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### President's Message

As you receive the 2023 April TOOT, six PVS members are returning from a fun and exciting BRSC ski trip to Val d'Isere. This TOOT issue will be Val d'Isere-centric: starting with this column, continuing with the ski trip writeup, and finishing the adventure with Ski Talk.

The adventure started with a pretty loooong flight from Dulles through Frankfurt Germany, and finally into Geneva, Switzerland. I'm sure that club members who have been on European trips remember these flights. We had a long layover in Frankfurt, and it was a good thing since passport control took over 2 hours. This was an indication that travel is back to pre-pandemic volume. We were on the same flight as another BRSC ski club, the Snow Searchers, who were a family of 10 participating in the adventure. In particular, the air travel was an experience for the four of us PVSers, since none of us had ever flown on a Boeing 747. In fact, on the return flight, PVSer Don Vierimaa even got to visit the cockpit and sit at the controls!



After a few more wrinkles at Geneva, all 6 of us PVSers (we hooked up with 2 other members in Geneva) were finally able to board our bus for the 3-hour trip up into France to the Club Med facility at Val d'Isere. Here, I'm going to give a big shout-out to Mr. Dan Ellis, Encompasse Tours in-country representative for the trip, since he was essential for our travel needs on both ends of the trip.



Once we finally arrived at Club Med, the experience really began. First, we were ushered into the main theater area of the facility, being offered glasses of champagne along the way. Club Med staff handled our room assignments and getting our bags to the correct rooms. This Club Med had recently been upgraded and refurbished, and everything was amazing. It is now a



five-star resort and is to be a showcase establishment. We arrived a little later than originally expected due to travel delays. [We were supposed to arrive closer to "Tea" time (or cake hour to some folks)]. However, we were just in time for our first dinner experience at Club Med. And WOW, what an experience the meals were! There were at least 5 or 6 "stations" throughout the serving area; each station served

a different protein source: whether it be salad, sushi, fresh fish, grilled seafood, beef, chicken or pork, fresh pastas and pizzas, fresh soups, deli meats, prepared international dishes, cheeses, fresh baked goods, and oh the many freshly made desserts, including a home-made ice cream station. Since this is a Club Med and everything is included, there were plenty of beverage choices; so, whether it be wine, beer, or other, it all flowed freely and whenever you wanted it. And this was for EVERY meal! Breakfast offered crepes, omelets, scrambled and sunny side up eggs, bacon, sausage, hot and cold cereals, yogurt, plus a variety of croissants and pastries. It's no wonder that we put on a few pounds.

Now that I've described the "formal" meals, there is also the afternoon apres-ski time. I mentioned missing "Tea" time (or cake hour as one guest called it) on arrival day; around 4 o'clock or so, they served various cakes, cookies, other sweet items, and certainly some beverages. There is also a full open bar available during "Tea" time as well, and frankly, available all day long.

In case one missed the cake hour, it was immediately followed by Happy Hour, where the sweets were replaced with more non-sweet items such as Raclette cheese slices, fresh cut-up vegetables, soup, various mini edibles, and live music. While PVSers didn't always make cake hour, we did try to get together for Happy Hour to mingle with various other BRSC club members. Then at the appointed hour, we moseyed down to dinner, where we dined together on the aforementioned "sparce" meal options. For those who still had energy left, there were evening musical/dancing "shows" put on by the Club Med staff up in the theater area of the facility. If one were not skiing, they could enjoy the pool, sauna, spa, or venture down to the quaint village of Val d'Isere.

Lest the reader think that all we did was eat and drink, we did have some fabulous skiing. Prior to us arriving, the ski conditions were not looking all that fantastic. Skiing in Europe, and France in general, was not having a very good year. Our Ski Instructor explained that the resorts below 1,500 meters were not able to retain their snow, and not able to make snow, so they were having to close. However, Val d'Isere was above 1,800 meters, so it wasn't having those issues.

Luckily, the snow gods were kind to us, and the mountain got around 32" of snow just the week prior to our arrival, and we got more snow a couple of days while we were there. So, the conditions were wonderful for our week, and the instructor said that we had probably the best snow. It did get a bit warm during the week (into the 40s with some blue-sky days), so in certain spots/areas it was a bit of Spring skiing – but NOT complaining!

For those of you that have gone on BRSC trips before, this was a very different experience because of the Club Med environment. There weren't the usual BRSC only events/get-togethers, but there was plenty of opportunities for inter-club mingling and connecting, especially during the Happy Hours, as it seemed most of the clubs were well represented.

Well enough about the *dreadful* Club Med experience and onto the rest of my last message as club President.

The Annual Meeting is coming up shortly, and I hope to see many folks there as we have several major elections (President, Vice-President) that will take place, as well as elections for several ExCom members, and voting on a prospective Associate Member. Thanks to the nominating committee for getting that all together for us.

Switching gears and onto an administrative item, still on the list of volunteer opportunities available, are the Chair positions for Membership and Ski Trip Committees. So, if you have interest in serving in either of those positions, please let us know.

As I mentioned previously, we have turned Members' Corner into a column for members to write about any and all adventures that they may have undertaken, and we have had a tremendous turnout of write-ups to carry us a few months into the new year. I want to thank those members for their participation; and look forward to many others helping later in the year. If you have taken a fun trip/adventure that you would like to share with the other members, then by all means write it up and send along with any pictures to Ellie for publication.

In closing, if you feel comfortable in hosting a monthly membership meeting at your house, please reach out and let us know, so we can build up the calendar for the rest of the year's meetings.



Telluride



Glacier



## **Nominating Committee Report for PVS Officers (2023-2025)**

Candidates for PVS Officers for 2023-2025: President: Cara Jablon Vice-President: Bob Jablon	Submitted by the Nominating Committee:  Kerry Hines (Chair)
Candidates of PVS Board Members for 2023-2025: ExCom: Bob Knopes ExCom: Inge Lesjak ExCom: Rosemary Schwartzbard	Marianne Hines  Ellie Thayer
(Additional nominations may be made by the signatures of any five active members in good standing and must be presented at a business meeting at least one month prior to the election, which will be held on April 8, 2023.)	Mary Tycz  Nick Young

### **PVS Annual Meeting Saturday, April 8, 2023, 1:00 PM**

**at the Stratford Clubhouse adjoining 1860 Stratford Park Place Reston, VA 20190**

**P.S. Volunteers to help set up and come an hour early are welcome.**

**Please let Marianne Soponis (marianne.soponis@gmail.com or 202-363-5250) know if you can help and if you plan to attend.**

**Hosts: Reg Heitchue, 703-861-9190; Susan Sinclair, 202-361-6677 heitchu@yahoo.com**

**Join fellow PVSers at the annual business meeting to elect new President, Vice-President, ExCom Officers for 2023-2025, vote on one Associate Member Applicants, and to join in on the perennially favorite social hour with fellow skiers.**

**No entrance fee! Please BRING a favorite appetizer (A to N surname) or dessert (O to Z surname) to share.**

**Feel free, however, to bring your favorite food. Beverages will be provided. As we are in a party room, please take your platter and leftovers home with you.**

**See directions and parking below: (Tolls collected via EZpass only, or by photo/snail-mail billing.)**

**Directions to Annual Meeting from the Beltway: Take Dulles Toll Road (VA-267) West toward Reston/Herndon. Take Exit 12 (Reston Parkway, VA-602), and bear right at the end of the exit ramp. In 0.4 mile, turn right onto Stratford Park Place. Park in a space that is NOT marked RESERVED. Walk to the Clubhouse building located in the center of the complex by the swimming pool (the other side of Building 1860).**

### ***Candidates for Officers and Board Members for 2023-2025***

#### **Cara Jablon - Candidate for President**

I have been a skier for more than 58 years. My initial ski experience was at Mount Holyoke College (in South Hadley, Massachusetts) at a no longer extant ski area called Mt. Tom. After a single ski experience, I went home for Christmas vacation and bought my first pair of skis – long wooden skis - and lace-up boots. For years, I have enjoyed the challenge of the moguls and worked on improving my bump technique. Currently, the biggest challenge to this type of skiing is the loss of strength that comes with aging

After graduating from Mount Holyoke with a major in chemistry, and a minor in philosophy, I headed to New York City to attend Columbia University in a doctorate program in Biochemistry. Although I eventually finished the doctorate, I decided that I was not destined to be a scientist. What else to do but go to law school! After marrying Robert Jablon, and several months after my first child, Stephen, was born, I started law school in Albany, New York. During that year, Robert joined a law firm in Washington, D.C., and I dropped out of law school. I resumed law school at George Washington University the following year, and also finished writing my doctoral dissertation that year. Halfway through law school, I had another child, Lara.

After finishing law school, I started work in the Office of General Counsel of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, where I practiced pesticide law for thirteen years and was involved in limiting the use of wood preservative chemicals and Compound 1080, and taking arsenic ant baits off the market. My third child, Joel, was born in 1984.

Near the end of my time at EPA, I did a detail at the U.S. Attorney's Office in DC. Over the course of four months, I tried numerous misdemeanor drug cases. My subsequent legal career, over a period of about twelve years, was at three different law firms, where I wrote countless briefs and memoranda in the area of chemical regulatory law.

I retired early from law – despite my father's advice never to retire – and turned my attention in a different direction to beading. I have a small jewelry business and make necklaces, earrings, and bracelets that I sell at local craft shows. I have chaired or co-chaired the Northern Virginia Handcrafters Guild Thanksgiving weekend show for five years and was president of that organization for several years. I am also the vendor chair for a holiday show at Temple Sinai in DC.

I enjoy spending time with my dog Tila, doing dance aerobics, swimming regularly in the summer, reading, going to concerts, opera, and theatre, and eating at restaurants. I am also a member of a Toastmasters Speaking Club. For the past six years, I have been a volunteer teacher of English as a second language (ESL) at the Washington English Center and tutor individual students as well as conduct a conversation class. Bob and I enjoy collecting art, particularly folk art, and have not been able to resist the sand paintings sold on the square in Santa Fe and other art objects from western ski trips.

Stephen, our oldest son, lives with us in DC and runs chess tournaments. Our daughter, Lara, and her husband live on a 40-acre farm in southern Washington State, replete with goats, sheep, llamas, alpacas, chickens, dogs and cats. In addition to raising livestock, Lara runs a bed and breakfast business and gives farm tours when not taking care of eight-year old Nathan. Joel teaches high school English in Portland, Oregon.

A number of years ago, I served as president of PVS. I have participated in the PVS Snowmass trip for many years, and have also been on many other club trips, including trips to Sun Valley, Sun Peaks, Andorra, Austria and France. Bob, who also served as the club's president, and I have run ski trips to Mt. Bachelor, Steamboat, and Park City.

I am still working on perfecting my bump skills and recently took a three-day bump clinic in Aspen. Articles about my experience appear in the TOOT this month. Probably the best piece of advice was to look at the next bump, rather than the steep descent down the hill.

### **Bob Jablon – Candidate for Vice President**

I am told that I was born in October of 1939. I have no real proof because my birth certificate did not have my name. If my parents were to be believed, when I arrived, I was the most premature baby to have been born and survive. My PVS membership is thus appropriate. Like life, skiing challenges survival. Had I been born later, as I should have been, now I would be younger.

I was born in Manhattan, but my family soon moved to Brooklyn, home of the Brooklyn Dodgers. *THE* Dodgers taught me to identify with underdogs. Unlike the Chicago Cubs, who just lost, the Brooklyn Dodgers raised peoples' hopes high before losing. My relationship with *THE* Dodgers prepared me for going downhill in the future.

I wended my way getting a degree in economics from Lehigh University and in law from Harvard Law School. More relevant to skiing, I was a postgraduate drop out from two major universities. Not finishing leaves open opportunities, avoids risk, and permits one to do more. During this period, I tried to find life's meaning. I participated in all night college and post college discussions, often interrupted by games of Hearts (which are nastier than bridge); I attended introspective French and Swedish movies. (Now, if I want to know about life, I have to read Brian Greene.) Sensibly, I concluded that religion counseled against clamping locked boots that cannot be removed on waxed boards and proceeding down (or off) mountains. However, I met my first wife, Cara, who said I should do just that. But she did give me positive skiing encouragement like, "Well, get up" or "Go, already."

In addition to her skiing, Cara is CEO of Cara's Creations, which sells fine jewelry at too low prices. Cara's Creations arose like the Phoenix from Cara's biochemistry doctorate and environmental law practice.

Cara and I have three children. Unlike us, they appear to have gotten older. Stephen is a chess maven. He runs chess tournaments and teaches class. He lives with us in Washington, DC. With her family, Lara raises animals and runs an Airbnb and environmental farm in Washougal, Washington (near Portland). Joel, who is youngest, teaches literature and English as a Second Language at Portland, Oregon's Lincoln High School.

Post-school, I have practiced natural gas producer rate regulation and appellate law for the Federal Power Commission, regulatory law as Assistant General Counsel to the New York Public Service Commission, and antitrust and energy law for *Spiegel & McDiarmid*, where I have largely represented cities and cooperatives, who own electric systems in competition with privately owned utilities, and also state governments. We hope that what we do is public spirited. I still connect with the firm. How much real work I actually have been doing is a matter of family debate.

Returning to PVS, Cara and I attended a dinner party a number of years ago, which was also attended by Dick and Rosemary Schwartzbard. Having failed to reform my skiing – "reform" is a word that I think is often used incorrectly - Cara told Rosemary that she was desperate to find people with whom she could appropriately ski. Rosemary said that PVS was perfect. Cara could ski moguls and abandon me both at the same time. It was all downhill from there. (Cara recently took a three-day Aspen mogul lesson. I was allowed to watch with binoculars.) We joined PVS, where we found kindness, support and friendship.

One never knows. If I keep to the think method (*see* The Music Man), I might again ski. I might even learn to ski properly other than by looking at slopes from my hotel window and thinking about gliding down – beautifully. PVS, a ski club, may, of course, want to select one who currently skis more than I. Or it can adapt the old Brooklyn Dodgers’ adage, “Wait ‘till next year”.

**Bob Knopes – Candidate for ExCom**

A native of Wisconsin, where the highest peak is about 700 feet, I came to skiing late. In the midst of a foreign service career concentrating on Asia, I took an assignment as cultural attaché in Rome and learned to ski in Cervinia in the Italian Alps. From Rome I returned to Asia, serving in Beijing, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, and skiing in northern Japan whenever possible. I was introduced to PVS about the time I retired from the foreign service in 1994 and I have enjoyed the great ski trips, excellent food, and unlimited friendships PVS has provided. I am no longer skiing but still enjoy PVS gatherings and programs.

**Inge Lesjak – Candidate for ExCom**

I started to ski when I met my husband Sam in Germany in 1964 – it was either go skiing or stay home.... Sam served in the US Army. We married in Clarksville, Tenn. in 1966. It was not until four years later, when he returned from Vietnam and we moved back to Germany, that I was able to really enjoy this sport. We were members of the Munich International Ski Club and the Patch Ski Club in Stuttgart for many years, and led many ski trips to European ski destinations. We truly became ski groupies and enjoyed the camaraderie and opportunity to introduce Americans to our favorite destinations, i.e., Sigi Baumgartner’s mountain in the vicinity of Salzburg, Austria, Kitzbuhel and Obergurgl in Tyrol, Bled and Kranjska Gora in Slovenia, Val Gardena in Italy and Chamonix and the Trois Vallees Region of France. I was a Vice President of Munich International Ski Club from 1974 to 1984 and later of Patch Ski Club from 1987 to 1995. Skiing in Europe is good, while skiing in the United States is great!

I joined PVS when it merged with CGS in the summer of 2013. Since that time, I have led PVS contingents on ski trips to Europe, served as a Membership Committee PR Representative, served on committees, and served as a member of ExCom.

**Rosemary Schwartzbard – Candidate for ExCom**

I am a retired Clinical Psychologist who practiced over forty years in Arlington, Virginia. I have always had a special interest in mind body relationships and sports psychology and worked with clients to help improve activity level and get started on a healthier lifestyle. I started running in my 40s to stay in shape for skiing and ran marathons into my 70s. I continue to do some road races, such as the Cherry Blossom, and am involved in parkrun where I do a 5K every Saturday on Roosevelt Island.

I first tried skiing in my 20s when on a trip to Europe with a friend. I signed up for an Austrian ski school. It was humiliating but exciting. I couldn’t speak the language; I was black and blue from falling; and I was the worst in the class. However, I knew it was something I wanted to learn to do. It took several years for me to get back to skiing. After getting married and having two boys, Dick and I bought a ski house at Hidden Valley in Pennsylvania. We took lessons with our young sons who excelled immediately. Our first trip out west was when our good friend and neighbor, Kay Christensen, invited us to go to Vail with her and we are forever grateful. Skiing out west was such a different experience.

Dick and I joined PVS in 1999. Since that time, I have been on many PVS trips and have skied a variety of resorts throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. My favorites are Val d’Isere, France and, of course, Snowmass, Colorado.

I joined the Ski Trip Committee many years ago, and I have been Chair of the Committee for the past 12 years.

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***Candidate for Associate Membership***

**Ben Purcell– Applicant for Associate Membership**

*(An associate member is one who lives more than 75 miles from Washington. Barry Lake is Ben’s sponsor.)*

Growing up near Atlanta, GA, skiing on snow was not a thought, much less a dream. Much later while in the real estate business in northern Virginia, I was first exposed to this wonderful sport - in corduroy bellbottoms, used skis with replaceable screw on edges, and 600-foot verticals at Roundtop and Liberty mountains!

As a retiree now and since my wife Andrea no longer skies, she encouraged me to join the Richmond ski club for new options and spend “her” money. As a result, I have enjoyed many exciting Western adventures, and through other Richmond ski club members, have made new friends over the last four or five years on the annual Snowmass trips with the PVS club.

I like to ski fast and look for steep groomers; and I look forward to learning more about skiing in deeper snow with my ski buddies, and enjoying many more Snowmass trips to come

# Ski Talk - Lessons from Val d'Isere



Skiing in Val d'Isere is amazing! It is such a vast area, which also has access to Tignes. Our Club Med package included a ski instructor for the first five days. Can't imagine navigating this massive area on our own! The first day, we were divided into groups with an instructor. Some of us had a hard time following the instructor in single file. But,



somehow we all seemed to adapt.

It turned out that we were not all in the same group. However, we enjoyed getting together at lunch and dinner to share our day's experiences. Here are some of the ski tips we learned:

- Always look forward, except when looking for uphill or crossing traffic
- Do not look down at your skis
- Shoulders should always be facing downhill
- Lean slightly forward, never backward
- Keep knees bent
- Poles should be held at hip level slightly in front of you
- A turn should be like an S rather than a V
- When starting a turn, ski downhill with your body up
- When completing a turn, bend knees with body down
- Downhill pole should be held lower when completing the turn (it helps keep your balance)
- When making quick turns, lean forward and continue the above format
- Do not lift up your uphill ski when turning (that could put you off balance)
- When skiing over bumps (big or small) turn at the top of the bump (top meaning uphill portion not highest part)
- Keep knees bent going over bumps
- Pick your own path over bumps and turn when you want
- Overall RELAX AND ENJOY!



One day our instructor took us down a long narrow run which had just opened for the season. They needed to wait for enough snow to cover the river that runs through the trail. Also, needed to make sure that snow wouldn't fall from the cliffs on to the narrowest portion of the trail. It was an adventure! The lift that we took back up was



next to a road that the Tour de France travels on. En route to this trail, we skied by a bit of history. There was a



pyramid-like structure that looked like a chimney in the middle of the run. It had a large area inside that was used by Napoleon for shelter during his treks over the mountains.

Our last day of skiing we were on our own! We had asked our instructor to map out a route for us. She kindly obliged by highlighting trails on the map and providing a written list of the lifts we needed to take. We went from Val d'Isere to the highest peak in Tignes, which required taking the Grand Motte tram to the very top. It was awesome! We skied down a really long run to the base of Tignes. Then worked our way back home to Val d'Isere. We were quite proud of ourselves for navigating on our own!

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\*\*\*Washington DC Ski Travel Show - Friday, May 5th 6:30-9pm at Marriott at Tyson's Corner\*\*\*

If interested in attending, please let us know so that we can send in the registrations all at once.

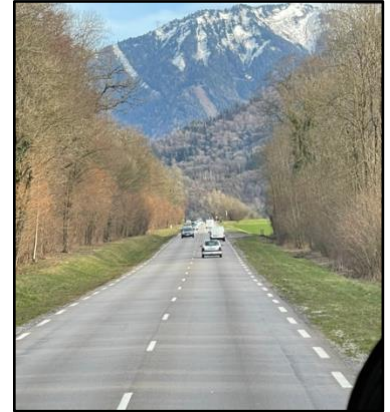
[kathylakehomes@yahoo.com](mailto:kathylakehomes@yahoo.com)



## Val d'Isere Ski Trip

Six PVS skiers joined 120 Blue Ridge Ski Council skiers at Val d'Isere in France (3 miles from Italy). We left Dulles late at 7 pm for Geneva via Frankfurt. We took a 3-hour bus ride through small villages on two-lane winding roads to Val d'Isere arriving at Club Med at 7 pm local time (5 hour's time zone difference).

The day before our arrival, 30 inches of snow fell. Tuesday it snowed all day with another 12 inches of snow. Ski conditions were good, and we all enjoyed the ski trip with no injuries.



We started the day with a breakfast buffet at 8 am and met with our guide/instructor at 9:30 am to ski to the gondola or lift. Back at Club Med at 12:30 pm for lunch. We left at 2:00 pm for the gondola or lift and back to Club Med for dinner at 7:00 pm. Shows started in the lounge at 9:30 pm to 10:15 pm.

We skied in groups of 8 to 10 skiers. The base was at 5100 feet with a maximum elevation of skiing at 11,300 feet. There are no trees. There are 25,000 skiable acres with 186 miles of ski slopes, and 79 lifts. The temperature ranged from highs of 27 to 45 degrees F.



We enjoyed the quarter acre of buffet. This was an all-inclusive resort with food and drink included. The PVS Six ate together with most having wine and one outcast ordering drinks that required a Google search. Nick told us all about cricket, though no one understood it. Barry, knowledgeable in electronic security, was able to ask intelligent questions while the rest rolled their eyes. Salli reported that in post-Soviet Bulgaria, crime was rampant, and she got into her East German car and remarked how clear the windows were. The bad news was that her windshield was stolen. The good news was she now had air conditioning. Jon (pronounced yawn) told us about his uncle "sweet Louie" and his mafia connections. Kathy described the real estate market so well, that we all bought a house except for Jon who recently moved into a retirement complex. Don brought from the dessert section sweets covered with whipped cream (looked like the ski area) so heavy one could not see what was underneath.

Richard, from another ski club and a laser physicist, explained how lasers were used to create nuclear fusion. He explained this better than Nick explained cricket.

On the return, we left on a bus at 4:30 am. We arrived at the Geneva airport stopping at only two traffic lights. We landed in Frankfurt as far away from our Boeing 747 as possible without being in another airport. Jon, a former marathon runner sprinted to the gate on four moving walkways, three floors of steps, an elevator, and a walkway leaving the rest of us behind crawling and panting. We arrived back at Dulles on time, but in a crowd waiting to get through passport control while Jon took the VIP Global Entry pass through and arrived home a day before the rest of us.

Submitted by **Don Vierimaa**





## PVS – BYOB (Bring Your Own Book) Group

Though there were only three attendees, the three had a lively discussion of books read and recommended and thoroughly enjoyed the hour together. Please consider joining us next month on **April 13 from 4 to 5pm**. See below. Remember FOMO...

### Here's what we chatted about in March:

**Jan Marx** has been reading (listening to) books in the Andy Carpenter mystery series by David Rosenfeld. Andy is a lawyer who would rather spend time with his dogs and rescue dog organization than practice law. Jan related some of the clever canine titles in this series such as *Collared*, *Dog Eat Dog*, *One Dog Night*, *Muzzled*, and the like. Together, man and his best friend solve the mysteries.

**Marianne Sponis** chose *The Violin Conspiracy* by Brendan Slocumb. It begins with the story of a young Black child who loves music. He overcomes society's and family obstacles to rise to great heights as a violinist. A mystery ensues when his Stradivarius is stolen before a prestigious international competition. Marianne was entranced by a lyrical passage that she read to us describing a musical piece in terms of snow falling and other phenomena.

**Ellie Thayer** turned to Ireland for her choice. *Foster* is a novella, but Ellie found its shortness belied the power of the subtle haunting story about a poor young Irish girl who is sent to a rural home for the summer by her overburdened family. There she experiences love and security unknown to her before. It appears that an Irish language film that is gaining attention, *The Quiet Girl*, is based on this novella by Claire Keegan.

The next BYOB Zoom call will be held on Thursday, April 13, from 4 to 5 pm. Let Marianne Sponis know at [marianne.sponis@gmail.com](mailto:marianne.sponis@gmail.com) if you're interested in joining us and she'll put you on the list to get the link to the Zoom call. No commitment! Questions or comments? Contact Nancy McKinley at [nancymckin@gmail.com](mailto:nancymckin@gmail.com) or 703 595 8375.



*It Happened Because I Like to Read Mysteries*

*by Jan Marx*

It all started with a mystery I was reading, which took place in West St. Paul, MN. It was written by a local author whose descriptions are geographically accurate. I opened Google Maps to locate a particular park in the story, and I happened to see that my father's childhood home address (the Nier's) had a tag that said ----- "Black Market." Wait, what? How does the city allow a business to be run out of my grandparent's house?

I went to the website provided, and I learned that the couple living at 220 W. Isabel St. had a BBQ food truck. They sold Texas BBQ every Friday from 5-7 PM all year long from a location "at the top of the High Bridge" - a place I know well. After further exploration of their website ([www.blackmarketstp.com](http://www.blackmarketstp.com)),



I learned that this BBQ wagon originated from a friendship between Jimmy Mann, and his well-known BBQ place near downtown, and a young man named Robert. The Twin City PBS station produced a wonderful video of this story which can be found on this website. Robert and his wife, Jill, liked to cook and decided that they wanted a way to bring the neighborhood together. (I learned later that they also had day jobs.) They started with their BBQ truck in front of 220 W. Isabel St. with neighbors stopping by. Its popularity grew, and they moved to the more accessible location at the south end of the High Bridge, with a view across the Mississippi of downtown St. Paul.

I wrote to them, and told them who I was, and that I would like to meet them. They were excited about meeting, so I let them know that I would be in the city that summer. My cousins and my nephew, who live in the city, and I ventured to meet them at their usual Friday event. They treated us to some of their delicious pulled pork and beans. Outstanding!

That same day we also met Jimmy's widow, Anna Marie, who lived across from my grandparents on W. Isabel Street. Anna Marie is interviewed in the video. It was arranged that we would visit my grandparent's house on another day.

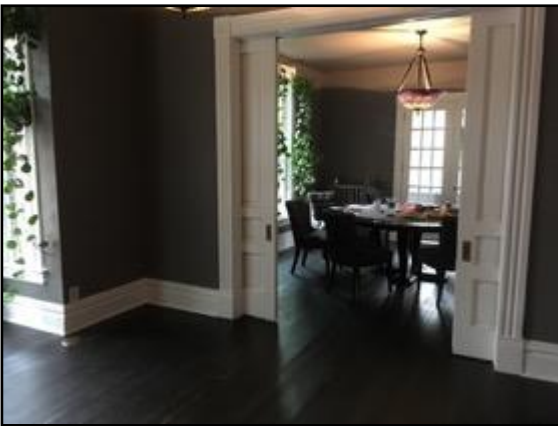




1913 & 2019



When we visited 220 W. Isabel St., I brought pictures of the house and my family from our album. I also had my memories and recollections of the house and neighborhood to share. Robert and Jill told us about what they had found in the house, and how they changed it. They researched the city records. What I remember most vividly is the pull chain toilet in a funny little room with a creaky wooden floor 😊. I also recall the dining room with a bay window on one side and the master bedroom on the other. Through the



large pocket doors was the living room where my grandfather would set up his pyramid Christmas tree. It could rotate with heat from the candles, and it had a mirror at the base with skating figures on it. The grandparents had immigrated with their families from different cities in Germany. Beyond that and through glass French doors was an enclosed front room. Growing up, my dad used it as his bedroom because his sister, 11 years older, lived with her family in the upstairs of the house. I don't recall anything about the upstairs, but Jill showed me how they had fixed it up. Seeing the space, I was amazed that Dad's sister raised 3 kids there. (Note the pocket doors between rooms.)

The kitchen has been remodeled, (probably not the first or even the second time), with subway tile on all the walls and a large, stainless-steel sink and appliances. I recall a big old stove and a flour bin. There was a grape arbor in the back yard. My parents were treated to homemade wine, and my brother and I had something bubbly that tickled my nose. The front and back yards have changed, and the big old tree finally had to be cut down.



Grandparents with me in back yard.



Dining Room - Grandfather & Aunt with a doll. Fireplace is the same. I still have the clock on the mantel. Note the different chandelier. The doorway to modern kitchen, and radiator remain.



Jill, Robert, Jan,



& Anna Marie.



**Epilogue:** I later learned that a distant cousin on my mother's side was a St Paul policeman, and he was Jimmy's boss, when he was in uniform. After his police service, Jimmy decided to open a restaurant. Black Market has grown, and has relocated to a larger location, still in the neighborhood. It now features free, local musical entertainment in the summer. Tips appreciated.

*Spring*



*has Sprung!*



**Calendar**

- Sat Apr 08 PVS Annual Meeting at 1:00 p.m. Heitchue/Sinclair condo clubhouse, Reston, VA
- Thu Apr 13 BYOB (Bring Your Own Book) Zoom at 4:00 p.m., N. McKinley

**ExCom Officers, Board Members, and Chairpersons**

<p><b><u>Officers:</u></b>          President – <i>Barry Lake</i>          Vice Pres. – <i>Cara Jablon</i>          Secretary – <i>Ellie Thayer</i>          Treasurer – <i>Dick Schwartzbard</i>          Ex Officio - <i>Vacant</i></p> <p><b><u>Board Members:</u></b>  <b><u>First Term 2021-2023:</u></b>  <i>Manfred Boehringer</i>  <i>Jannes Gibson</i>  <i>Mary Rose de Valladares</i>  <b><u>Second Term 2022-2024:</u></b>  <i>Salli Diakova</i>  <i>Kathy Lake</i>  <i>Don Vierimaa</i></p>	<p><b><u>Chairpersons:</u></b>          Events – <i>Marianne Soponis</i>          Membership Records – <i>Vacant 12 months</i>          Ski Trip Committee – <i>Vacant</i></p> <p>TOOT Coordinator – <i>Ellie Thayer</i>          TOOT Layout Editors – <i>Jan Marx, Kerry Hines &amp; Dave Warthen</i>          TOOT (E-Distribution) – <i>Barry Lake</i></p> <p>Webmaster – <i>Mary Ellena Ward</i></p> <p>Meeting Records – <i>Sue Lyon</i></p> <p>Historian – <i>Jan Marx</i></p>
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**Useful Ski "Links"**

[Potomac Valley Skiers](#)  
[BRSC Sanctioned Trips](#)  
[DC Ski Online News](#)

**Reminder: It is club policy that contact information in the club’s roster not be used for promoting personal business, for advertising, or for personal financial gain without the advance permission of the individual member to be contacted. Membership contact information shall not be distributed outside PVS.**

