



Ski Center News • Fall 2012

Trail Signs, continued from page 2

the twins left the trail and piled into the snow, the other landing atop him. "Get up. I think I broke my leg," one said. "No you didn't," the other replied. They got up, brushed as much snow as they could from their wool clothing and pressed on to the chalet. No bones were broken.

Dirk's Curve: Named for Dick Clark, whose nickname is Dirk, this tricky little left-hand curve comes after a gentle downhill and requires some nimble footwork. As the story goes, Clark once missed the corner and ended up hugging a maple tree where he stopped. "We've since taken that tree out," Helmer said.

Frank's Rest: Frank Gulbrandsen of Clover Valley has always liked this spot along the trail. He told Helmer one day, "When I die, you can put my ashes

in this spot."

Marty's Rest: This spot is marked by a sitting bench that Marty Heimer of Clover Valley built just before the ascent to the top of Iso Maki, or the Big Hill. Heimer often stops there to rest before continuing up the trail.

Iso Maki: "Iso Maki" means "big hill" in Finnish. If you've been to the top, you understand.

Tanner's Hole: At this place where the trail kisses the Little Knife River, long-time groomer and Korkki friend Danny Tanner once had the Ski Doo Alpine and the groomer slide off the trail and drop about three feet down to the frozen river. It took some serious shoveling and ramp-building to get the machine back on the trail.

Folks of good character have been enjoying the trails at Korkki for over fifty years, and no one has ever sued anyone over anything. I understand that if I ski or hike or hang out at these trails, I might get hurt, but I probably won't, and won't sue if I do, because I willfully agreed to participate in these activities. And, if I do sue, I will pay for my own attorney and Korkki Nordic's. I agree to the above conditions to be part of the Korkki Nordic Ski Center.

Signature: _____

Korkki Nordic Ski Center Membership Form, Winter Season 2012 - 2013

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Membership Level:

Individual: \$20 Family: \$30

Nordic Center Sponsor: \$ _____

I would like to volunteer! Sign me up to:

Thank You From the Assistant Cheif of Trail

Some thirty years ago, I started skiing and helping Charlie work on the trail system that has now become known as Korkki Nordic. In the early years, it was primarily Charlie and I working on the trail. As Charlie grew older and as improvements were needed, friends and community members volunteered their time and energy and helped make Korkki Nordic what it is today.

With that said, it is time to thank some folks who have been invaluable to me as the years have passed.

I need to start by thanking the first board of directors, that included Mike Hieb, Joe Schneeweis, Arvid Slotness, Liz Holliday and Frank Guldbrandsen. They were there to help develop the model for the ski center. But more than that, I will be ever indebted for their advice and friendship.

Lynn Quenemoen has faithfully brought his DR mower to Korkki every fall and helped mow the trail for as long as I can remember. He even brings his own beans and white bread! My dear old friends Danny Tanner and his wife Val, have helped more than I can describe in this short article. Don and Lori Mitchell have always been prepared to

help whenever or whatever the need.

In recent times, Craig Brown and Chris White have been clearing trail, limbing, mowing, and building bridges with energy and enthusiasm. John Thomas, who always calms me down and pays the bills, keeping the gate so carefully with his quiet and steady hand. The Fryberger twins, for their outpouring of support; who like Charlie have taught and inspired me by the way they live their lives.

Last but not least, Marty and Yvonne Heimer. Yvonne for her years of work on the board, her many publications of newsletters and flyers, and most of all her passion for Charlie's trails. Marty, a gifted and talented mechanic who has maintained equipment, cut windfalls, mowed, and spent hundreds of hours grooming. After Charlie passed, Marty filled a void and helped me to keep Korkki open.

In sum, without the help of these wonderful folks, and many others, I am not sure I could have kept my promise to Charlie. Thankfully, volunteerism is alive and well at Korkki Nordic. To all of you, a heartfelt thank you.

The Assistant Chief of Trail...

Korkki Nordic Receives Grants for Kids

The Young Athletes Foundation has awarded Korkki Nordic a grant of \$3000. Ski's, boots, and poles were purchased and are now available to local

youth at North Shore Community School. A very special thank you to the YAF (The Young Athlete's Foundation is a program of Grandma's Marathon.

A Skier's Guide to Korkki Nordic's Trail Signs by Sam Cook

The following is a Guide to Korkki Nordic's Trail Signs. Most of these names were bestowed by either the late Charlie Banks, co-founder of Korkki Nordic, or Mark Helmer, who still calls himself the Assistant Chief of Trail. The signs are listed in roughly the order you'll encounter them as you ski the trail.

Dorothy's Loop: Named for Dorothy Banks, Charlie's wife. Dorothy didn't like skiing hills, so Charlie made a 1-kilometer loop without hills for Dorothy.

Mike's Crossing: This creek crossing is named for Mike Gunsolus, an early Korkki skier who donated lumber for bridges and platforms across the trail's low, wet places.

Bryan's Loop: Named for Bryan Paulson, this sign denotes the beginning of the 5-kilometer back loop at Korkki. Bryan, a good friend of Mark and Charlie's, died far too young during a bicycle race. He loved to ski at Korkki.

Elizabeth's Way: This short cut-across trail from the upbound portion to the downbound por-

tion is named for Elizabeth Holliday, wife of Mark Helmer. One cold and rainy November day, Mark enlisted Liz' help to cut this trail when Charlie was in the hospital with heart problems. Charlie knew he would no longer be able to ski the steep down-hills on the more distant reaches of the trail, and he had asked Helmer to make him a shortcut.

Salmela's Curve: This sharp left turn was the scene of a legendary skier pile-up many years ago involving Chad Salmela of Duluth, Brucie Hannula of Houghton, Michigan, Roger Pekuri of Ely and Mark Helmer. Salmela apparently took too much momentum into the curve and lost it at the corner. Hannula and Pekuri, close behind, crashed on top of Salmela. Helmer maintains to this day that he avoided falling.

Erkki's Hills: Named for the late Erkki Harju of

Two Harbors, a legend among area skiers. This two-step ascent requires nearly all skiers to herringbone in order to make the climb. Not Erkki. With his powerful upper body, he often powered up these hills without having to herringbone.

Geno's Crossing: The late Gene Marsolek, an excellent skier and friend of Korkki, died in 2003 while piloting his stunt plane. His wife, JoAnn Hanowski, one of Duluth's top skiers, made a donation to Korkki in honor of Geno after his death. Part of that money was used to build the platforms that allow skiers to cross this swampy spot in the trail.

Danny's Duck Pond: Korkki friend and trail groomer Danny Tanner once skied the trail to this pond carrying a large pack loaded with two wood-duck nesting boxes and the tools to mount them.

Wolf Kill Ridge:

One day long ago, Charlie and Helmer were skiing the trail together and came upon this location where a wolf had killed a deer. It overlooks a drainage on the left and a beaver pond on the right.

Johan's Gate to

Heaven: One day after a good snow, Helmer encountered Dr. Johan Bakken at this point in the trail, where a snow-laden maple tree was bent over the trail in a beautiful arc. "Look," Bakken told Helmer. "Just like a gate to heaven."

Cook's Fall: Charlie and Mark Helmer were grooming this roller-coaster section of the trail one day after a snowfall. They had stopped at the base of the hill to adjust the groomer just before Sam Cook of Duluth came zipping down the hill. Cook narrowly missed the groomer and plowed face-first into the deep snow along the trail.

Frybergers' Curve: Jerry and Bob Fryberger of Duluth are long-time friends of Korkki. It was late in the day when these twins came upon this hard left turn in the trail. Details are sketchy, but one of

continued on page 4



Korkki Nordic Dates & Events

Korkki Nordic 2012 Annual Meeting

The Korkki Nordic 2012 Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on the first Wednesday of December.

NOTE: The 2012 meeting will be held December 5 at 6:30 PM.

The meetings are open to all members and to the public.

The Korkki Board Members are: Frank Gulbrandsen, Matt Miller, John Thomas and Chris White.

Two Harbors High School Invitational

The THHS Invitational will be held at Korkki on Thursday, January 3rd, 2013.

Korkki Kids Ski

The Korkki Kids Ski begins the first Sunday after New Years, January 6th, 2013. Beginning at 1:00 pm, every Sunday through ski season, bring your kids to Korkki. Hot Chocolate and Cookies will be served.

Erik Judeen 10k Classic

Join in the fun and take part in history! Korkki Nordic has been hosting the Erik Judeen 10k Classic ski race since 1962. After 50 years, the race is still going strong!

The 2013 race will be held at Korkki on Sunday, February 3rd. As always, there is fun for the whole family, **and spectators are also welcome!**

The Kid's race is free for youth 12 and under, and begins at 10:45 am.

The Adult's race is \$20, and begins at 11:00 am.

Pre-registration is encouraged. You will be able to get a Flyer/Registration form at the Ski Hut, 1032 East 4th Street, Duluth. On-site registration is available at 9:00 am the day of the race.

For more details, please call Chris White at the Ski Hut at 218.724.8525 after the ski season has begun.

We look forward to seeing you there!



Korkki Nordic Contact Information

Email: korkki@lakenet.com

Phone: 218.525.7326 (December - April)

Mail: Korkki Nordic
6219 East Superior Street
Duluth, MN 55804