

BIG SKY SNOW STRIDERS - 2012 SCHEDULE

The Big Sky Snow Striders (BSSS) are poised for another season of grand adventures and après ski enjoyment, with two new special events. Trips commence every Thursday at 9:30 (unless otherwise indicated) at the **Big Sky Community Park parking lot** where we can ski or car pool to the trail head. For the local trips on Lone Mountain Ranch trails, meet at the **LMR parking lot** by the A-frame.

Skiing will be traditional classic style and skiers should be of intermediate level or better and conditioned to exertion at altitude. For those who do not feel up to this level, we will have a “Less Strenuous” group on certain weeks. There will also be some trips that will be suitable for those who wish to use skating technique. However, the LS and skaters must arrange their own groups, leaders and routes. This is particularly important on backcountry trips where group cohesiveness is an important safety consideration. Of course we will attempt to arrange the suggested trails so that everyone can gather together for the après ski.

When traveling on a cross country trip, it is important to remember to bring extra warm clothing, water, and a snack. The leader should have a spare ski tip and repair kit, as well as first aid. If you lack a sense of humor, an oxygen bottle would be a good addition too. Backcountry trips are much better with the wider backcountry skis which are available for rent at Gallatin Alpine, Grizzly, and Lone Mountain Ranch. Touring skis would work, but track and racing skis should not be used for these off trail trips.

For those outings planned for the Lone Mountain Ranch trail, be sure that you have purchased a pass. These are available for the season or a day at the Ranch, or for BSOA members, season passes are available at the BSOA office or LMR A-frame for \$50 + tax. You may also wish to sign up for the LMR ski report at <http://www.lonemountainranch.com>.

Planned outings are arranged to have a local trip, a rather distant adventure, and a backcountry jaunt each month. Suggestions are always welcome. Just email Skimeister Jeff at jeffandkaren@3rivers.net. Any change in schedule will be emailed to everyone on the mailing list by the day prior.

SPECIAL TRIPS THIS YEAR! The night ski will be another after dinner affair. The moon will be full on Thursday, March 8, so we will plan for that night and will be hosted by Lone Mountain Ranch. Bring your headlamps, warm woolies, and good cheer.

The overnight will be a three day affair at the Snow Lodge at Old Faithful February 14-16. Bookings need to be completed by December 1 with Xanterra, so hurry, if you have not done so already.

Big Sky Snow Striders - 2012 Season

December - We have traditionally started the season after the New Year, but if we get of the early (and well deserved) snowfall we can do some early trips., The LMR trails are scheduled to open December 14. Some of the sluggards are remaining in the warmer climes letting their bodies soften. However, for those of you that are here, Thursday skiing would be a fun start to the season. Meet in the LMR parking lot as usual at 9:30 and pick a place to venture.

Jan 5 - Meadow Loops - The start of the season will be an easy loop around the Meadow trails. All levels are welcome as the loops can be short or longer as your energy allows. For the longer adventurers, a brief trip across the Spur Road to see the loops of the Town Center trails will be in order, if the weather allows. Après ski lunch will be at the Brewery. Be sure that you have your LMR trail passes.

Jan 12 - Bacon Rind - Time for another back country adventure that is sure to precipitate blizzard conditions. Parking at the Fan Creek/Fawn Pass pullout at mile 22 we cross #191 and go west 2 miles to the Park border. This is relatively flat with a nice meadow and chance to see critters when the weather cooperates. Après ski at the Brewery.

Jan 19 - Rendezvous - Rendezvous ski trails in West Yellowstone got a lot of positive requests for this year. They are well groomed for track or skating and will satisfy many skill levels. Trail passes are \$5 payable in an envelope at the entrance. The main Rendezvous Loop is an intermediate 10 km, but we may explore one of the alternative routes for the main group. There are a couple of new trails and much improved signage this year. Bring a trail snack, but we will lunch in West Yellowstone – depending on who is open.

Jan 26 - Little Bavaria/Walkin' Jim's Way - This 10 km trail is marked as beginner, but has a steady uphill climb of about 800'. It passes through beautiful climax forests on the North Fork to a snack rest at the top. The long, steady downhill to the Ranch will be rewarded by an après ski lunch at their dining room. Gather at the LMR parking lot.

Feb 2 - Fawn Pass - A true backcountry trip into Yellowstone Park, there is no easy alternative to this trip. Extra warm gear and wide skis will be necessary. We have done the Fan Creek and Donner Pass variations in prior years. This year we propose to go up the Fawn Pass Trail as far as conditions and energy permit. We will snack at a good view then return down our trail to the car park at milepost 22. Join us at Bugaboo for a late lunch if you ski the easier LMR trails.

Feb 9 - Middle Fork - Starting from the Ranch, it is a long road grade up to the base of the Thunderwolf lift at Big Sky. It is 13.5 km and a 600' elevation gain. A short detour to go down the Beaver Slide will be offered for the thrill seekers. Those fainter of heart can wait at the bottom of the slide and take bets on the success or lack of it by the beavers. Gather for the start at the LMR parking lot and we will have the après ski lunch at the Ranch dining room.

Feb 14-16 - The Snow Lodge at Old Faithful - This year we have planned a "trip of a lifetime" for the "outing". We have reserved rooms at the Old Faithful Snow Lodge for 2 nights.

After snow coaching in from West Yellowstone to the hotel, there will be time the first day to explore the Old Faithful geyser basin, or take a short ski on the nearby trails. The second day will be a long ski up to Shoshone Overlook from Divide, down the Spring Creek Trail, over to Lone Star Geyser, and home to the hotel. Altogether this is 12 miles (20 km). The hearty ones will do the black diamond Shoshone Overlook, while the others will skip this to just do Spring Creek. The short detour to Lone Star Geyser is also optional. For those not interested in this much exertion, the Lone Star Geyser trail, Fern Cascades, and Mystic Falls make more reasonable alternatives from the hotel. We come out on Thursday with a stop to ski to Fairy Falls, a 3-1/2 mile (6km) rather flat route by the Grand Prismatic Spring to a lovely falls. Non-skiers and others can sightsee in the morning and meet us at the trailhead for the ride back to West Yellowstone.

There are still places on the snow coach on Tuesday, Feb 14 for people interested in a 1 day scenic tour into Old Faithful. We have 24 people, but Xanterra has offered 2 more rooms if anyone is interested. Contact the Skimeister, Jeff Strickler, at jeffandkaren@3rivers.net if you would like to go on the day trip, or are late and want a reservation for the whole trip.

Feb 23 - **LMR: Mountain View** - Time for a more intermediate exercise as we trek around one of the more attractive trails at LMR. This 9 km trail has some ups and downs and a series of wonderful views. LS skiers can do an easier trail and meet us for après ski. Park to start at the LMR lot and we will have lunch at the ranch.

Mar 1 - **Bohart Ranch** - To get away from the Gallatin Valley for awhile, we will head up to Bozeman's favorite set of groomed trails. Bohart is just 1/4 mile beyond the entrance to Bridger Bowl and has a nice set of trails groomed for track and classic with loops suitable for all levels. There is a nice warming hut and ski shop next to the parking lot, and the trails have some great views of the Bridgers. Après ski in Bozeman.

Mar 8 - **Full Moon Skiing** - This year's full moon ski will be at the Lone Mountain Ranch. GM Mike Parlett and Chef Bill Baskin have said that they would love to host us. Cynthia Lawson and Kari Hammen are on the dinner committee, and would appreciate any other volunteers. Moonrise is at 7:18, so if we are done with dinner at 8:00. It should be over the Gallatins and shining down on Big Sky. We will leave the Ranch and wander in the dark up the Ranch Loop to the meadow on top. Joy's Loop should make for some perfect skiing in the moonlight - and not too far. Bring your headlamps and extra warm gear. In case of inclement weather we will gather around the bar to tell lies. Après ski after skiing will be hot toddies at the LMR bar.

Mar 15 - **Specimen Creek** - It is time to return to this favorite trail in the NW corner of Yellowstone. Trailhead is on the east side of #191 at milepost 26.5. The trail winds through a rather narrow valley to the junction of the Shelf Lake/Sportsman Lake trails. A nice little bridge on the southern fork makes a good place to snack and turn around. Although a backcountry adventure, this trail is well used and, except after fresh snow, has a good track. The elevation gain is only 200', and at 2 miles each way, is suitable for advanced beginners. Après ski at the Brewery.

Mar 22 - LMR Ralph's Outlook - Ralph's is a rather strenuous 14 km trail with a long uphill and fast, fun returns. Read that 1½ to 2 hrs to the top and a half hour zip down. The views are great and with good snow it can be a real special trip. Der Skimeister has been unfairly criticized in past schedules for saying that there were only 5 uphill sections that needed herringbone. Perhaps there were a few more than that, but it is a strong uphill trek, that your March ski legs should handle easily. There is no easy alternative, but feel free to meet us for après ski. Gather at the Community Park with the après ski at the Brewery.

Mar 29 – Riverside - Often our first backcountry trip, this will be the last again this year. The weather will be warmer, and hopefully we will again see wildlife along the Madison. Starting in West Yellowstone, a left at the second stoplight, Madison Ave, and one block to Boundary St. gets us to the entrance. It is then 1 mile up the telephone poles to the river and the several loops up and downstream. Occasionally groomed for tracks, this is best seen as a backcountry trip that is suitable for intermediate skiers. Après ski in West Yellowstone is problematic late in the season, so we will finish the year at the Brewery in the Meadow Village Center.