



February 27, 2020

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**Greetings Members & Affiliates**

A note from Dave Carlson—Treasurer CVSC

A big shout-out to DAVID A ROCK for his exemplary work and effort on fy2020 Bus Trips!! Hip, Hip Hurray!!

We met our goal of 4 trips, no injuries, a great time was had by all, AND we made a net profit of \$45!! Woo Hoo!!

It's always important to note how meaningful these bus trips are to the vitality of this club and how participation in the trips leads to membership growth and retention.

Thanks again, Dave, for an absolutely terrific job!

**The Upcoming Events**

**Banff Ski Trip**

- March 7th to the 14th

**Ski Japan— Part II. Hokkaido Powderhounds**

By Lisa Brand

After the CVSC Hakuba trip, Judi, Larry, Eric and Lisa stayed in Japan for another 10 days of fun. They made their way to Hokkaido on the north island. Hokkaido is located near Russia and has its coastlines on the Sea of Japan, the Sea of Okhotsk, and the Pacific Ocean. The center of the island has a number of mountains and volcanic plateaus. It's renowned for its "champagne powder" snow: light smooth and dry. It's also famous for the high quality of its seafood, as the cold waters surrounding Japan's northernmost area are ideal for fish.

The group was met by two young enthusiastic skiers, "powderhounds" who were to provide intensive training. They worked for an Aussie who owned a small ski school and guide company, Hok-



*Larry Fordyce in chest-deep pow*

kaido Mountain Experience. And what an experience it was!

**SWEATING BULLETS**

Judi, Larry, Eric and Lisa all readily admitted to some anxiety ever since they had signed on for this ski experience. That anxiety melted just a bit for Judi and Lisa when they found out that they'd be the only two with their instructor. But what about the guys? They were to be joined by another skier. Eric and Larry were sweating bullets, imagining some young hot shot. Uh-oh, they'd have to kill themselves trying to keep up with him!

All we knew was that his name was David. When we went

with the instructors to pick him up, there were a few moments of silent anticipation, and then we got a good look at him. He was our age. A cheer went up: "Da-vid! Da-vid! Da-vid!"

**THE ONSEN**

We knew it was going to be an excellent trip when on our first night, our young enthusiastic instructors, Makenzie and Jack, invited us to join them at the Onsen. An Onsen is a Japanese hot spring. Many hotels have hot tubs, even filled with natural mineral spring water, but this Onsen was the Real Thing!

We piled into the van that first evening then drove for an hour until we were high up in the mountains. In the descending darkness of dusk, with the snow sparkling in the dim light of a flashlight, we hiked a winding mountain path with mounds of snow and some impressive drop offs on either side. Finally we came to a small icy clearing. We could hear the rushing water below.

The locals have piped hot mineral springs water that runs through the mountain, into a man-made

pool, ringed with boulders and rocks. It looks as if it has been there for all eternity. Local volunteers maintain it year-round. Anyone is welcome to use it but only hearty adventurers visit, especially in the dead of winter. Undressing in the dark at temps way below freezing was a challenge.

After plunging in, Lisa had the crazy notion that this was all a cruel hoax and she was being boiled alive. A hungry mountain giant was going to chow down on Lisa stew for supper. But, not seeing any chopsticks, fish sauce, or salt, she soon relaxed, acclimated to the steamy hot water and dreamily gazed at the surreal inky black outlines of the trees in the surrounding forest.

Snow flurries tickled our bare skin. We stayed in that hot spring until we were light-headed. Climbing out barefoot onto ice and snow was less painful than we imagined because our feet were as hot as coals. By the time we shook the snow off our clothes and got dressed, our bathing suits and towels were frozen stiff.

### SUSHI TRAIN

Here's the scenario after driving back to town from the Onsen: the 7 of us were sitting in a booth at a restaurant for a late dinner. There were wooden discs (the "train") chugging along, running on a track past hungry customers. Almost each wooden disc had a colorful plate on it. The cargo was a variety of food: raw fish, sushi rolls, fried tofu, cod roe: rice balls: and desserts, including a purple lavender cake. In the summer, there are acres of lavender fields in bloom in Hokkaido.

The routine: snatch a plate off the sushi train as it comes by, when something tickles your fancy. The different colored plates denoted the price of a particular dish, but we had no idea what that price was. So it was just "Grab the tuna ... I want the salmon ... Get that tofu...". The person sitting closest to the train worked hard to keep friends at the

table well fed. Don't like sushi? Then special order some avocado or cucumber rice rolls and fried chicken. Bon Appetit! Itadakimasu!

### SKIING TOMAMU

Our first morning out we loaded up 2 vans of people and our gear and headed for Tomamu which is in the center of Hokkaido. Our guides had consulted locals who advised that Tomamu would have the best conditions for the day. By the way, there are over 500 ski resorts in Japan! Tomamu



boasts two modern twin round high-rise colorful hotels. We decided that the weird, colored buildings looked like they were made of leggos.

We rode up on the gondola then eagerly hit the powder. Okay. To tell the truth, sometimes the powder eagerly hit us. We all started out together but the guys soon skied their way to off-piste adventures with their instructor. The women were put through their paces, dedicating their best efforts to challenging exercises to hone their ski skills. We all rallied at lunch time to guzzle bowls of ramen and report on our progress. There were lots of smiles.

### FURANO INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL & JAPANESE CULTURAL PERFORMANCE

Winter on the north island in Japan is cold, long and dreary. No bluebird skies here. You can throw away your sunglasses. To brighten up the season, there are numerous winter snow festivals. The most world famous one is



in Sapporo in early February, often attended by as many as 2 million Japanese and foreign visitors. The main attractions are the beautiful ice and snow sculptures.

At the beginning of our trip, our stay in Furano, a city of approximately 22,700, coincided with their modest international winter festival. For less than \$20 U.S., one could purchase an entry ticket that included all the beer or whiskey one could drink until 8 pm, and a raffle ticket. Food was available for



purchase. Most folks were seated at long tables in a large room like a gymnasium. They were eating dinner and having a raucous good time. The place was so crowded that there was standing room in the back for the overflow crowd.

It was an international festival because it was well



attended by many foreigners who had come to Furano to ski. Traditional Japanese music, songs and dance were presented on stage. There were some male dancers, and a few children, dressed in colorful outlandish costumes, all with their abdomens exposed and painted with caricatures. This apparently is a prelude to the much loved Furano summer belly button festival, when men and women expose their belly button, paint their abdomen and join a belly button parade.

About that raffle ticket... there were many prizes. The first one was a large box of laundry detergent. There was also toilet paper; tissues; paint rollers; boxes of sake, a crate of beer cans. Lisa won a bag that contained a bottle of sparkling sake; a can of fermented sweet-sour plum alcohol; and a box of soba noodles. One of the instructors won a battery powered toy helicopter. By then we were all caught up in the gaiety of the evening and cheered at the prospect of our imaginary heli-skiing outing. A fellow standing near us won a humongous bag of potato chips which he generously shared. When we came to the long ribbons of dried squid in the bag some of us lost our appetite for chips, including the winner.

Several locals who spoke English approached me to chat. They asked where I was from, wanted to know if I was skiing, and what other cities I had visited in Japan. When they heard that I had been

to Tokyo, they thanked me sincerely for visiting their comparatively small city. It was quite the friendly crowd!

### SKIING TO PERFECTION

Judi and Lisa returned to Tomamu with Makenzie, for day #3 on the slopes. Lisa was bursting with enthusiasm, and promptly began the day by executing a face plant of absolute perfection in a foot of powder. By the end of the day, both Judi and Lisa were thrilled with the progress they were making. Makenzie piled on the praise. Meanwhile, the guys had headed out for Asahidake.

### ASAHIDAKE

"Asahidake is a haven for powder hounds...a back country ski area serviced by one cable car, the creme de la creme of the powder that Hokkaido is renowned for." WOW! Jack took the guys on a challenging back-country adventure. Skiing in snow that was consistently knee deep, often higher, the guys used up every ounce of their energy to



navigate that winter wonderland. There were a few mishaps: at one point it took almost 1/2 hour to find one of Eric's skis. In a white-out, he unintentionally skied over a cornice (ridge), sailed a few feet up in the air, landed on his feet, lost a ski then did a complete summersault and found himself safely sprawled in the soft snow. Meanwhile, his recalcitrant ski took the opportunity to go AWOL.



## KIRAMU SKI LINKS AND PIPPU

The group skied at a variety of ski resorts over the week. KIRAMU was a small friendly family place but



with enough challenging slopes to keep us busy. At Pippu, the high winds almost knocked us over and snatched our ski poles. Just after noon, lifts closed early due to the fierce winds. What to do when you can't ski? Onsen! We all headed for the local community Onsen. Free entry with a senior lift ticket!

## RETURN TO ASIHADAKE AND IN THE CREEK WITHOUT A PADDLE

Later in the week, Eric and David wanted another go-round at Asihadake, so Jack headed there with them. They skied fresh tracks, and explored isolated back country. That required hiking a while to find a pass over a creek. Jack found and tested a narrow "snow bridge" hard-packed and stable. But, there was a slight uphill at the end, requiring a backwards snowplow and some fancy footwork to get up and over the creek. No problem.

Jack skied over the snow bridge first. Eric successfully followed. David got over the bulk of the bridge. As he approached the uphill, he appropriately maneuvered into a backward snow plow, but started to slide sideways. Jack grabbed David's poles to steady him, but David continued to slide over the edge, about a 14 foot drop into the creek. Jack couldn't keep David steady. David continued to slide. David held on until the bitter end as he slowly slid down. He's about 6 feet tall so he had an approximately 8 foot free fall into the shallow creek. Luckily, he landed safely on his skis and the water didn't top his boots. But, he was completely out of sight to Jack and Eric. They had a sickening moment of panic, until David yelled up that he was OK.

Jack took a few minutes to problem solve and consider the options. He shed his skis and paced out a route. Then he and Eric went into action. They started shoveling. Eric said he just shoveled wherever Jack told him to shovel. Later, Eric described his amazement: as they shoveled, Jack took some of the snow and packed it down, then he changed course, directed Eric to change course, shoveled

some more, packed down more snow. And so they worked. Soon there was a staircase of sorts and David was able to climb up and out of the creek. Rescue successful!

## KOKUSAI: THE END TO A WONDERFUL WEEK

Everyone skied the last day at the Kokusai ski resort in Sapporo. It was the 7th straight day of skiing and we were all feeling the fatigue. Happily, it was an uncharacteristic day: bluebird skies! So we relaxed, kicked back, and enjoyed cruising under then sun. A wonderful way to end a wonderful trip!

## ARIGATO! (THANK YOU!)

Arigato, Judi and Larry, for the perfect planning. You outdid yourselves.

Arigato, Makenzie and Jack, for the excellent instruction, all-around good advice, and your friendship.

Arigato, David, for being such a good sport and good company, and for being able to laugh about your creek adventure.

Arigato Japan!

## EPILOGUE

We all arrive home just in time to take a short



breather, and then head for the CVSC trip to Banff.

## Ski Report for the weekend of February 27, 2020

Resort	open runs	% open	Base	Snow past week	Snow this weekend	Conditions/Comments
<b>Eastern Great Lakes</b>						
Holiday Valley NY	47	78%	21-58"	0"	1"	Machine groomed
Seven Springs PA	32	97%	28-40"	0"	0"	Machine groomed
Bristol NY	32	94%	24-48"	1"	0"	Machine groomed, packed powder
Snow Trails OH						Temporarily closed
Peek'n Peak NY	26	96%	29"	0"	4"	Packed powder, machine groomed
Kissing Bridge NY	12	31%	6-50"	0	3"	Closed temporarily
<b>New England</b>						
Stowe VT	96	83%	36-60"	2"	1"	Machine groomed
Killington VT	144	93%	26-30"	2"	0"	Packed powder, machine groomed
Jay Peak VT	81	<b>100%</b>	45-55"	0"	0"	Machine groomed, packed powder
Cannon Mtn NH	94	97%	20-65"	0"	0"	Machine groomed
Sunday River ME	135	<b>100%</b>	26-32"	0"	0"	Machine groomed
Sugarloaf ME	149	92%	28-34"	0"	0"	Corn snow, hard packed
<b>Catskills</b>						
Hunter Mtn NY	48	72%	36-48"	0"	0"	Machine groomed, wet snow
Windham NY	49	91%	12-32"	0"	0"	Wet snow, machine groomed
Belleayre NY	35	70%	16-28"	0"	0"	Hard packed
<b>Poconos</b>						
Camelback PA	39	<b>100%</b>	36-50"	0"	0"	Spring snow
Elk Mtn PA	26	96%	12-40"	0"	0"	Machine groomed, variable
Blue Mtn PA	39	98%	36-48"	0"	0"	Packed powder
<b>Upper Midwest</b>						
Boyne Mtn MI	48	80%	42"	3"	0"	Machine groomed, variable
Nubs Nob MI	53	<b>100%</b>	54"	0"	0"	Machine groomed
Granite Peak WI	68	<b>100%</b>	52-93"	0"	0"	Packed powder, machine groomed
Lutsen Mountains MN	61	98%	30-72"	0"	1"	Machine groomed, packed powder
Mt. Bohemia MI	105	<b>100%</b>	40"	2"	0"	Packed powder, variable
<b>Northern Rockies</b>						
Jackson Hole WY	132	99%	37-102"	10"	4"	Powder, machine groomed
Grand Targhee WY	97	<b>100%</b>	100-104"	9"	3"	Packed powder, machine groomed
Sun Valley ID	109	91%	39-55"	1"	0"	Packed powder, machine groomed
Big Sky MT	310	98%	58-99"	0"	3"	Powder, packed powder
Lake Louise AB	142	98%	57-63"	5"	2"	Packed powder
Sunshine Village AB	138	95%	67"	8"	3"	Packed powder
Schweitzer ID	92	<b>100%</b>	64-109"	5"	0"	Machine groomed
<b>Central Rockies</b>						
Aspen/Snowmass CO	333	99%	47-64"	16"	3"	Packed powder
Vail CO	195	<b>100%</b>	77"	10"	1"	Powder, packed powder
Telluride CO	143	97%	51"	6"	2"	Packed powder, machine groomed

## Ski Report for the weekend of 2/27/20 continued

Resort	open runs	% open	Base	Snow past week	Snow this weekend	Conditions
<b>Central Rockies (continued)</b>						
Steamboat CO	169	100%	70-99"	14"	2"	Powder, packed powder
Copper Mtn CO	149	99%	60-98"	20"	1"	Powder, packed powder
Breckenridge CO	187	100%	86"	26"	1"	Powder, packed powder
Keystone CO	128	100%	59"	13"	1"	Powder, packed powder
Winter Park CO	166	100%	74-75"	3"	1"	Powder
Snowbird UT	138	99%	121"	7"	10"	Packed powder, variable, <b>MEOW!</b> 8" Sunday
Park City UT	335	98%	54-70"	4"	9"	Packed powder, machine groomed, <b>MEOW!</b> 7" Sunday
Deer Valley UT	103	100%	73"	2"	9"	Powder, machine groomed, <b>MEOW!</b> 7" Sunday
Snowbasin UT	107	100%	88"	0"	8"	Packed powder, machine groomed, <b>MEOW!</b> 7" Sunday
Powder Mtn UT	154	100%	61"	0"	8"	Spring snow, <b>MEOW!</b> 7" Sunday
<b>Southern Rockies</b>						
Taos NM	110	100%	73"	11"	1"	Packed powder, machine groomed
Ski Apache NM	15	32%	38"	0"	0"	Packed powder
Arizona Snowbowl AZ	36	65%	64"	16"	1"	Powder, packed powder
Lee Canyon NV	26	100%	30"	6"	0"	Powder, machine groomed
<b>Pacific Northwest</b>						
Whistler Blackcomb BC	234	100%	100"	12"	8"	machine groomed
Sun Peaks BC	137	100%	77-87"	7"	2"	Machine groomed, packed powder
Revelstoke BC	74	99%	59-100"	10"	6"	Powder, machine groomed
Mt. Bachelor OR	110	98%	89-96"	5"	1"	Spring snow, variable
Mt. Baker WA	38	100%	159-187"	7"	16"	Machine groomed, <b>MEOW!</b> 7" Friday & Saturday
Mt. Hood Meadows OR	60	71%	112-177"	2"	2"	Hard pack, machine groomed
<b>Sierras</b>						
Mammoth CA	150	93%	39-75"	0"	3"	Machine groomed, hard packed, no snow the past month!
Squaw Valley/Alpine CA	165	67%	32-86"	0"	2"	Hard packed, machine groomed, no snow in 3 weeks.
Heavenly CA	95	96%	29-53"	0"	4"	machine groomed, spring snow, no snow in 3 weeks.
Northstar CA	98	98%	18-49"	0"	2"	machine groomed, packed powder, no snow in 3 weeks.

Foto of the week — Banff/Sunshine Village  
2/26/20





## Remaining Trips Left on the CMSC trip schedule for 2020.

**The following trips are listed on the Cleveland Metro Ski Council's website under "trips". It is suggested that you search the individual ski club's website to gain more information on any specific trip you may be interested in.**

### ONE DAY TRIPS

Location	Start Date	Sponsor Club	Trip Leader	Email	Phone
Ellicotville, NY	28-Feb-20	Stark County Ski Club	Jeri Johnson	skierkj@gmail.com	(330) 495-9260
Ellicotville, NY	6-Mar-20	Stark County Ski Club	Roberta Graham	skiingdef@gmail.com	(330) 418-2613

### MULTI DAY TRIPS

Location	Start Date	Sponsor Club	Trip Leader	Email	Phone
Holiday Valley, NY	13-Mar-20	Beaver Valley Ski Club	Ray Lucci	raymond@luccikitchens.com	(724) 312-7080

### WEEKLONG TRIPS

Location	Start Date	Sponsor Club	Trip Leader	Email	Phone
Mammoth Mountain, CA	29-Feb-20	Lewis Ski Club	Tom Vannuyen	mammoth2020@lewisskiclub.org	(440) 879-8088
Banff, Canada	29-Feb-20	Warren Ski Club	Mary Kirila	mekskier1@gmail.com	(330) 502-9360
<b>Banff, Canada</b>	<b>7-Mar-20</b>	<b>Chagrin Valley Ski Club</b>	<b>Judi Fordyce</b>	<b>juditravels@live.com</b>	<b>(440) 289-5511</b>
South Lake Tahoe, CA	8-Mar-20	Goodyear Ski Club	Mary Beth Grether	mbgrether4@gmail.com	(330) 328-3797
Mammoth, CA	14-Mar-20	Fagowees Ski Club	Tom Keller	tomkeller@gmail.com	(216) 224-1066
Lake Tahoe, CA	14-Mar-20	Cleveland Metro Ski Council	Curtis Bell	curtiscmsc60@gmail.com	(330) 240-8005
Red Mountain, BC	14-Mar-20	Erie Ski Club	Vince Dunsworth	red2020esc@gmail.com	none given
South Lake Tahoe, CA	14-Mar-20	Stark County Ski Club	Art Pokopac	pokieman@aol.com	(330) 697-7491
Telluride, CO	21-Mar-20	Suburban Ski Club	Beth Silverman	bethsilverman59@me.com	(216) 799-2001
Lake Tahoe, CA	4-Apr-20	Beaver Valley Ski Club	Ray Lucci	raymond@luccikitchens.com	(724) 312-7080

Don't forget Dave Rock's "Drive-Up Deal" to Holiday Valley this weekend. It is *TERRIFIC!*

Thanks Dave!!!