

Backtracks: A North Star Retrospective 1977–1987 Compiled by Wayne Lindskoog and John Holmquist

1977–78

Officers this year included Jean Dick, President; John Holmquist, Treasurer; Roger Freeberg, Secretary; Pat Richards, Trips Coordinator; Judy Rykken, *Løype* Editor; Ron Bole, Programs Chairperson; Frank Coune, Membership Chairperson; Woody Engelking, Publicity; Lucy Grams, Special Projects; Scott Knudson, Singles President; Bill Steinbicker, VJC Chairman; Lee Radermacher, Trail Development; and Goodman Larson and Tim Knopp, Minntour representatives. This was another year of "firsts" for the club.

We held our first annual ski swap at the Hyland Hills chalet and our first annual 10K run at Hyland Park. Both were resounding successes, with the swap grossing over \$6,000, and Jeremy Denny winning the run over 88 other competitors. The singles division was in full swing with both a summer and winter schedule of activities.

The BWCA issue was now in the hands of Congress, and our cause was being championed by then Representative Don Fraser. The USSA announced formation of the Bill Koch League to encourage youngsters to participate in instructional clinics as well as low-key, competitive Nordic recreational activities.

Pat Richards' trips schedule consisted of 39 trips, as well as four singles weekend trips. For several consecutive years the club had now averaged about 45 trips per season. Where the VJC was once the only tour/race around, the '77–78 schedule listed no less than fifteen citizen races.

Governor Perpich expressed interest in ski touring trails and met with Minntour representatives to establish a ski trail task force. Finally the pendulum showed signs of swinging toward ski touring and a long overdue parity with snowmobiles.

One-piece full length racing suits were seen for the first time at Telemark's Gitchi-Gami Games, and there arose the suspicion that knickers would soon go the way of wood skis. Nevertheless, an ad in the December 1977 *Løype* proclaimed the virtues of organic skiing: "insist on wood," it read, "they're biodegradable!"

Jack Maloney received an Award of Merit from the U.S. Ski Association for his work on behalf of wilderness preservation, and the governor's task force held its first meeting in January of 1978.

Nine hundred skiers participated in the VJC after a two-year hiatus, with the overall winner being Audun Endestad. Wendy Brown won the women's title. Three thousand citizen racers and elite competitors entered Birkebeiner VI. Jane Lincoln, then a novice racer, penned the following "Ode to a Birkebeiner Tenderfoot":

*There once was a couple named Lincoln
Were skiers, or so they were thinkin'
They're barely alive
But completed fifty-five*

Tonight in Cable they're drinkin'

The *Løype* was chosen runner-up in a nation-wide rating of ski club publications by the USSA, with article content and journalistic style receiving high marks. The year ended with a Western trip to Beaver's Lodge in Winter Park, Colorado, led by Fred and Betty Kobs.

1978-79

Officers for the year were Judy Rykken, President; Lee Mayer, Treasurer; Kathy Kelly, Secretary; Pete Hawkins, Trips Coordinator; Carol Jahoda, *Løype* Editor; Anne Potter, Programs Chairperson; Frank Coune, Membership Chairperson; Woody Engelking, Publicity; John O'Connell, Special Projects; Gary Gumble, Singles President; Ron Reich, VJC Chairman; Goodman Larson and Tom Cooper, Minntour Representatives; Scott Knudson, Trail Development; Jean Dick, Past President; and Jinny McWethy, Corresponding Secretary.

Activities abounded not only during the ski season but in the off-season as well. Jinny's fall bicycle ride to Jonathan was now an annual event. The second North Star 10K run was held on November 4th, with Ron Bole posting the winning time. The ski swap was held once again and generated almost \$500 to be split between the Nordic Patrol and Courage Center.

Singles division members began to increase dramatically in numbers; in response to this unprecedented growth, the trips schedule and associated club activities were expanded accordingly. The '78-79 trips schedule listed nine singles trips along with 39 regular club trips. This year's *Løype* also featured, for the first time, Bob Tokar's column, "A Touch of Blue under the Foot." It was to become a regular feature for the next four years. The smoke began to clear on the BWCA controversy, and after a five-year struggle, wilderness preservation had apparently prevailed.

The ninth annual VJC was held on February 4th with 871 participants, including Norwegian consul general Storhaug, braving the minus 45 degree wind chill. The event was won by Roger Pekuri and Karen Henry, with Dann Kann and Beth Wald winning the touring divisions. Birkebeiner VII attracted over 4,000 skiers.

Notable among the array of club trips this year were, of course, the Western trip (this time to Lone Mountain Ranch near Yellowstone Park), and a European trip to Austria led by Don Berg. This was to be the forerunner of a series of overseas trips to the likes of Austria, Poland and Scandinavia. Weekend trips included Nemadji Hilton, led by Don Youngdahl; Itasca State Park, led by Jim and Jane Lincoln; Hayward/Telemark, led by Doug Nimmo; National Forest Lodge, led by Laurie Levin; Camp Mishawaka, led by Craig and Janet Swan; Grand Portage, led by Kathy Kelly; Olympia Village, led by Wayne Lindskoog; American Birkebeiner Weekend, led by Ken Rykken; Camp du Nord, led by Lucy Grams; and Remote Lake, led by Bob Tokar. Singles overnight trips included Glacial Moraine, led by Bruce Nelson; and Telemark Lodge, led by Sue Kluesner and Gary Gumble.

The year ended with the annual spring banquet at the Normandy Hotel.

1979-80

Officers were Leslie Hollister, President; Lee Mayer, Treasurer; Tom Rice, Secretary; Bob Tokar, Trips Coordinator; Gary Gumble, *Løype* Editor; Anne Potter, Programs Chairperson; Barb Hostert, Membership Chairperson; Ron Reich, Publicity; Jean O'Connell, Special Projects; Wayne Wise, Singles President; Wayne Lindskoog and Bill Rolshouse, VJC Chairmen; Tom Cooper and Arne Stefferud, Minntour Representatives; Scott Knudson, Trail Development; Judy Rykken, Past President; and Jinny McWethy, Corresponding Secretary.

The singles division continued to grow phenomenally within our ranks. This year's trips schedule listed ~6 trips for singles members, 40 regular club trips and 20 citizen races. Extended trips this year included the Laurentian Mountains in Quebec, led by Pete and Kathy Hawkins; Lone Mountain Ranch in Montana, led by Dianne Plunkett; and the Tatra Mountains in Poland, led by Bob Tokar. Weekend trips included Timber Lake Lodge, led by Don Carlson; Remote Lake, led by Pete Hawkins; and Camp Mishawaka, led by Janet and Craig Swan. Connie Donnelly led her annual Pike Island ski in December, Frank Braun led his annual Cedar Lake moonlight ski, and Marion Stief led her annual Anderson Lakes ski.

The third annual North Star 10K run was won again by Ron Bole, with Laurie Hoffman taking the women's honors.

The VJC was moved from the Jonathan area to Carver Park, only to have it cancelled for the third time in its storied history due to a lack of snow. The official name of the event became the Victoria-Jonathan-Carver Tour/Race.

The *Løype* continued to provide outstanding coverage of club personalities, trips and the latest in equipment, with genuinely entertaining reading. Club membership remained relatively consistent with no major increases or decreases over the last few years.

Interest in trail development was now quite high and voluntary donations to the trail fund increased dramatically. Under Scott Knudson's leadership, this club began to take an active part in assisting touring areas, resorts, and parks in cutting and maintaining trails. This tradition continues today, and is probably our most significant contribution to ski touring in Minnesota.

1980-81

Officers included Lee Mayer, President; Don Nelson, Treasurer; Betty Kobs, Secretary; Lucy Grams, Trips Coordinator; Judy Rykken, *Løype* Editor; Jack Lynch, Programs Chairperson; Rochelle Tascher, Membership Chairperson; Laurie Hoffman, Special Projects; Jim Lincoln, Publicity; Bill Weber, Singles President; Scott Knudson, Trail Development; Wayne Lindskoog and Bill Rolshouse, VJC Chairmen; Tom Cooper, Minntour Representative; Leslie Hollister, Past President; and Jinny McWethy, Corresponding Secretary.

The NSSTC donated \$300 to help rehabilitate the Wirth Park ski jump.

Thirty-six club trips, as well as eight singles trips, were organized by Lucy Grams. The Western trip returned to Lone Mountain Ranch in Montana, led by Jinny McWethy and Pat Smith. Weekend trips included Eagle River, led by Bob and Kathy Overby; Maplelag, led by Bryant Dunshee; Cascade Lodge, led by Don and Krista Nelson; Olympia Village, led by Laurie Levin; Camp

Mishawaka, led by Janet and Craig Swan; Remote Lake, led by Bob Tokar; and Camp du Nord, led by Lucy Grams. Singles overnight trips included Telemark, led by John Cook; Brainerd trails, led by Chuck Holst; Gunflint Lodge, led by Toni Lehman; and Grand Portage, led by Ann Erb. Most exciting of all was the hut-to-hut trip led by Thor Nordwall in March of 1981

Ron Bole won the fourth annual 10K run at Hyland Park Reserve, with Margot Remington winning first place honors among women. The VJC was again cancelled, for the fourth time in six years, and we began to collectively wonder if there wasn't a dramatic climatological change going on.

Thor Nordwall began writing his regular column, "Letter from the North Country." An almost snowless winter with spring-like temperatures forced the cancellation of numerous club trips and races, including the postponement of Birkebeiner IX. A VJC memorial bike ride was established in memory of cancelled VJCs. In all honesty, we must admit here, we had to somehow get rid of all the old pins lying around. The spring banquet was held at the Olympia brewery in April, but we could just as well have had it in January this year.

1981–82

Club officers this year consisted of Don Nelson, President; Terry Quam, Treasurer; Don Carlson, Secretary; Anne Potter, Trips Coordinator; Mel Peterson, *Løype* Editor; Bob O'Hara, Programs Chairperson; Linda Jacobs, Membership Chairperson; Kathy Overby, Special Projects; Connie Donnelly, Publicity; John Cook, Singles President; Scott Knudson, Trail Development; Bill Rolshouse, VJC Chairman; Bob Tokar, Minntour Representative; Lee Mayer, Past President; and Jinny McWethy, Corresponding Secretary.

The winter of 1981–82 was a return to the Ice Age compared to the previous one. Snow and extreme cold dominated the season; where trips had been previously cancelled due to lack of snow, this year saw cancellations due to extreme wind chill factors and below zero temperatures.

Pete and Kathy Hawkins led a week-long trip to Devil's Thumb Ski Touring Ranch in Colorado. Weekend trips this year included Remote Lake, led by Bob Tokar; Eagle River, led by Anne Potter; Nemadji Hilton, led by Don Youngdahl; Maplelag, led by Bryant Dunshee; Cascade Lodge, led by Mike Carlson; Camp Northland, led by Bob Tokar; Seven Pines Resort, led by Candace Carlson; Birkebeiner Weekend, led by Ted Cardozo; Camp du Nord, led by Lucy Grams; and Bearskin Lodge, led by Bob and Kathy Overby. Singles overnight trips included Brainerd, led by Chuck Holst; Telemark, led by Katy Burns; Cascade Lodge, led by Bill Weber; and Sugar Hills, led by Wayne Wise.

The NSSTC annual 10K Fun Run was held at Hyland Park in October, and our annual Ski Swap was held at Hyland Hills Chalet in November.

A VJC was finally run on its new course at Carver Park, with Norm Hopkins winning the Jonathan Cup and Terri Pauls heading the women. North Star member Laurie Hoffman won the first annual Saint Paul Winter Carnival marathon in minus twelve degree temperatures—and that's running, not skiing!

1982-83

This year's historical summation was compiled by Bob Tokar, who served as club president for the season. His Board of Directors included Betty Sebring, Secretary; Terry Quam, Treasurer; Mel Peterson, *Løype* Editor; Linda Jacobs, Membership Chairperson; John Holmquist, Trips Coordinator; Bob O'Hara, Program Chairperson; John Hopwood, Special Projects; Jeff Adrian, Publicity; Ann Erb, Singles President; Don Nelson, Past President; Jinny McWethy, Corresponding Secretary; Don Pusch, Trail Development; Roger Geis, Club Liaison; Bill Rolshouse, VJC Chairperson; and Tim Knopp, Government Liaison.

The club continued to expand its commitment to trail clearing and maintenance. \$1,000 was given to the Hennepin County Park Reserve, and it was decided that meals and gas money should be provided to trail work volunteers. Preliminary work was begun by the NSSTC on the passage of a state trail user fee for cross-country skiers.

This year saw the gathering together in written form of our club's history. Wayne Lindskoog was appointed club historian, and in the seven issues of the 1982-83 *Løype*, he outlined the historical evolution of this organization. His review of the North Star Ski Touring Club was articulate and full of insight, and considered by many to be essential to our vision of just who we are and what our purpose is. Wayne's efforts surely resulted in a legacy for us all.

This year the club provided the labor to erect a three-sided shelter on the Remote Lake Ski Trail. It also provided the labor and lumber required to install a floor and benches in this new shelter as well as another on the Remote Lake trail system.

We experimented for the first time with the concept of a "democratic" election of officers, with multiple candidates for each office, ballots, election judges, and so on. The results of this experiment in democracy included a generally poor voter turnout, a few hard feelings, and in the end, resignation to the fact that for this club the time-honored use of a nominating committee to select our officers seems to best meet our needs.

1983 also saw the first increase in club dues in quite some time. They were raised from \$8 to \$10 per year, certainly still a bargain by any definition.

A statewide ad hoc committee, which included NSSTC members Tim Knopp and Bob Tokar, was formed to promote the passage of a ski trail user fee bill in the state legislature. Our club donated \$300 from its trail fund in support of this endeavor.

John and Leslie Hollister led the western trip this year, to Black Cat Ranch, near Jasper National Park in Alberta, Canada. Weekend trips included the Nemadji Hilton, led by Don Youngdahl; Bearskin Lodge, led by Kathy and Bob Overby; Maplelag, led by Bryant Dunshee; Izaty's Resort, led by Don and Krista Nelson; Camp Mishawaka, led by Pete & Kathy Hawkins; Camp Northland, led by Bob Tokar; Birkebeiner Weekend, led by Ted Cardozo;

Grand Portage, led by Ann Erb; Camp du Nord, led by Rosemary Dineen; and Camp Menogyn, led by Lucy Grams. Singles overnight trips included Maplelag, led by Bill Weber; Telemark Lodge, led by John Cook; Brainerd, led by Chuck Holst; and Minocqua, Wisconsin, led by John Hopwood.

We ended the season in style with a special 15th anniversary spring banquet at the Fort Snelling Employees Club. We deviated this year from club tradition and made this banquet a bit more of a formal affair, with most of our past presidents in attendance.

1983–84

This year's officers and appointed Board members were as follows: Connie Donnelly, President; Kathy Hawkins, Secretary; Sam Meddaugh, Treasurer; Judy Rykken, *Løype* Editor; Linda Johnson, Membership Chairperson; John Holmquist, Trips Coordinator; Julie Norwall, Program Chairperson; Ed Dike, Special Projects; Alberta Bell, Publicity; John Hopwood, Singles President; Bob Tokar, Past President; Jinny Mcwethy, Corresponding Secretary; Roger Geis, Trail Development; Ann Erb, Club Liaison; Bill Rolshouse, VJC Chairperson; and Tim Knopp, Government Liaison.

Connie reports that it was an outstanding year for snow, with one result being a very successful VJC. Three ski clinics were reinstated after having been missing from the roster of club events for several years.

Weekend overnight trips this year were led by: Terry Quam, Don Youngdahl, Jim and Jane Lincoln, Bryant Dunshee, Don and Krista Nelson, Pete and Kathy Hawkins, Bob and Kathy Overby, Ted Cardozo, Bob Tokar, Dave and Win Paulson, Gail Lundeen, Jinny McWethy, Joanne Joachim, Bill Steiner, Steve Marquis, Chuck Holst, Ann Erb, and John Hopwood.

New to the club was a silent auction, held at the December meeting and replacing the ski swap as a primary fund raiser. It netted \$750, which was divided equally between the Nordic Ski Patrol and Courage Center.

The telephone hot line, as yet unnamed, made its debut in time for the ski season. Another first for this club was opening the Fall Fun Run to the public and using it as a fund raiser for the University of Minnesota Nordic ski teams.

Another decision of the Board was to print in booklet form Wayne Lindskoog's series of historical articles on the NSSTC. It was titled, "Backtracks: A North Star Retrospective, 1967-82," and made available to club members.

Finally, it must be noted that the job of mailing the *Løype* was taken over by our publicity chairperson who, along with a group of dedicated volunteers, saw to it that our newsletter arrived on time. This was no small accomplishment.

1984–85 & 1985–86

John Holmquist had the distinction of serving as club president for both these North Star seasons. This makes him only the second person in our history, the other being Wayne Lindskoog, to have served more than one year in this position. His report on these years tends to avoid major distinctions between each term in office; instead, he looks at the years 1984–86 as more of a continuum of the way things were done and the progress that was made

along many fronts. Many in this club would say that we have never had a more active, involved president than John. We will certainly never come close to guessing the time and effort invested by this man in the interests of an organization he truly believes in.

John's Board of Directors for the 1984–85 season included Shirley Sailors, Secretary; Sam Meddaugh, Treasurer; Gary Gumble, *Løype* Editor; Linda Johnson, Membership Chairperson; Candace Carlson, Trips Coordinator; Bruce Nelson, Program Chairperson; Ed Dike, Special Projects; Alberta Bell, Publicity; Roger Geis, Trail Development; Mary Redding, Singles President; Bill Rolshouse, VJC Chairperson; and Tim Knopp, Government Liaison.

Officers for the 1985–86 season included Shirley Sailors, Secretary; Carl Conney, Treasurer; Gary Gumble and Mel Peterson, *Løype* Co-Editors; Peggy Roser, Membership Chairperson; Bill Weber, Trips Coordinator; Bruce Nelson, Program Chairperson; Mike Carlson, Special Projects; Gail Lundeen, Publicity; Ted Cardozo, Trail Development, Holly Woodhull, Singles President; Lucy Osojnicki, Singles Trips Coordinator; Bill Rolshouse, VJC Chairperson; and Tim Knopp, Government Liaison.

Throughout these years Jinny Mcwethy, who really *does* deserve to be called Mother North Star, remained a fixture on the Board as a nonvoting Corresponding Secretary. She served as our collective memory as well as, by his own admission, John's conscience.

Early in John's tenure, on July 6th of 1984, the NSSTC lost one of its founders with the death of Robert D. Larson. A memorial donation was made in his name to the National Ski Patrol System.

By the spring of 1984, it was also very obvious that the North Star Ski Touring Club was becoming two entities—a Singles division and a "Main" club. To reverse the trend, monthly meetings and winter trip schedules, formerly separate for each division, were combined. "Cookie & Cider Time" was added at meetings to grease the gears of social intercourse. Through it all, we watched Mary Redding grow from a shy flower to a self-assured leader, hostess, entrepreneur, and Cider Lady.

Meeting locales continued to alternate between St. Paul and Minneapolis. The program theme for the 1984–85 season was "Getting Started"; in '85–86 it was "Enjoy Your Skiing." We began to announce meeting dates in Twin Cities newspapers, and we distributed brochures and club posters (designed by Pat Redmond) to area ski shops.

The annual Ski Swap was resurrected by Pete Hawkins in November of 1985 as a one-night stand, and after a two-year trial our Silent Auction was dropped. The annual 10K pre-season Fun Run was held in 1984 as a benefit for Judy Rykken's national championship U of M Nordic ski team. In 1985 it reverted to "members only" status at Hyland Lake Park. "How's that?" you ask. "Fun Run" is a contradiction in terms!

The 1985 VJC Tour/Race was cancelled once again, this time due to ice and poor snow conditions. It went in 1986, though, with about 325 finishers and a brand new, skid-mounted timing shack (so the timers no longer burn holes in Jerry Gray's van trying to stay warm).

Our newsletter, the *Løype*, continued to be the main channel of communication with, and among, members. It took on more visual pizzazz under the artistic eye of Gary Gumble. The addition of co-editor Mel Peterson strengthened the content, which made it still one of the prime club newsletters extant. Member contributions sustained our newsletter. And member volunteers handled the mailing, which ensured a timely delivery each month.

Our telephone hotline, sponsored by Hoigaards, became as of February 1986, the NORDIC CONNECTION—a 24-hour data source for important news and information updates all year long. In summer it kept the Singles division members up to speed.

During these years, the Singles division accounted for over half the memberships in the club. Singles have been proportionately more active as officers, trip leaders, and volunteers. Summer singles activities numbered more than 100 events of a widely varied nature, almost all of them related to the outdoors and to eating. Trips planning, formerly organized by the Singles President, was turned over to a trips coordinator appointed by the Singles President.

Weather problems in the 1984–85 season caused cancellation of some club-sponsored trips, both day and overnight. The "Western" trip, led by Pete and Kathy Hawkins, went to the Far Hills Inn in the Laurentian Mountains north of Montreal. After a shaky start (lost luggage and icy trails), it mellowed out to good snow and even better food. Ted Cardozo led a nine day ski trip to Colorado. Don and Nancy Nelson led a week-long ski trip to Quebec.

Overnight weekend trips for 1984–85 were led by Karl Ludescher, Jim Ruhl, Chip Treen, Terry Quam, John Cook, Paul Sundquist, Don Youngdahl, Bryant Dunshee, Steve Marquis, Sarah Ylvisaker, Chuck Holst, Bruce Nelson, Sheila Jansen, Karl Ludescher, Candy Carlson, Holly Woodhull, Ann Erb, John Holmquist, Mary Redding, Ted Cardozo, Jinny McWethy, Terry Quam, David Foster, Carolyn Rusch, Lucy Grams, Gail Lundeen, Nick Mavrogenis, and John Kopp.

During the '85–86 season we had skiable snow from Thanksgiving through March. Few trips were cancelled. One, to Lone Mountain Ranch, was amazingly unfilled. New low-cost, high-quality facilities were found this year that will no doubt warrant return trips in seasons to come. Mike Carlson led the ski trip to Lone Mountain Ranch, Colorado, and Thor Nordwall and Audry Delano led a week-long ski trip to Sweden.

Overnight weekend trips for 1985–86 were led by Karl Ludescher, Chip Treen, Dave Abrahms, Candy Carlson, Don Youngdahl, Bruce Nelson, Charlie Evenson, Jeanine Foeller, Joe Novak, Bryant Dunshee, Steve Marquis, Clare Fossum, Bill Weber, Dick Neumeg, John Holmquist, Holly Woodhull, Ted Cardozo, Will Hommeyer, Dale Wiehle, Pete and Kathy Hawkins, Roger Geis, Tom Malone, Gail Lundeen, and Lucy Grams.

We maintained a custom begun by Bob Tokar in which our club presidents, singles and main club alike, lead a three-day trip over Presidents' Day Weekend in February. Mother North Star started the annual five-day, mid-week trip for the "Idle Rich"—skiing the North Shore Mountains Trail from

one resort to the next. (They haul your gear; you "push yer tush" over the hill to shelter).

Roger Geis inaugurated Thursday Nite Telemark (TNT) clinics at the Hyland Park downhill area in January and February. In the fall of 1985, Bill Weber organized a leadership skills meeting. It grew out of a mounting concern with liability. The club was uninsured, and it seemed that the best course in any event was to concentrate on problem prevention. The highlight of the year for a lucky few was a two-week tour to Swedish Lapland, led by Thor Nordwall (a fallen-away Swede) in April and May.

Under the capable direction of Roger Geis and Ted Cardozo, trail construction and maintenance gathered steam. Trail fund contributions have continued apace. Allocations from this fund were split between cash grants and reimbursement of expenses to volunteer members. Two major weekend work parties of up to 40 people each were organized at Camp Northland outside Ely and on the North Shore Mountains Trail, with both efforts hosted by local resorts. Trail maintenance trips to these particular areas have been a club tradition for a few years.

The NSSTC continued its long-standing cooperation with the Hennepin County Park Reserve District, now called simply Hennepin Parks. New in 1985-86 was their "Easy Ski" program, devised to bring in people new to the sport and teach them through group clinics. Working with Dyke Williams of Hennepin Parks, this club provided many of the volunteer instructors needed for the program. Bob O'Hara organized the staff of instructors.

Our club also ran clinics for beginners taught by such as the venerable Norman Oakvik. Clinics were one more way that we've encouraged new members, especially those new to the sport of cross-country skiing, to participate.

Politically, the state user fee program for funding ski trails stayed on the front burner. Considered a raging success in its first season, the program languished in 1984-85. In assessing the reasons for this, there was much finger pointing and even some rational discussion between skiers and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Truth to tell, there was not even total agreement among skiers on the issue (surprise, surprise!). We took heart, however, in the fact that there was a marked improvement in revenues for the '85-86 season. There are bugs to be worked out, and we are encouraged by recent personnel changes within the DNR.

This club spoke on record as favoring ski trails in plans for developing Voyageurs National Park and the Moose Lake unit of the state forest, and we continued to uphold club interests elsewhere. We seem to find among ourselves a gradual change in attitude toward snowmobilers, one that has progressed from confrontation to admiration. Those guys get what they want; we must learn how they do it.

What else was new? We sold club T-shirts and established a new membership category. Anyone 75 years or older who has been a member of the North Star Ski Touring Club for at least five years is to be granted a lifetime membership (even if that person didn't buy a T-shirt!) with the title, *Member Emeritus*. We saw the Giants Ridge Olympic Training Center rise like a

phoenix from the ashes of the Iron Range to become a world class ski facility. A new, pre-season *Løype* published in late August reminded members that it was time to renew their membership. The power of the computer allowed us to cut off lapsed members after the first *Løype* of the season. The message was clear: no dues, no trip schedule. A follow-up mailing to tardy members paid off in renewals. And then there's the pervasive issue of (sigh!) skating with skis on. We'll still be dealing with that when Holmquist makes *Member Emeritus*.

Our spring banquet in 1985 honored State Representative Darby Nelson, sponsor of the skier user fee legislation. In 1986, Ahvo Taipale was feted for his contributions to cross-country skiing and for his help in making Finnish understandable to anyone. We also gave special recognition, and a gift, to outgoing Trail Development Coordinator Roger Geis. Then we took the time to install 88-year-young Chauncy Greene as our first *Member Emeritus*.

Membership stabilized at around 1200. At an average of 1.8 skiers per membership, that comes to about 2,000 members overall. As we have said before, we believe ourselves to be the biggest, most active ski touring club in all of North America. Even the IRS auditor joined, after he checked our tax forms.

1986-87

Pete Hawkins served as this year's president. His Board of Directors included Nancy Nelson as Secretary; Sam Meddaugh, Treasurer; Mel Peterson, *Løype* Editor; Carolyn Rusch, Membership Chairperson; Bill Weber, Trips Coordinator; Bob O'Hara, Program Chairperson; Karen Dingle, Special Projects; Gail Lundeen Brand, Publicity Chairperson; Ted Cardozo, Trail Development; Dick Neumeg, Singles President; Bill Rolshouse, VJC Chairperson; and Tim Knopp, Government Liaison.

Pete reports that the most prominent feature of this ski season was, without question, the nearly complete dearth of skiable snow in the Twin Cities and surrounding area (within 100 miles). This was the year of waiting for "The Big One" that never came. Other parts of the country were inundated with the white stuff and they cursed it, but we who desired it most were deprived. The only good features of this snow-drought year were low heating bills and incredible ski sales.

Nevertheless, our club and its membership fared quite well. If one really wanted to ski it was certainly "the year" to belong to the North Star Ski Touring Club because of our extensive trip schedule and the insider information our members are privy to. Trip Coordinators Bill Weber (main club) and Vicki Chelgren (singles) did a first-class job of organizing a trips roster with over 70 events scheduled; and it is noteworthy to add that 98% of them took place even though skiing was not always possible. It is highly likely that more weight was gained by our membership this year than during any year in our long history. The highlight of the schedule was Ted Cardozo's trip to Leutasch, Austria. Around 35 lucky members participated in this fairytale-perfect tour of the Austrian Alps above Innsbruck.

Overnight weekend ski trips this year were led by: Terry Grove, Chip Treen, Jim Hollnagel, Mary Redding, Don Youngdahl, John Holmquist, Rita Wetzel,

Chuck Holst, Bryant Dunshee, Karl Ludescher, Pete Hawkins, Dick Neumeg, Clare Fossum, Ted Cardozo, Bruce Nelson, Lois Langholtz, Lucy Grams, Gail Lundeen, Terry Grove, Don and Krista Nelson, and Bob O'Hara.

Our year started strongly in the fall with an ambitious set of trail clearing projects organized by Ted Cardozo. Once again, the weekend projects proved most popular with a total of four such trips booked to the max. Because of its increasing importance, the position of Trail Development Chairperson was resolved to be made an elected Board position at the general membership meeting in December. In the future, the trail development chairperson will have a voting voice on the disposition of trail development funds.

Monthly meeting attendance held very strong this year with an average of about two hundred people. This was mainly due to the interesting and innovative programs arranged by Bob O'Hara. Some events did not do as well as expected. Karen Dingle tried valiantly to promote a non-competitive Family Fun Run, but it was cancelled due to an overwhelming lack of interest on the part of our membership. It's back to a serious 10K next year! Karen Dingle, Bob O'Hara, and John Holmquist organized a block of volunteers for the first ever Timex/Rodale Ski Festival. Because of their efforts, this event took place in spite of tremendous impediments, and all of the volunteer workers won a prize! Karen also organized another very successful Spring Banquet which featured a program by Denny Olson and a rather loony friend of his.

This was also to be the trial year for the VJC "Classic" Race/Tour, but Mother Nature just did not cooperate. The hard work of Jinny McWethy, Bill Rolshouse, Bonnie Feig and others was a futile but much appreciated effort. Happiest about this cancellation were last year's winners who got to keep the traveling trophies one more year.

Our membership level was slightly down this year, at around 1,050 households compared to a norm of 1,200. Carolyn Rusch did an excellent job of coping with the demands and problems of membership chairperson. Changes are in progress to ease the burdens of this position in the future. Publicity efforts, orchestrated by Gail Lundeen Brand, helped keep our membership at an acceptable level during a bad snow year. The highlight of her efforts was our participation in the Winterfest Expo hosted by Midwest Mountaineering in November.

Besides those already mentioned, there were many "behind the scenes" individuals whose excellent cooperation and talents kept our ship afloat this year. In addition to all the Board members listed above, we must not forget Past President, John Holmquist, and our eternally young corresponding secretary and club matriarch, Jinny McWethy. Where would we be today without the ongoing efforts of these two? Betty Driscoll served in the thankless position of *Løype* mailing chairperson and Vickie Selep gave of her time each month as our official North Star Cider Lady. Too numerous to mention are all the fine, dedicated trip leaders whose efforts counted more this year than ever. And how we lean on these people!

Finally, a large debt of gratitude must go to our *Løype* Editor, Mel Peterson. He upheld this year the tradition of excellence we have come to expect from

our publication. Without question the 1986–87 issues of the *Løype* will become collectors' editions