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Potomac Valley Skiers, Inc.
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President's Message:

Many thanks to Jill Nelson for hosting this year's Summerfest. Although the attendance was lower than in previous years, those of us who came enjoyed a lovely afternoon catching up with current and former PVS skiers. We have reached a point in our club where there are very few skiers left – many people have “aged out” of this sport because of balance, strength or joint issues or because they are just no longer comfortable braving the slopes. I hope that I still have a few more good skiing years left, even if I cannot spend my days on the bump runs, and that there will be a core of PVS skiers with whom to share my skiing experiences.

Even if you are not skiing, I encourage you to attend PVS events and to consider hosting a PVS meeting. We are only holding PVS meetings on alternate months, but do need members to step up and host a meeting. Please let Marianne Sponis know if you are willing to host. We will do everything possible to make hosting as easy as possible for you – we can hold events where attendees bring food or can have co-hosts for a meeting. Our next event is the Steak and Swim, hosted by Marianne and Kerry Hines at their beautiful home in Delaplane, Virginia. I hope to see many PVS members there.



An update on our two puppies- Andre and Milo. After determining that Andre had not learned much from his first trainer, and that Milo was “wild,” we decided to sign both dogs up for two weeks at a dog training school in Rockville, Maryland. This involved driving the dogs up to Rockville in the morning and picking them up at the end of the day, a total of almost four hours of driving a day. The first week Bob and I generally did the trips together, but this past week, we alternated so we each did one trip a day. We also have a private lesson on Saturdays with the trainer. Although application is still a problem, i.e. when there is the distraction of another dog, the dogs have learned. Allegedly, they know “let’s go,” “wait,” “come,”

“sit,” “down,” “place,” and “off.” We have signed them up for one additional week in the hopes that they will better learn to apply their knowledge. I am happy to report that I held a meeting at my house this week for the Temple Sinai Sisterhood Board, and the dogs were very well behaved. Perhaps these animals can be civilized.

I hope that you are all having a good summer and I look forward to seeing you at PVS events and at Snowmass in January.



Cara Jablon, PVS President

SUMMER FEST

Sunday, June 9, 2024



It was a perfect weather day for our Summerfest meeting at Jill Nelson's Chevy Chase home. Her grandson, Bjorn, greeted us at the door. He had a tablet of paper and instructions to have us sign in. Marianne showed him how to make spaces for each signature. Nice job! There were 18 of us plus his parents, Martha and Aaron, and his great uncle, Jon from NJ.



Jill had prepared chicken, sausage, salmon and an array of drinks for us. The rest of us provided a delightful assortment of appetizers and salads, including shrimp, liver pate, veggie kabobs, veggie, and pasta salads. Weather allowing windows to be open invited a table full of people onto the patio.

Cara called the business end of the meeting to order as we gathered inside. Kathy told us that we have 20 rooms reserved at Snowmass and that if you are interested in going, please send in \$250 deposit now. It can be refunded as late as October. She also talked about the BRSC meeting and the ski areas they voted on for the coming year. In addition, Kathy discussed the Washington Ski Travel Show, which the, Lakes and the Jablons attended with Barry winning a door prize of 2-days lodging and lifts at Whitefish, MT. Cara reported that there was no interest in Park City for 2025. Marianne reminded all of the Steak and Swim in August and that the next meeting will be the Oct/Nov one but we need a location.



The Holiday meeting will be at the Jablon's.



Cara adjourned the meeting and we enjoyed choices of desserts - Carrot cake, pastries, oatmeal-raspberry bars and bite-size peanut butter cookies.

Thank you, Jill, for hosting us!

Submitted by Jan Marx





SKI TALK

by
Kathy Lake

Random Thoughts About the Ski Season...

SNOW

With temperatures close to 100 degrees, it's hard to think that parts of the northwestern states recently received snow! The mountains in Montana and Wyoming had a fair amount of snow in early June. As much as 14" was reported in Montana. Some of the back roads were closed until they could be cleared. Glacier National Park in Montana saw a fresh 12" of snow in mid-June. Yellowstone National Park had its share of the snow, too.

SKI BOOTS

If you are thinking about buying new equipment, Rossignol has a new ski boot coming out in the fall that "goes on like a slipper". Bootfitters are calling the Rossignol Vizion a game changer for skiers tired of wrestling with their boots. The design and technology elements include a traditional 4 buckle overlap boot, a steel spine and something Rossi is calling a "spine like mechanism" which allows the back of the boot cuff to hinge backwards to widen the cuff opening, then lock back in to an upright position. It's getting good reviews!

Meanwhile Nordica has brought back the rear entry boot, called the Nordica HF (hands free) boot.

AIR FLIGHTS

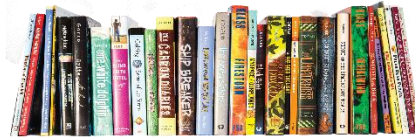
Delta has just announced its largest ever ski schedule, with flights to Aspen, Vail, Jackson Hole and other ski areas. Delta is promoting the 2024/2025 ski destination flight schedule will have 10% more seating capacity than last year.

I have also heard that, in general, the costs of airfares for next winter are looking reasonable. It might be time to book your flight for Snowmass!

SNOWMASS

Speaking of Snowmass, plans are coming along for our trip – Jan 8 – 15, 2025. We finally have pricing. We will be staying slopeside at the Mountain Chalet, once again. The package will include 7 nights lodging and a 5 day Senior ski pass. For more details see the Snowmass Trip Flyer elsewhere in the Toot. Please sign up and send your deposit.

Events



PVS - BYOB (Bring Your Own Book) Group

This little group is always open to new folks who'd like to talk about books! Come and observe when you have an hour on the second Thursday of the month at 4. Get a Zoom link by contacting Nancy McKinley at nancymckin@gmail.com. It's always interesting to hear what others are reading and to put them on our (long) to-be-read lists. **See again the info at the bottom for how to join in on Thursday, July 11th from 4 to 5 pm on Zoom.**

Books we shared in June:

Bonnie: The Wind Knows My Name by Isabel Allende

Allende intertwines two stories of escape from dangerous situations. A five-year-old Jewish boy during World War II escapes Nazi Germany alone on the Kindertransport train. In the present day, a mother and daughter escape the murderous cartels of El Salvador via train only to be separated at the US border. **5 stars**

Mary Ellena: reading old mysteries by Dorothy Sayers

Mary Ellena says she's been relaxing with the works of Sayers, a part of the early literary scene at Oxford where Sayers was a student. Using frequent literary references, Sayers went on to create the well-known character of Lord Peter Wimsey, an upper-class amateur sleuth. Examples of the mysteries Mary Ellena has been reading are Clouds of Witness in 1926 and Strong Poison in 1930. **5 stars**

Karen K: A Fever in the Heartland: The Ku Klux Klan's Plot to Take Over America, and the Woman Who Stopped Them by Timothy Egan

An amoral young man named D.C. Stephenson propelled the nascent Ku Klux Klan in Indiana in the early 1920's into a powerhouse. His goal was the White House, and his following was enormous at a time when the KKK was getting the support of millions in the country. A woman raped by Stephenson bravely testified against him and spelled his end. Egan's journalistic approach and the subject matter made for "a disturbing read" for Karen. A "good but hard read." **5 stars**

Marianne: A Very Private School by Charles Spencer

Written by Princess Diana's brother, this memoir details his years at a private boarding school from the ages of 8 to 13. He describes a terrible place with a headmaster who cleverly won over the parents while at the same time bullying the children with the goal of toughening them up for the military. Marianne doesn't recommend it if you want a cheerful read. **4.5 stars**

Jan: Holmes, Marple & Poe: The Greatest Crime-Solving Team of the Twentieth-First Century by James Patterson and Brian Stitts

Patterson teams up with another collaborator to create a fanciful New York City detective agency with a play on well-known names. Each member of the agency has a special skill calling on one's brains, one's powers of observation, and the third's muscle to solve each crime. Jan calls the novel "fun" and gives it **5 stars**.

Bob: New Cold Wars: China's Rise, Russia's Invasion, and America's Struggle to Defend the West by David E. Sanger and Mary K Brooks

Bob declares the thesis of the book as that nuclear risk and other risks are back. Globalization and the free market are not garnering the peace that had been hoped. Sanger, New York Times national security correspondent, reports on what's driving Putin and the Chinese while the US tries to be the "good guy" in international affairs. "Well worth reading" per Bob. **5 stars**

Ellie: Almost French by Sarah Turnbull

Australian journalist Turnbull's memoir tells how she briefly met a handsome Frenchman while in Romania. He invites her to Paris for a visit and she impetuously joins him where she remains. They live together in Paris for nine years while she tries to break into the often very formal French culture. Turnbull subsequently becomes a successful journalist in Paris before the couple moves to French Polynesia. **5 stars**

Nancy: James by Percival Everett

Not just a retelling of the story of Huckleberry Finn, Everett's reimagining makes fun of how racial identity is nothing more than a construct worthy of ridicule. James (Jim) is an erudite, well-read, and compassionate man in this telling. His adventures, with and without Huck accompanying him, point out with caustic humor the absurdity of slavery. **5 stars**

The next BYOB Zoom call will be held on Thursday, July 11th from 4 to 5 pm. Let Nancy McKinley at nancymckin@gmail.com know if you'd like to stop by and check us out and she'll put you on the list to get the Zoom link. No commitment!



Special Event !!!

Join us at PVS' 32nd (*not* annual)

STEAK AND SWIM



At the HINES'
Saturday August 17, 2024 - - 3pm
Rain or Shine



This is PVS' oldest annual club event, except that it's not quite annual!
Celebrate summer in the Blue Ridge foothills in Delaplane, VA.
Enjoy good food, camaraderie, open space, and maybe even a dip in the pool!

Limited to 25. Reserve Now!
Deadline to sign up or cancel is August 10th.

BRING: Your own bathing suit and towel and either an **appetizer or dessert**.

INCLUDED: steaks, baked potatoes, salads, fixings, beverages and (hopefully) sunshine!!

Cost: \$20 per person.

To sign up or for directions phone Kerry or Marianne at 540 364-4810, or email
machines@erols.com and tell us what you'll bring. Also, let us know if you need directions.





Potomac Valley Skiers

2025 SNOWMASS, Colorado Ski Trip

Wednesday - Wednesday
January 8 – 15, 2025

Trip Details

Once again, we will be staying at the [Snowmass Mountain Chalet \(SMC\)](#) which offers a convenient ski in, ski out location. The **“LAND ONLY”** package includes: transportation to and from Aspen airport; 5- day Senior (65 and older) lift pass ([good for all four ski areas in the Aspen complex, free shuttle bus](#)); 7 nights lodging (double occupancy); luggage handling; buffet breakfast, soup lunch, welcome reception, pizza party and farewell group dinner to celebrate our trip. Additional nights at Snowmass are an option **based on availability**. **Trip insurance is available through www.Encompasse.com and is [highly recommended](#).**

The Basic Package price is based on 2 people per room. We have 20 rooms reserved consisting of Standard and Deluxe, King and Queen/Queen rooms. The Standard Rooms are on the 1st floor/ground level with no microwaves or coffee makers. Deluxe Rooms are on floors 2-4. See below for pricing. Room preferences will be on a first come first serve basis.

<u>Costs:</u>		<u>Standard</u>	<u>Deluxe</u>
Basic Land Only Package (65 and older)		\$2,336	\$2,506 per person
Under 65	add	\$ 130	\$ 130
Single Supplement	add	\$1,605	\$1,775
Extra hotel night (pending availability)	add	\$ TBD	\$ TBD per room per night
Non-skiers	deduct	\$ 396	\$ 396
Extra ski days (65 and older)	add	\$ 119	\$ 119 6 day Senior pass
	add	\$ 199	\$ 199 7 day Senior pass
Under 65	add	\$ 247	\$ 247 6 day pass
Silver Pass (Age 70 and older)	add	\$ TBD	\$ TBD

Payment Schedule

Deposit of \$1,250 due by **July 10th** with Application & Signed Waiver
 Final payment is past due **September 1st**

Checks should be made out to **Kathy Lake** and mailed to
 11677 Fox Glen Drive, Oakton VA 22124
 (put PVS Snowmass 2025 on the check memo line).

Cancellation Policy: The entire cost of the trip is non-refundable after **September 1st**.

Kathy & Barry Lake are the trip leaders. Feel free to contact us at 703-625-2715 or kathylakehomes@yahoo.com

APPLICATION FORM

Potomac Valley Skiers Trip to Snowmass, Colorado

January 8-15, 2025

Name (List both names if a couple) as on your Official ID:

_____ Age 65 or older Y N

_____ Age 65 or older Y N

Address: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Email: _____

Emergency Contact and Phone: _____

NOTE: Please let trip leader know of any special medical issues which may affect your trip.

Roommate (if a separate person) - Official name as on ID: _____

Bedding Preference (Pending Availability): ____ 1 King or ____ 2 Queens ____ Deluxe or ____ Standard

	<u>Standard</u>	<u>Deluxe Price</u>
Basic Snowmass Package (65 and older)	\$2,336	\$2,506 per person
Under 65	add \$ 130	\$ 130
Single Supplement	add \$1,605	\$ 1,775
Extra hotel night (Pending Availability)	add \$ TBD	\$ TBD per room/night
Non-skiers	deduct \$ 396	\$ 396
Extra ski days (65 and older)	add \$ 119	\$ 119 6 day Senior
Under 65	add \$ 199	\$ 199 7 day Senior
Silver Pass (70 & older skiing 8 or more days)	add \$ 247	\$ 247 6 day pass
	add \$ TBD	\$ TBD

Please check all appropriate spaces:

Cost (will be filled in by trip leader):

____ Basic package _____

____ Single supplement _____

____ Extra hotel nights _____

____ Non-skier _____

____ Extra day(s) of skiing ____ days _____

____ Silver pass _____

Total price of trip \$ _____

Additional nights at SMC: yes ____ no ____ if yes, what dates? _____

Additional comments _____

Potomac Valley Skiers

WAIVER

**RELEASE, ASSUMPTION OF RISK, AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY AGREEMENT PERTAINING
TO THE JANUARY 8-15, 2025 SKI TRIP to SNOWMASS, COLORADO (Potomac Valley Skiers)**

- (1) I acknowledge that there are inherent risks in the sport of skiing and other sports or activities in which I might participate during this trip, and in the process of traveling. There may be bodily injury, illness, accident, death, property loss or damage, and unanticipated additional costs or other economic losses. I fully and willingly accept the responsibility and liability for all such risks, dangers, costs, and losses.
- (2) I agree not to sue or hold responsible the trip leader, Potomac Valley Skiers, Inc. (hereafter PVS), its officers and members of the Executive Committee, or its members for: (1) any accident, personal injury, illness, or death occurring to me or to any other trip participant, arising directly or indirectly from this trip; (2) any loss of deposit of payment, any other property or economic loss, or unanticipated additional costs, delay, or change of itinerary arising out of any action or inaction of any hotel, airline, tour operator, land transportation operator, or other entity or person providing services on this trip; and (3) any trip cancellation, delay, early termination or extension due to acts of God, forces of nature, or other force majeure events or situations. I willingly and with full knowledge assume these risks.
- (3) I understand and agree that the trip leaders, and the tour operators or agents with whom the trip leaders have contracted, have the right to substitute accommodations of similar or better quality, to change transportation arrangements and providers, and to modify other services. In the event of such changes, no refund or credit will be provided if the accommodations, transportation, or services are of comparable or better quality and cover the same approximate time period.
- (4) I agree that I am not entitled to a credit or refund for any included trip service that is not used by me.

I have read and I fully understand this "Release, Assumption of Risk, and Waiver of Liability Agreement," the final trip flyer, and the trip application, and I agree to all of the specified terms and conditions.

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name of Participant: _____

Potomac Valley Skiers

Members' Corner

South Wales
April 17 – 28, 2024
By Ellie Thayer

Wales promised lots of castles, ruins of old abbeys, and 5,000-year old stones. I liked the sound of it even before I left. Our group stayed three days in Tenby and seven days in Cardiff and took lots of side trips. And, I saw lots of castles, ruins of old abbeys, and 5,000-year old stones.

First stop was the marvelous UNESCO World Heritage site, Avebury, in England. It is the largest prehistoric henge in the world, covering some 16 times the space of its nearby cousin, Stonehenge, and nearly 3/5 of a mile wide. Unfortunately it is not as intact as Stonehenge and is harder to visualize as a completed site. Nonetheless, I loved it.



Portal stones at Avebury



Chepstow Castle



Tintern Abbey

Next stop was Chepstow Castle in Wales. Very old. The tower was built in 1067. The Normans started building castles right after William the Conqueror landed in England in 1066. The Welsh resisted. Perhaps that is why there are more than 600 castles in Wales, most in ruins now. Perhaps that is why many Welsh use 1066 as their phone passcode in a “Remember the Alamo” sort of way. The final first-day visit was to the picturesque ruins of Tintern Abbey, founded by the Cistercians in 1131. Lots of old; lots of ruins; lots of stones; what a start to the trip.

The afternoon ferry ride from Tenby to Caldey Island proved exciting as it was very windy. Caldey Island, has been a historic monk enclave dating from the 6th C Celtic monks, to the Benedictines, to the present-day Cistercians. The monastery is huge and grand, especially incongruous because it only houses eight monks. Brother Gildas knew our local guide and was gracious enough to greet us. He was charming and amusing.



Monastery on Caldey Island



Brother Gildas



St. David's, a Norman Church

The following day we ventured further west to Pembroke Castle and then north along the rugged coast to St. David's and Fishguard. We finished the day nostalgically at the site of a dolmen, Carreg Coetan Arthur. I say nostalgically because in October 2007, Jack and I along with two friends spent a week in this part of Wales, often spending our days chasing dolmens all over Pembrokeshire.



October 2007



April 2024



Pembroke Castle was huge

St. David's is the name of both the tiny city and Wales' largest cathedral dominating that city. St. David is to Wales what St. Patrick is to Ireland – both are credited in spreading Christianity to their countries. The cathedral, which was a pilgrimage destination (three trips to St. David's was equal to one trip to Jerusalem), boasted a 16th C oak ceiling among other very old features.



St. David's Cathedral



Oak ceiling



Panels in Fishguard Tapestry

Fishguard is a few miles north of St. David's and is home to the "famous" Fishguard Last Invasion Tapestry. How to explain this tapestry? Fishguardians compare it to the famous Bayeux Tapestry in France, which depicts the Norman conquest of England in 1066 by William the Conqueror. In contrast, the Fishguard tapestry shows the Welsh defeating a French invasion in 1798. However, as the story unfolds on the tapestry, the invasion consisted of a few Frenchmen who were blown off course and, after drinking and carousing for a couple of nights, surrendered to the pitchfork-wielding women of the town. It seems unfortunate to me that this silly invasion comparison has been promoted because the tapestry itself is utterly charming and amusing and the comparison detracts. It is 100 feet long and consists of 37 panels; it was embroidered by 80 women of the area for the Millennium, part of a four-year project. Worth it!

On the way to Cardiff we stopped at Laugharne Castle (as far as I could make out this was pronounced "Larn"), the Dylan Thomas Boathouse, and the National Botanic Garden of Wales. All three were good for a short wander. The real reward was for the traditional toast with an Aperol Spritz in Cardiff, a requirement on every international trip.



Laugharne Castle



Laugharne Castle



Botanical Garden



Aperol Spritz toast

Hotel Indigo Cardiff was located in an arcade that led to a “pedestrianized” street, as Phil would say. Cardiff Castle was two blocks away and we started our Cardiff city walking tour there.

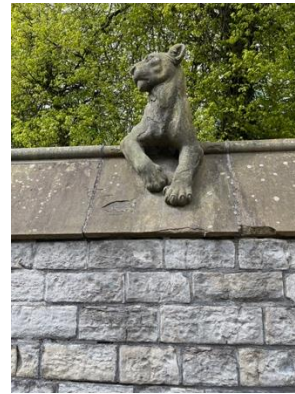
Cardiff Castle was a sight to behold. The Norman castle went through many style metamorphoses over the ensuing 700 years, but in the late 1800s a Victorian architect got his hands on it and created a “Welsh Victorian Camelot” per the castle website. No room was spared. The fireplaces in particular were elaborate. The Marquess was denied the privilege of bringing live animals into the vast park adjoining the castle, so he whimsically created statues of wild animals attempting to escape on the walls. In 1948, the family gave the castle to the city.



Cardiff Castle



Victorian interior



Wall outside the park

St Fagan’s National History Museum is a large open-air museum consisting of over 50 buildings moved to the site and reconstructed. Especially interesting were a row of miner’s homes ranging from old to more modern. Last stop of the day was Llandaff Cathedral. It boasted a 20th C modern sculpture in the center. I loved it; some hated it.



St. Fagan’s Museum



St. Fagan’s Museum



Llandaff Cathedral



Llandaff Cathedral



Rodin in National Museum



Monet



School children everywhere



Woolly Rhino

The National Museum had a little bit of everything. The Impressionists collection was touted as large, but it had been built up too much, ending in disappointment.

The next day we bused to Swansea, Wales second largest city, and the Gower Peninsula. We visited the small Glenn Vivian Art Gallery where I took my time enjoying its unusual offerings. However, the highlight was the Gower Peninsula and the wild horses.



The entire group was looking forward to our hardhat tour at the Big Pit National Coal Museum. Alas – the canary died! The underground hardhat tour was canceled in a dramatic fashion as poisonous gases were detected in the mine. It was a sobering reminder of the hazards miners faced back in the day. Another reminder was the 66-foot Guardian sculpture on the site of the Six Bells Colliery site where 45 miners died in an underground blast in 1960.

One of the highlights of my trip was attending an evening rehearsal of the Cardiff Arms Park Male Choir not far from our hotel. They were incredible. It doesn't hurt that their rehearsal space is in a bar. About 60 men led by a paid choir director. This choir was not amateurish. They rehearse two nights a week and often perform twice on weekends. They have CDs and a Facebook page. I asked Phil if choirs such as these, born in coal mining towns, would survive considering their aging memberships. "Time will tell," he responded noting that young men are too busy with young families and other activities to be interested in the time commitment.

The final two cities/towns that we visited are not far from Cardiff: Newport and Caerleon. Newport has a weird Transporter Bridge, one of eight still operating in the world. It is undergoing restoration so we could not experience its weirdness close up. It carries vehicles

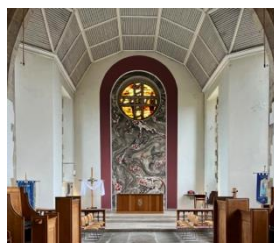
and people across the River Usk in gondolas. Newport Cathedral, i.e., St. Woolos Cathedral, encompasses architectural styles from pre-Norman to 1960s modern. In contrast to the modern sculpture in Llandaff Cathedral, I did not care for its modern creation. Nearby Caerleon was the site of a Roman military base until the Romans departed after 400 A.D. We saw a grassy amphitheater, Roman baths, and a cozy pub with a range of beers and ales.



Newport's Transponder Bridge



St. Woolos Cathedral



Modern chancel



Roman amphitheater

During our final day in Cardiff, we explored some of the city's many 19th C arcades, enclosed passageways that connected parallel streets. Indeed our Hotel Indigo was in one of the arcades. Various arcades contained cafes, open-air markets, banks, and shops. Some were bustling; some were not. We dropped into a very old church near our hotel, St. John the Baptist, which is the oldest building in the city center other than the castle and is the only significant landmark that remains of the old medieval borough. We enjoyed the Museum of Cardiff, especially a short video presentation about the etymology of a variety of local businesses.

Stonehenge! We stopped to visit the famous 5,000-year old circular arrangement of megaliths on the way to Heathrow Airport. Phil related an interesting story about a millennium project by British university students who were trying to determine how some of the "blue" stones quarried in Wales were transported hundreds of miles to the site. First, they determined that the stones could not have been rolled along logs or tree trunks, one prominent theory. The stones crushed the tree trunks almost immediately. Second, the students built a ship to transport the stones by water. Their ship and stones sank immediately. Nonetheless, the transport-by-water is the predominant theory at this time. Stonehenge is simply awe-inspiring. It was a great way to end a great trip.



Map of arcades



St. John Baptist Church



Stonehenge



Stonehenge

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*Rosemary Schwartzbard*

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16