty graduates of the Bryn Mawr Skis Program were on hand as well. The kids were bused in by First Student and attended to by numerous Loppet volunteers.

The Sunday events obviously did not go as planned. However, thanks to the efforts of our dedicated volunteers and the resilience of artificial snow, we made the best of things with our impromptu Loppet Ski Party.

It bears mentioning that the Loppet's volunteers are now an area of great strength. Peggy Galvin – with some able computer help from her husband Hal – built a phenomenal volunteer organization. The great talent of leaders like Peggy has allowed the Loppet to build

a wealth of loyalty and support despite three years of less-than-ideal weather conditions.

Trail Development

The Foundation has begun an ambitious project to achieve permanent snowmaking and lights at Wirth Park. Three years ago the Foundation convinced the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board to begin looking at the idea of snowmaking at Wirth. The next year the Foundation lobbied the City of Minneapolis to contribute \$200,000 toward snowmaking. The Park Board then studied the issue and last summer adopted a Master Plan containing a 3.3 kilometer lighted loop with permanent snowmaking.

The Foundation is now working to make the Master Plan into a reality. To find out more about the Foundation's efforts, go to www.wirthwinter.com.

Membership

Your memberships are critical to the development of the Foundation. As we have built the organization over the past several years we have not had an adequate opportunity to thank the members that make the organization successful. One of our goals moving forward is to make membership more meaningful. Going forward, members can expect bi-annual newsletters. In addition, we have made arrangements with some of our sponsors for special membership benefits. We will be issuing a member benefit card to all renewing members over the next few weeks. The card will entitle members to:

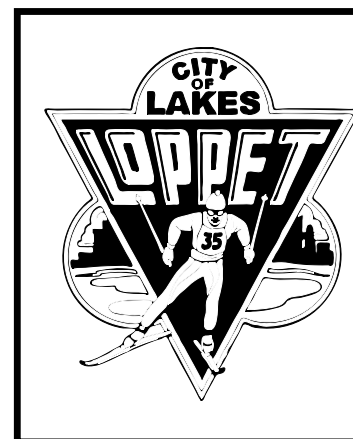
- a 5% discount at Finn Sisu Ski Shop;
- a free stone grind and thermo bag base saturation (\$70 value – one per membership per year).

We will let you know as other benefits come available.

Membership runs from June 1, 2005 through May 31, 2006. Those of you who have become members since February 5, 2005, you do not need to renew now. For the rest of you, now is the time for membership renewal. Use the attached renewal application or visit www.cityoflakesloppet.com to renew your membership today.

Please call me at any time with your thoughts or comments on the progress of the Foundation.

Sincerely yours, John Munger
(612) 618-9681



CITY OF LAKES

NORDIC SKI

FOUNDATION

Youth Programs TRAILS

Newsletter Spring 2005

FOUNDATION NAMES JOHN MUNGER ITS FIRST EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The City of Lakes Nordic Ski Foundation recently named John Munger as its first Executive Director. Mr. Munger, who is an attorney, will continue to practice law, but his first priority will now be Foundation activity.



Mr. Munger, who is an attorney, will continue to practice law, but his first priority will now be Foundation activity.

Foundation Board

Members are excited about the opportunity hiring an executive director brings to the Loppet and the Foundation's other causes. "We have relied almost exclusively on volunteer work up until this time," comments Vice President Kate Ellis. "But the task has become much too big. John was doing a full-time volunteer job on top of his law practice. He's going to have more time to devote to the Foundation now."

"John will be a fantastic executive director," says fellow board member Piotr Bednarski. "He has proved himself capable of leading the organization and its volunteer team, building relationships in the community, and finding sponsorships and grant opportunities for the Loppet and the Foundation generally."

Mr. Munger's first order of business is organizing the campaign to install snowmaking and lights at Theodore Wirth Park. "I am excited about the prospect of snowmaking at Wirth and the ski community is obviously fired up about it after this past winter," says Munger. Other priorities include strengthening the Loppet by adding sponsors, building on the success of the Bryn Mawr Skis Program, and adding Loppet events throughout the year.

You can reach Mr. Munger at director@cityoflakesloppet.com or by calling 612 618-9681.



YOUTH PROGRAMMING REPORT

Over the past several years the Foundation has looked for ways to involve Minneapolis-area kids in cross country skiing and in silent sports generally. Two years ago the Foundation ran its Get Outside! program, which was a hit with kids participating in other Park Board programs. Through Get Outside!, Minneapolis-area kids were exposed to inline skating, orienteering, mountain-biking, trail running, and canoeing and kayaking. This past year saw the Foundation find its long-term niche with the establishment of the Bryn Mawr Skis program at Bryn Mawr Elementary School ("Bryn Mawr"). Bryn Mawr straddles north and south Minneapolis but most of the kids hail from the north side of town. The kids at the school are 45% Asian, 45% African American, 5% Latino and 5% white. The Foundation is excited to have the opportunity to spread excitement about cross country skiing to kids whose cultural background would not typically include the sport.

To make the Program a reality, the Foundation worked with the Minneapolis

Public Schools to run the Loppet Trail through the school property. (See Trails Article). Through Rossignol, the Loppet obtained 45 sets of ski equipment – enough to take care of even the largest physical education classes at Bryn Mawr. The Foundation's Outdoor Education Specialist, Claire Wilson, worked with Physical Education Instructor Anita Chavez to help 4th and 5th graders at Bryn Mawr learn to ski.

To make a more well-rounded Program, the Foundation worked with Dr. Mark Bixby of North Memorial Medical Center. Dr. Bixby arranged to have physicians from North Memorial attend the classes in order to teach the children the importance of fitness and nutrition through learning tools such as heart-lung machines, and real-life samples of hearts and lungs.

The Program ran from early-December, 2004 through early-February 2005. The kids in the Program were exposed to skiing on a weekly basis. They first learned how to put ski equipment on and identify the various pieces of equipment ("the long things are 'poles' not 'sticks,'" Ms. Wilson informed them). As the weeks went on, the children learned the various ski strokes (diagonal stride, herring bone and double poling) and eventually made their

continued inside,

Youth Report continued from front, way outside.

The lack of snow did not deter the kids in the Program. "If there was anything white outside – even if it was only frost – we were out skiing," remarked Ms. Wilson. "The kids had a great time just getting outside at all."

The Bryn Mawr kids were even able to ski with Mayor Rybak, who made a special appearance to teach the kids a few new strokes.

The Program culminated with a trip to the Sons of Norway Minne-Loppet on Hennepin Avenue in Uptown. The Foundation arranged to have the kids bused to Uptown, where they were met by Loppet volunteers. "The kids were a little afraid before the Minne-Loppet started," commented Bryn Mawr Principal Nanette Yurecko, "but once the Minne-Loppet started the kids had a great time. They were just so proud of their new skills and the cheering crowds were something special for these kids. Bryn Mawr kids don't have the opportunity to bring a medal home every day – the next Monday all of the kids had their medal in school to show the other kids. The Program was great in teaching the kids to ski but also helped with their self-esteem."

Ms. Chavez added that the Program was a highlight of her career as a teacher. Needless to say, the Program will go forward again next year. In fact, if the Foundation is able to obtain the grants it has applied for, the Program will expand to cover all of the 4th and 5th graders at Bryn Mawr. Future plans include a possible Middle School Ski Team at the adjacent Anwatin Middle School.

To help with the Bryn Mawr Skis Program, please call Claire Wilson at 612-715-1479 or email her at: cewilson8@earthlink.net.



this year, primarily by removing buckthorn (an invasive species) and widening existing paths. The greatest changes were made in the woods south of Glenwood Avenue between Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden and the Bryn Mawr neighborhood (the Erickson Trails section). The trail was entirely rerouted through this area to better use the terrain in existing meadows and to add challenging uphill and descents in the wooded sections. The biggest new hill – dubbed Gronquist Hill – after John Gronquist, the Loppet's Chief Groomer, who suggested the change – replaces the narrow Xerxes Hill, which has been entirely removed.

A new pond crossing creates access to new trails on the Bryn Mawr Elementary/Anwatin Middle School property. These new trails have been an exciting addition and have allowed the Foundation's Bryn Mawr Skis program to go forward with skiing directly out the door of the school. (See Bryn Mawr Skis article.)

Across Theodore Wirth Parkway, in the Quaking Bog area, the Park Board added over 1.2 kilometers of twisting, hilly trail. Together, these improvements make the middle section of the Loppet Trail one of the most challenging of any trail system in the region. For the hill-lovers out there, the Erickson Trails/Quaking Bog area provides a new "destination" trail system.

On the north end of Cedar Lake, Loppet volunteers helped clear an old railroad access road to add 1.7 kilometers of new trail. This addition adds a terrific skyline view to our urban ski race and some varied terrain to the lakes section of the course.

In the golf course section, on the northwest side of Wirth Parkway, the Park Board made a number of great improvements to the existing trails. The one you will notice most has been christened The Big M, a great climb and roller-coaster descent near the Par 3 building and parking lot.

All of these changes made it possible to shorten the flat section of the race by eliminating the much-maligned second lap on Lake of the Isles from the 2004 race.

Thanks to all of the volunteers and Park Board employees who made these improvements happen!

Snowmaking and Trail Plans:

The most exiting news for Twin Cities skiers is the Wirth Winter Recreation Area Master

Plan, which calls for a 3.5 kilometer lighted loop with snowmaking. At the behest of the Foundation the Minneapolis Park Board adopted the Master Plan this past August.

The snowmaking loop is slated to run on the Par 3 section of the golf course and through the "Back 40" – the wooded and hilly section on the west end of the park. (See enclosed brochure). The plan calls for widening of existing trails and adding a new loop around the Back 40 meadow. These changes should ease congestion at the beginning of the Loppet in addition to ensuring skiing throughout the winter.

The Foundation is leading the charge to have these improvements funded and implemented as soon as possible. (See attached brochure). After lobbying from the Foundation, the City of Minneapolis allocated \$200,000 toward the project and the Park Board has allocated an additional \$300,000. However, with a price tag of \$1.35 million, there is still work to be done.

The Foundation is working with Xcel Energy in order to have the electrical portions of the project built by the utility under their street lighting program. This would save \$350,000 - \$400,000 off of the total project cost. Three Rivers Park District has also expressed interest in the project and the Foundation is counting on Three Rivers Park District for \$300,000 toward the total project cost. This leaves a funding gap of \$250,000 - \$300,000.

The Foundation has a three part fundraising plan. To show that there is strong support for this project in the community, the first phase of the Foundation's fundraising effort calls for \$100,000 to be raised by June 3. Once Xcel and Three Rivers see that there is strong support in the community we expect them to fully commit to the project. The second phase involves moving to individual donors who may want to play a bigger role in the development of this project. The final phase calls for working with corporations and foundations (please contact Kate Ellis at 612 382-0489 if you have ideas on individuals, corporations or foundations that may want to be involved). With your help, we are confident that we can make this plan a reality by 2006 – with a potential for some snowmaking this year!

With park planners, we are continuing to look at ways to add and improve trails, particularly by connecting to the Twin Lakes area. If you are interested in working on trail projects, please send an email to Craig Rudd at Craig@financialGPS.net.



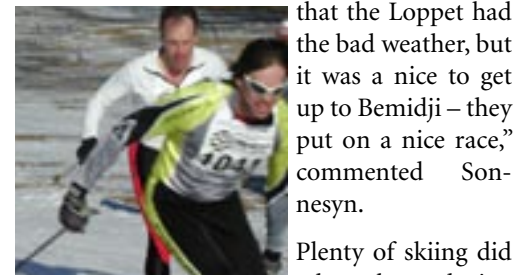
LOPPET 2005

By Jerritt Johnston

Unfortunately, weather forced the cancellation of the Sunday events of the 2005 City of Lakes Loppet. In a winter nearly devoid of snow it appeared that one storm had provided enough to hold a successful race. Then, nearly a week of 50 degree temperatures melted the courses, the work of over 700 volunteers and the expectations of more than 2000 registered skiers.

Despite the cancellation of Sunday's racing events skiers and volunteers showed great enthusiasm for skiing and the event by participating in record numbers in the Saturday events and the Sunday open ski. Many skiers were thrilled to have the opportunity to ski at all. "It was great to see the Loppet make the most of a tough year. I am amazed we were able to ski at all, much less race and ski in Uptown," said Caitlin Compton of St. Paul.

The weekend of events continues to grow. 899 skiers registered for the 35 kilometer freestyle race, with 210 for the Hoigaards 35k Classic, 497 in the REI 10k and 41 skiers signed up for the Rossignol Junior Loppet. To ease the blow of the cancellation, each of those skiers received a voucher for a discount registration for next year's race as well as a discount for this year's Minnesota Finlandia, which was held on February 19 in Bemidji. Many Loppet registrants, including Steve Sonnesyn of Plymouth, skied the Finlandia this year. "It was a bummer that the Loppet had the bad weather, but it was a nice to get up to Bemidji – they put on a nice race," commented Sonnesyn.



Plenty of skiing did take place during the weekend. On Saturday, 164 skiers participated in the Toko/Finn Sisu Sprints. Under this year's new format, the racers qualified during the day at Theodore Wirth Park for the chance to compete on Saturday night in Uptown. Skiers and volunteer shovelers battled the melting snow on a challenging, one kilometer course.

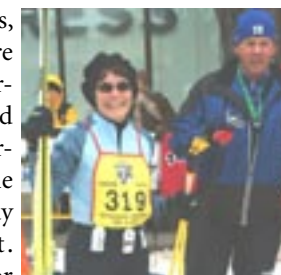
Along with the Toko/Finn Sisu Sprints, the National Masters Championships wrapped up a week of racing with sprint relays. Due to some quick thinking by race officials and flexibility

by the competitors, the heats were successfully completed with a quick start system before the "summer" sun melted all of the snow away.

Qualifiers went on to ski in Uptown that night. Race officials estimate that there were more than 2000 spectators. The fans were not disappointed as racing was as memorable as the location for this Olympic Qualifying event. Chad Giese won the men's event, beating Zack Simons, Kevin Hochtl, and Tim Weston in the Sprint Finals. In the women's final Karen Camenisch beat the Twin Cities' own Lindsey Williams, with Kate Whitcomb, and Roseville's Anna McLoon finishing third and fourth. Minnesotans Danny Whipple and Maria Stewart topped the citizen's field. "The nighttime sprints continue to be a world class event. The competition is outstanding and the crowds are unbelievably supportive of the racers," said Giese, who has won the sprint title in two of the three years and is the only male to have won the City of Lakes freestyle race.



After the sprints, the streets were invaded by nearly 200 hundred young skiers participating in the Sons of Norway Minne-Loppet. The event for kids under 12 allowed participants to ski the same streets Olympic hopefuls had just exited. Upon their safe return to the finish they were greeted with a medal, cookies, and hot apple cider. After successfully racing to the finish five year old Luke Golin exclaimed that "this was great. I had so much fun. Where's my cookie?"



Participants from the Bryn Mawr Skis program at Bryn Mawr Elementary School joined the race for the first time this year. The students participated in a winter long skiing and fitness education program sponsored by the Foundation, in cooperation with North Memorial Medical Center, the Minneapolis Public Schools and Rossignol. Their hard work and pride showed as they completed the Minne-Loppet course on Saturday night.

The streets were opened to all skiers after the kids cleared out. Loppet registrants and Uptown residents had the chance to ski to the music of live bands and the sounds of Uptown on a Saturday night. Mothers and fathers skied with their kids, high school skiers zoomed around the trail and a few nervous racers tested wax for the next day's events.

continued on back,

CITY OF LAKES NORDIC SKI FOUNDATION

It's time to renew your membership in the Foundation. Membership is more important than ever. The Loppet is faced with the task of bouncing back from a tough year. The Foundation has ambitious goals: add snowmaking at Wirth Park (see attached brochure), expand the Bryn Mawr Skis Program (see Youth Programming article), and expand the Loppet trails to make for a better, less congested, event (see Trails article).

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION June 1, 2005 – May 30, 2006

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____ Zip code: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____
Club/affiliation: _____
Birthdate: _____

Membership Fee

Individual	\$25	\$ _____
Family	\$40	\$ _____
Business	\$100	\$ _____

Donate to the Loppet Foundation

Trail Development (snowmaking at Wirth Park)	\$ _____
Youth Programming	\$ _____
General	\$ _____
Total Payment	\$ _____

Note that donations to the Loppet Foundation are tax deductible.

Please make checks payable to the City of Lakes Nordic Ski Foundation.

Please return this form to:
City of Lakes Loppet
P.O. Box 50304
Minneapolis, MN 55405

Call 612 715-1479 for more information.

TRAILS REPORT

By Bill Dossett

New Trail Construction:

City of Lakes Loppet volunteers and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board opened over seven kilometers of exciting new ski trail

