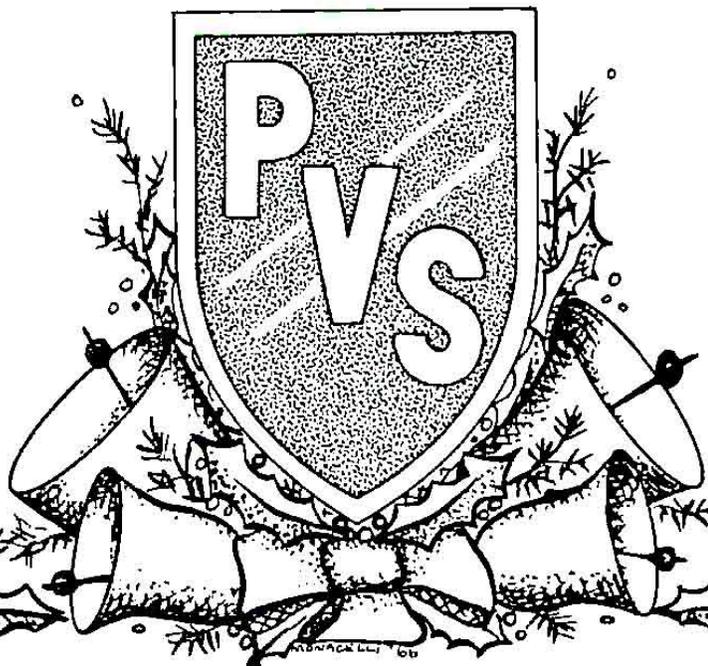




Season's Greetings
and
Best Wishes for the New Year



Mike Santoro was a long time member of PVS and Trudy (a charter member) wished to share the following with you as a remembrance of Mike. She told us that son John wrote it but wouldn't let her see it until the church service. It speaks for itself and you can see why she is proud of their only child.

Americo Michael "Mike" Santoro, Jr.

October 17, 1929 – November 1, 2005

Eulogy given on November 7, 2005 by John Santoro at St. Anthony's Church, Falls Church, VA

Less than two months ago, my dad was doing one of his favorite activities – playing tennis. Acting more like a youth than someone a few days from turning 76, he was practicing two hours a day in preparation for a national tournament. I was happy seeing him enjoy this passion and not paying attention to his age.

My dad has maintained a healthy lifestyle that always included exercise since his teenage years. While speaking to his brother Dick recently, I learned that as a teenager, my dad had gained a few unwanted pounds. Long before exercise was highly touted and gyms started popping up all over town, he built his own exercise equipment – squat racks and benches – out of two-by-fours and loose weights. He worked out in his make-shift gym, lost the extra pounds, and developed a six-pack.

As many of you know, my dad was also an avid skier. In fact, it was returning from a ski club trip to Europe when he met my mom, Trudy. She was seated in the row behind him on the plane, and he struck up a conversation with her. As my mom likes to tell it, everything was going very well until the plane landed. At that point they both stood up and my dad realized that he was a few inches shorter than her. It took him a week or two in order to overcome his ego and call, but he did and eventually, in what I imagine was a shock to his family, he got married at the young age of 40. It was two years later when I was born.

Recently, my dad told me that while he was in a ski shop, he overheard a man who appeared to be in his mid-50s lamenting that the pair of skis he was purchasing would probably be his last. My dad turned to him and pointed out that he was going on 76 and was purchasing a new pair of skis for himself. The man came over and shook his hand and said that he was an inspiration. I have to agree. When I look at the fullness of my dad's life and the delicate balance he maintained between family responsibilities, work, exercise, continual learning, and spiritual development, I feel inspired.

Growing up, my dad was always around and took an active role in my endeavors. I can't say that I always enjoyed this, especially when he was dragging me to wrestling practice, but I marvel at the time he made for me. In selfless service, he saw to it that I received every benefit that he missed or had to work extremely hard for. He got me started in tennis and skiing at the age of five, wrestling and piano at eight, and clarinet, guitar, saxophone, soccer, football, and baseball soon followed. He exposed me to various religious viewpoints, made sure that I was well rounded, and sent me to the best schools regardless of the cost. It was because of these acts of selfless love that I grew up to be the person I am today.

My dad was born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania on October 17, 1929. He was the eldest of the five children of Americo and Mary Santoro. He used to like to joke that his birth somehow triggered the Great Depression which began a mere two weeks later, but really, it was clear that growing up during that time shaped many of the values that he carried throughout his life. My dad learned the values of family commitment, self-sacrifice, and hard work, and he developed the discrimination to know which things were important in life and which were frivolous. His brothers and sister have repeatedly told me how he was always looking out for them when they were growing up.

My dad saw that education was critical to creating a brighter future. As a youth, he used to shine shoes in his uncle's store. A lot of servicemen would come through and they repeatedly told him to be sure to go to college. However, his parents had other plans. As the eldest son in an Italian working class family, his parents wanted him to work and help the family financially. Anyone who has been around my dad for a while knows that once he makes up his mind about something, nothing short of an act of God could change it. My dad was so insistent about going to college that he threatened, and then followed through on his threat, to enlist in the military. Through what appeared to be dumb luck, but was more likely the gracious hand of God, when he went to enlist, the military recruiter's roster was full. He was told that he would have to wait for two weeks. My dad returned home and told his parents what he had done and they finally agreed to let him attend college if he didn't enlist.

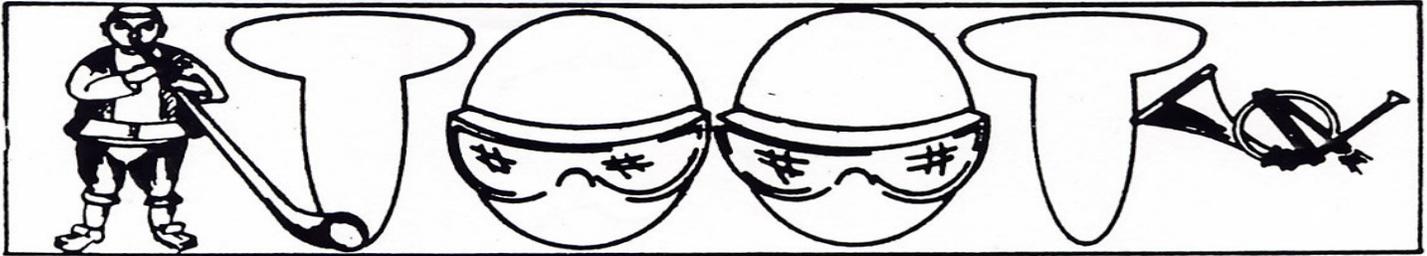
Living at home, my dad began studying engineering at Lehigh University, which was a short distance away. He worked to support himself and wrestled on the varsity team. Although he was overextended, he persevered and became the first member of his family to obtain a college degree. He spent a few years on active duty in the Navy and eventually returned to Lehigh to get an MBA. He also studied law for a few years while working and took a number of other courses while serving in the Navy and then in the Federal government.

His thirst for knowledge never waned –the study of various religions and spiritual practices, learning piano, traveling and soaking up local cultures.

My dad was always an independent thinker. In his youth, instead of following the crowd, he would go off on his own and build model airplanes, learn how to draw, and develop pictures in his dark room. Even back then he was always reading, learning, and forming his own opinions about things.

My dad was a loving and faithful husband, a dedicated father, a watchful older brother, and an excellent role model. I can honestly say that he lived his life to the fullest. He will be sorely missed, but I trust that he is receiving a much deserved pension for a life that was well led.





VOLUME XLI
NUMBER 12

Potomac Valley Skiers, Inc.
WASHINGTON MARYLAND VIRGINIA

DECEMBER 2005

www.potomacvalleyskiers.org

info@potomacvalleyskiers.org

Dear PVSers,

I hope all of you, and your families and friends had a wonderful Thanksgiving. Surely, all of us have much to be thankful for, and that includes the good times we enjoy in friends' company, the camaraderie for which our club is so much liked.

I wish to mention several subjects and ought to start by expressing once more our collective thanks to the very dedicated and capable committee members who planned and "delivered" a most memorable 40th anniversary bash. The consensus among our 87 participants was that this was a great success, and all of us felt richly rewarded by the program, the beautiful facilities, and not least the sumptuous food and drinks. A special thanks goes to our several speakers, and to Marvin for his wonderful slide presentation. May we all share great fun at the 45th!

There's a fair amount of planning in the works for a variety of activities, both mid-week and weekend. We don't want to crowd the calendar during the active skiing months, and are looking to increase our off-slope offerings when schussing season is over. Nevertheless, as indicated in this Toot, there's still all kinds of "stuff" going on.

One of our concerns should be the need for what is best described by the German word *Nachwuchs*, meaning something like succession, the new members who come to fill depleted ranks. With our membership renewal period completed, we do have a few vacancies, which we'd like to fill. Inevitably, we should be looking for compatible folks, who share our love for skiing, care about some of our traditional other activities, and whose ages could contribute to a rejuvenation of the membership. As you venture to the slopes think about your non-member skiing friends and invite them to a meeting or other activity. We'll make them feel welcome, and look for their joining our ranks.

The holiday season is upon us. Hopefully many of you will join us at our traditional annual holiday meeting. In any event, herewith our good wishes for a joyous holiday season, followed by a peaceful and happy new year. Let's think snow, and enjoy an injury-free season of skiing and riding. And let's be thankful for our well-being.

With my warm holiday greetings, and special thanks to those members who so conscientiously contribute to our being the group we are.

David

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Tuesday, December 20, 2005
7:30 PM

Judy Macaluso's

2011 Rosemont Ave. N.W.
(Mount Pleasant area, DC)

The parking lot across the street is now open.

Carpool if you can.
202 - 265 - 4903

Holiday Party



****BRING****

**an hors
d'oeuvre'
or
dessert
to share.**



Directions to Macaluso's

Traveling North on Connecticut Avenue, turn right onto Porter Street.
Traveling South on Connecticut Avenue, turn left onto Porter Street.

NOTE: Porter Street changes its name (invisibly) to Klinge Road about 1/4 mile after you turn onto Porter.

Once on Porter Street, the first light comes up immediately. Go through that light. The second light is about 1/2 mile down the hill, at Adams Mill Road. About 30 feet past that light, on the left, is Rosemount Avenue. Turn left onto Rosemount Avenue.

2011 Rosemount Avenue is the first row house on the right. **202 – 265 - 4903**

You can park on the street or in the Rosemount Center parking lot directly across from our house.
Remember: Bring a favorite goodie to share.



Corrections needed to the new roster sent to you last month:

- Tom Aguilar's ZIP Code got truncated by dropping the leading zero -- it should be **07960**.
- Nancy Monacelli's e-mail address needs to have an "n" added in front of what is there; i.e., **nmonacelli@comcast.net**
- Nancy Monacelli's ZIP Code has a spurious "dash" in front of it -- it should be **20744**.
- Sharon Mulholland's ZIP Code has a spurious "dash" in front of it -- it should be **20878**.
- Cherie Stallman's ZIP Code got truncated by dropping the final digit -- it should be **22311**.
- Dina Taylor's address is listed incorrectly – it should be:
5000 Queen Philomena Blvd., Apt. 229
Schenectady, NY 12304 *Note: We do not have a new telephone number for Dina*
- Geoff Wadey's ZIP Code got truncated by dropping the leading zero -- it should be **02066**.
- Terry Waldbeesser's post office name is misspelled as McClean -- it should be McLean.
- Penny Hanshaw's sons, Doug and Greg, and families bought Penny a hi-speed Internet connection and a new computer. Her new email address is: phanshaw@ouraynet.com



Ski Helmets

At the October meeting we announced the possibility of obtaining ski helmets at a bargain price through Ski Club of Washington, DC (SCWDC). Unfortunately SCWDC was inundated with interest from other clubs and members. So we were unable to work out the logistics of borrowing the samples to show PVS members colors and sizes.

Mike Strand

SKI LIBERTY MOUNTAIN - DECEMBER 21

5

Anybody interested in a day of local skiing before the holidays, should contact **Charles Huggins** at **(301-424-5725)** so we can form car pools. If you wish to drive your own car, contact Charles so the group can look for you at Liberty Mountain Resort. Lift tickets for 4 hrs. are \$36.00; for 8 hrs. are \$41.00. Those 65+ ski for half price. If anybody has free lift tickets from the Dulles Ski and Snowboard Show (Nov. 11-13), this is a good time to use them before they expire.



December/Easy Hikes led by members of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club

Several PVsers regularly attend. For details and carpooling call Dave or Carolyn at 703-370-4865.

December 7 (Wednesday)

National Arboretum, DC

The Easy Hikers will hike about four easy miles through the Arboretum. Meet at 10:15 a.m. Bring lunch and water.

December 14 (Wednesday)

Glover Archbold Trail, DC

Easy 4 miles along Foundry Branch; Van Ness St, NW to Georgetown. Lunch in Georgetown. Holiday decorations.

December 21 (Wednesday)

Derwood, MD

Meet at 10:15 a.m. at the Shady Grove Metro Station. We will walk a total of about 5 miles. Buy lunch

December 28 (Wednesday)

The Ellipse to Union Station

A 4.5-mile hike; The Ellipse to Union Station. Meet at 10:15 a.m. Enjoy holiday decorations. Buy lunch U. Station.



ZOO WALK 'N LUNCH

Wednesday, Feb 8, 2005 10:30 AM

Starting Point: National Zoo, Education Building, which is the first building on entering from Connecticut Ave. NW.



Route: Join us on this popular annual February Zoo Walk followed by lunch. Hopefully, we will get to see the new baby panda as well as take a docent-guided tour. Generally there are few visitors at this time so that both the animals and docents will be glad to see you.

Lunch: A special lunch will be available at the nearby home of Betty Byrne (one mile from zoo) for the first ten zoo walkers who place their reservation (no limit and no reservations needed for those participating in zoo walk only).

Information: Luncheon reservations can be made by calling Betty at (202) 483-4048. Further information can be requested by email at zoo@potomacvalleyski.org
Additional information will be placed in the January issue of TOOT.

Washington Nationals Baseball Tickets Available



Our group has 4 season tickets together. Great seats! Just under cover (no rain), in the shade, and near First Base: Section 306, Row 2, Seats 8 thru 11. Go to www.nationals.com for a seating diagram. This year the seats were \$25 each.

Due to turnover, we have available for the 2006 season, 2 seats for up to 30 games. We will accept as few as (2 seats at) 5 games. So, for a 5 game "subscription" you could have 4 seats at 2 games and 2 seats at 1 game.

For questions or to express your interest, contact Mike Strand at 301/468-1535 or hrdyna@aol.com

PVS is going to the Hexagon Show Again

Wednesday evening, March 15th 2006, at 8:00 PM

Each year, the Hexagon Club puts on a hilarious show of political satire and musical numbers.



Similar to that by the "Capitol Steps." All of the show's participants are volunteers and proceeds are donated to a charity. We are going again on the most popular night - Congressional night - since it was great fun last year. The show is in the Duke Ellington School for the Performing Arts in Georgetown. We have just 20 tickets and each is \$20.00. We expect to sell out soon. (No group dinner prior to show.)

If you are interested in attending this show, please send a check for \$20 per ticket to Margaret S. Wyckoff (made payable to her)

8100 Park Crest Drive

Silver Spring, D 20910

In case of cancellation, a refund will ONLY be issued if a substitute is found. For questions, call Margaret at 301-589-5532.

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|---|---|---|
| | <p>EXPRESSION OF INTEREST NEEDED NOW!!!</p> | <p>PVS Goes to the Theatre ♦ Broadway's Smash Hit June 9 or 16, 2006</p> |
| <p>The Broadway production won 7 Tony Awards in 2005, including Best Play and Best Comedy. Now starting its second sold-out year on Broadway, this multimillion-dollar production is coming to Washington's National Theater next summer.</p> | <p>PVS has a unique opportunity to get tickets, and at group rates at the National Theater for this smash, Tony Award Winning musical. We're going to one of 2 Friday Evening performances at 8:00 pm either June 9 or 16, 2006. When tickets are available (sometime this fall) we will need to act rapidly. Call Ray or Nancy McKinley now (703) 527-7126 to express interest (not a commitment). Or e-mail to nmckinley@convera.com. Please let us know if either Friday is OK. Prices are not yet set but are expected to be around \$90 for orchestra. They are \$150 each on Broadway. The show is expected to run from June 7 to July 9, 2006.</p> | |



The "Holiday Bells" cover was designed by Nancy Monacelli in 1966 for the December Toot and was printed in green ink. This was, technically, the second December issue and had 8 pages, whereas the December 1965 issue had less than one page. Nancy is a graphic artist and also designed the Christmas Tree motif cover familiar to most of us.



40th Anniversary Celebration

Potomac Valley Skiers *November 5, 2005*

[Web link to pictures~~~http://pvskiers.photosite.com/40thBanquet/](http://pvskiers.photosite.com/40thBanquet/)

Kudos to Rachel Abraham and her committee colleagues for organizing a truly memorable celebration of PVS's fortieth anniversary! It was an evening of nostalgia and fun attended by about 89 members, including the Clarks, Klines, and Sharers from what now has to be considered the PVS Williamsburg chapter, as well as Charlie Gordon from Texas, Irene and Jack Ragen from Arizona, and the Hensleys from West Virginia

Following a lot of good finger food and drinks reception replete with good conversations and camaraderie, we adjourned to an adjoining room for a truly excellent dinner prepared by the chefs of The Bolger Center. Our Master of Ceremonies for the evening, David Abraham, after welcoming remarks, called for a moment of silence in tribute to recently deceased PVS members.

Following dinner, David introduced Reg Heitchue who in turn called on Glade Flake and Larry Pease, two founding members of PVS, to share their recollections of their 40 years of membership in PVS. In his introductions of them, Reg noted their many decades of leadership and contributions to the skiing public as members of the National Ski Patrol. We learned a lot about PVS's early years from them. Because the early membership was rather small, there was opportunity for such activities as on-hill skiing instruction and safety clinics for members. Larry Pease, for example, provided clinics on the care and maintenance of ski equipment.

Following their presentations, we had a dessert break and then remarks by Ray McKinley about PVS and its' enrichment of his life (and each of ours). Ray brought with him PVS memorabilia, including an old PVS Cookbook that on page 54 included a hilarious Lu Beale recipe for elephant stew that Ray read to us.

We were then entertained by the PVS Singers - Marty Rine and Jan and Bob Marx - followed by a Marvin Haas slide show of PVS ski trips and other activities. Door prizes were awarded by Rachel Abraham, and her husband then closed the evening's wonderful celebration of PVS's 40th year. It was a happy bunch that then got in their cars and drove home.

by Bob McNeill

40TH ANNIVERSARY DOOR PRIZES

The Anniversary Committee is overwhelmed with the generosity of the following businesses. We appreciate their interest in our club and their benefaction to make our 40th celebration truly memorable.

SKI CENTER

ASPEN - SNOWMASS

RADISSON INN, PARK CITY, UTAH

BELLFAYRE MOUNTAIN, N.Y.

LIBERTY MOUNTAIN RESORT

WINTERGREEN RESORT

SNOW SHOE MOUNTAIN

ENCOMPASSE TOURS AND DELTA AIRLINES

SPORTSTOURS

WHITETAIL RESORT

SPORTS AUTHORITY - Gaithersburg

WISP DEEP CREEK MOUNTAIN RESORT

SKI CHALET - Gaithersburg

DICK'S SPORTING GOODS

CANADIAN MOUNTAIN HOLIDAYS

8 Chili Hike

by Bob Harmon



According to Ray, a few new records were set this year in the 20-year history of the chili hike: the best weather ever; the best chili ever (I don't think any of us who partook of it would dispute that!); and the smallest turnout ever for the hike. Only 14 of us made the nearly 5-mile hike, or 15 if we count Hoppy, Jim and Mary's little poodle (and why shouldn't we count him!). Hoppy was the only one in the group who seemed to have as much energy at the end of the hike as at the beginning!

After the hike we went to the McKinleys' for the main event. Ray greeted us clad in a serape and sombrero, attire appropriate for Mexican fare, prompting Kirk Burns to refer to him as a

"happy chappie in a serape." As a matter of interest, Ray told me that to make the chili he cooked 12 pounds of USDA choice beef every night from Tuesday to Saturday, putting it in the refrigerator during the day. In addition to the chili, Mary Beale's sour cherry pie was worthy of special note. Actually I'm not sure if it should be called pie or cake--it seemed to me like a cross between the two, but in any case it was superb. (Fortunately she made two of them!) As always, there were also several excellent salads. After the meal, most of us lingered a while, chatting around the gas fire in the fireplace.

Many thanks to Nancy and Ray for once again hosting this most enjoyable event.

What is new in skiing hardware?

November Meeting

Brian Eardley told us all about it.

Some tidbits: **Companies:** Amer (owns Atomic) bought Salomon. Nordica was sold, then bought back by the original owner for half of selling price (\$600 million) after the second owner grossly mismanaged it. Quiksilver sportswear bought the Rossignol conglomerate. Ninth Ward of CA is the only ski manufacturing company still in US. **Goggles:** Marker offers a new strong, undistorted lens. **Boots:** Head has a boot with more fitting options; they are good for people with knee injuries and back problems. **Bindings:** More skis are coming with binding systems. Nordica has a plate on the ski that puts pressure onto the front of the ski even if your weight is back. **Skis:** Fat skies are still the best for powder and junk. Stocki Storm Rider DP has one edge of each ski cut for powder, and the other for packed -- just switch feet - so you have skies mountaineering and alpine. There are soft skies for ladies. Twin tips are popular and, Brian said, very relaxing to ski on. Atomic is into nanotechnology; Rossignol and Fisher are into carving skies, which are fatter with a lot of side cut; **Poles:** K2 makes fiberglass with leather grip and *bling*.



Ingrid welcomed us to her lovely home set among big old trees in a large yard. She provided a variety of snacks and munchies for us in her spacious living room/dining/room. Drinks were available at the bar in the lower level, next to the rec room where the meeting was held. Coffee and dessert concluded our informative gathering.

We thank Ingrid for her gracious hospitality.

Scandinavian Smörgåsbord!

Scandinavia shines in the winter! The major tourist attractions—even the outdoor parks—remain open and invite visitors to enjoy without the crowds of summer. Our winter's trip will be perfect for skiers and sightseers alike covering the highlights of three different countries, in 5 Star Luxury--a true Scandinavian Smörgåsbord. Maybe our best trip ever! Scenery is fantastic and every day starts with a superb, full, Scandinavian breakfast. Our ski area, *Hafjell*, at **Lillehammer**, is the location of the major 1994 Olympic ski events, with over 15 miles of runs for all levels, 13 lifts and over a 2,800-foot vertical.

Sightseers can visit Lillehammer's many museums including the Olympic Museum and the famous star of the Olympic torch, the *Svalbard* on the coast of Norway. Stay 3 nights at the *Hotel de Ville* in the heart of the city. Those on the *Hotel de Ville* will see the *Oslo*.

After Oslo, we fly to Scandinavia's largest and oldest capitol, **Stockholm**, Sweden built on 14 islands, centered on the 14th century, captivating *Gamla Stan*, a former fortress now a rabbit warren of narrow, cobbled streets, with shops and boutiques selling the very latest in *haute couture* to antiques.

From Stockholm, we take an overnight cruise across the Baltic Sea on a huge cruise ship-600 feet long with 12 decks, ballrooms, multiple restaurants and private suites-to historic, medieval **Tallinn**, the capital of Estonia, part of the former USSR. We're certain you'll love it. Its mostly-intact city wall has 29 stone 12th Century watchtowers, each topped by a red tile roof. With cobblestone streets and lots of unique shops, it's a great place! We cruise back to Stockholm and sadly, return home on March 6.

What about temperature and light? In Lillehammer, March temperatures average 30° F daytime and 25° F at night. In the other capital cities, on the water, the temps are warmer. In Stockholm, in March, sunrise is at 6:30 am and sunset at 5:40 pm for a total of 11 hrs and 10 min. This is only a few minutes less sunlight than Big Sky, Montana on the same date.

The full, luxury 18-day trip is \$3,981 pp, double occupancy, including airfare, hotels, all breakfasts, dinners in Lillehammer and two overnight cruises. Our 11-day package, returning to the US on February 28, costs \$2,723. We look forward to a great See and Ski Trip and hope you'll join us! For more info call us at (703) 527-7126. Or e-mail nmckinley@convera.com. To sign up, send your check for \$2200 to Ray McKinley. Mail to McKinleys, 2326 N. Upton Street, Arlington, VA 22207-4045.



PVS ON THE INTERNET

The retrospective photo slide show presented at the PVS 40th anniversary banquet at the Bolger Center can be viewed at the web site

<http://www.pvskiers.photosite.com/pvs40th>

Photos from the banquet itself can be viewed at the web site

<http://www.pvskiers.photosite.com/40thbanquet>

Those with DSL or cable connections can then access full screen images by clicking on "View Slide Show." Those with dial up connections are better served by viewing the photos manually by clicking on "Next" or "Previous."

By the way, in many cases, those receiving TOOT by e-mail should realize that active "links" are present in most cases in the online editions in the Microsoft WORD and PDF formats; it is only necessary to place the mouse arrow on the URL, follow any popup instructions or left click.



Val Gardena & Munich

March 3 – March 14

- ❖ 16 people have signed up for the trip to Val Gardena and Munich -- We can still accommodate a few more – call quickly!
- ❖ Betty and I just returned from a trip to Germany and Italy to visit the trip sites.
- ❖ A short travelogue:

It is cold in Val Gardena; they were making snow and planned to open for skiing by the 26th of November. The mountains are beautiful, and I now understand why it has received such good press. School is taught in both Italian and German, so everyone is bilingual, English is widely spoken as the normal foreign language. I didn't get to use my German because their English was far superior.

The hotel in Santa Cristina looks great and has a fantastic reputation; it conveniently has a bus stop right at the front door for easy commuting.

We loved the old city of Bolzano; every turn was another post card look. We visited the museum that housed Oetzi, the 5,000 year old ice man who was found in the Alps in 1991. It is a worth at least a day of your time.

Munich also was great. Our hotel is a block and a half from Marienplatz, so it is centrally positioned. The outdoor bier gardens were closed because it was cold and snowy, but they should be reopened by our return in mid March. Betty and I had Weiner Schnitzel 3 times in 3 days. We, as usual, enjoyed the city. There is a lot to do and see, and the food is great.

Come join us March 3 – March 14, for 7 days in Val Gardena with super skiing, and 3 days in Munich. \$2,166 gets you great sights, good times, and lots of fantastic food. Start your diet when you return.



WINTER PARK RESORT
COLORADO'S FAVORITE®

Needed: One Male and One couple.

Tuesday, March 28 – Tuesday, April 4, 2006

Enjoy Spring Skiing at its best with Dave Lerner and Jan Marx.

Winter Park is one of Colorado's oldest and largest ski resorts and we will be spending 7 nights at the luxury Zephyr Mountain Lodge at the base of the lifts. The package also includes round trip air transportation on United, lift tickets for a full 6 days (not the usual 5), ground transfer on a deluxe chartered bus, 3 group dinners, after ski parties, a pre-trip party, baggage handling at the resorts, and tips and current taxes for all of the above.

The Zephyr Mountain Lodge is Winter Park's premier ski-in ski-out lodging accommodation. It is an all-condo property and we have reserved two bedroom – two bath units with a fully equipped kitchen. One bedroom has a king bed, and the other has twin beds. (Living room hide-a-beds will NOT be used.) All units have VCRs and free high-speed data ports. ***We may be able to accept additional signups if we can get units at the Zephyr Mountain Lodge.**

The mountain has a great selection of runs from easy cruisers to challenging steps on the newer Mary Jane area. There is a 3,060 foot vertical drop covering 2,770 acres. There are 24 lifts, including 8 high-speed quads. Snowmobile tours, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and ice skating are also available.

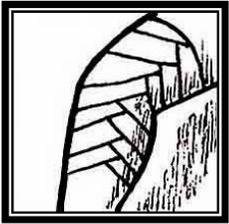
Value pricing is part of the Spring scene and we are able to offer the entire package for only \$1,160. There will be a substantial discount for senior lift tickets (details not yet available).

A full trip flier is available on the web at: <http://members.cox.net/dlerner1/WinterParkFlyer.html>

Call Dave Lerner at 703-281-6923 for more info or send e-mail to dslerner@ieee.org or Jebbmarx@aol.com

For more information call 571 426-3098 or e-mail me at

dick.comerford@adelphia.net



THE KNEE

By Ray McKinley

It's only four years and eleven months to our 45th Ankneeverary. Everyone of the almost one hundred of us who attended the glorious 40th celebration last month already has the next event on his or her calendar. This was the most expensive event in the last five years, the most elaborate and the best-attended. Kudos to David and Rachel Abraham, and their committee.

Let me remiknees a bit, and compare to our 10th Ankneeverary celebration that was my first with PVS. The 10th was also in November, and I believe it was about 30 years ago. Compared to then, we are older, grayer and balder. But, for the most part, we aren't noticeably fatter—perhaps because skiing is good for you and keeps you in shape.

Many more PVSers are retired, and quite a few have moved out of the area. We race less and smoke less—and dance less. We also enjoy our creature comforts more, and have the wherewithal to afford them. Overall it's a great group of people to know. Although no longer available, my favorite soda then was Knee Hi.

First tracks of the season: Bob McNeill and Charlie Huggins took off for Colorado in early November. They skied at Copper Mountain on November 11, with Huey Roberts. It was Huey's 14th day of skiing this season! Huey now owns 22 pair of skis, so he can only ski 8 more days before he will have to repeat—or get more skis.

A tip of the ol' kneecap to applicant Joanna Walker. She has just joined hubby Bruno in the growing ranks of the retired.

More on the 40th: There were 5 separate events, at 5 separate locations at the Bolger Center that night. Suzanne Boisclair started out at the wrong event, had a few hors d'oeuvres (“They weren't as good as PVS”), and finally found us. And, according to Pat Vagonis, Bill Marriott (as in THE Marriott) popped in, had a *canapé*, realized he was at the wrong reception, and left. Kneedless to say, Bill Marriott did NOT spend the night at the Bolger.

PVS’ December hostess and DC Superior Court Judge Judy Macaluso was at the event. However she was the judge “on call” for

the evening. Were someone arrested, she would leave to arraign him. Luckily, no one was.

In one of the Bolger Center's rooms there were rocking chairs. It must be for old people, quipped Gene Sharer

As one of PVS' founding members, Glade Flake was about to give a talk, he couldn't find his glasses, so as to see his notes. (Later, a Prince Valiant-coifed Larry Pease spoke without notes.) After looking everywhere, David Abraham lent Glade his specs. But Howard Hensley's worked better. It's rumored that Bill Marriott walked off with Glade's glasses.

Glade noted that he had two hips replaced and was about to have two knees replaced (perhaps in Tukneesia?) just like Bob McNeill. Bob chimed in that he had had three knees replaced. (Perhaps in Threekneesia?)

It was great to have Irene and Jack Ragen in from Arizona for the event. And also Charlie Gordon from Texas

At the PVS 40th, our shift from Beer to Wine was mentioned. We've gone farther. Now in addition to beer and wine we do Metamucil!

Long time PVSer and Colorado resident Penny Hanshaw is now recovering nicely from knee surgery. Ray Jones is, too. He's now walking without a cane. But no skiing this season for either Penny or Ray.

Local ski news: The back (aka powder) bowls at Liberty are not yet open. The “Over the Hill Gang” ran into liability insurance problems. So the international organization had to drop all of its local franchises. Thus, our local group is now the Capital Golden Skiers. Nice folks.

John Smith had a business trip to Cape Town. Pat Tengel came along. Bill and Susan Brown are also back—from a trip to Prague. They wanted to Czech it out.

As we had our November meeting at Ingrid Monaghan's, there was another PVS meeting. The Williamsburg group—PVS South also held a meeting. It included Dick and Marilyn Clark, Gene and Wilma Sharer, Jim and Charlotte Kline, and Don and Marijane Harper.

But they didn't have Brian Eardley to tell them the latest ski news. A new West Virginia Ski area is now in the works—called “Almost Heaven.” And sub-miniaturized nanotechnology is now into skis. They are very, very short!

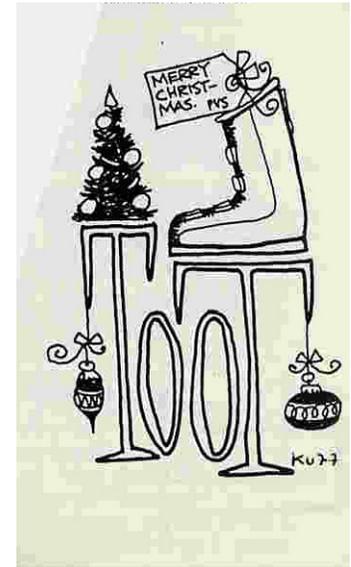
There was plenty of wine at the meeting. Hostess Ingrid Monaghan asked hubby Jim to pick up 4 or 5 bottles of wine. He got 5 cases!

Calendar 2005-2006

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Dec 6 | Free Concert – “Stan Kenton Christmas” - Kennedy Center |
| Dec 20 | Monthly Holiday meeting at Macaluso’s (DC) |
| Dec 21 | **Ski at Liberty. Call Charlie Huggins – 301-424 – 5725. |
| Jan 10 | December/January ExCom at Marx’s |
| Jan 15 | Scandinavian pre-trip party at McKinley’s. 4:00 pm. |
| Jan 17 | Monthly Meeting at June Read-Martin’s |
| Jan...18-20 | **WISP Demo Day trip |
| Feb 8 | Zoo walk, Wednesday |
| Feb 21 | Monthly Meeting at Mary Beale’s |
| Feb 28 | ExCom |
| Mar 15 | Hexagon |
| Mar 21 | Monthly Meeting at Ufholz’s |
| Mar 28 | ExCom |
| April | Frank Shelburne Memorial Hike |
| April 18 | Annual Meeting at Leonhardt’s |
| June 9 or 15 | Friday – <i>Spamalot</i> – National Theatre |

2006 SKI TRIPS

| | | |
|------------------|-------------|---|
| January 19-26 | Snowmass | wait listed |
| February 2-9 | Telluride | wait listed |
| Feb 17-March 5 | Scandinavia | space may be available |
| March 3-11 | Val Gardena | space available |
| March 27-April 3 | Winter Park | need a single male. Additional sign ups possible. |



Change of postal or e-mail address:

Call Pat Vagonis at (301) 838-5545
or send e-mail message to
pvagonis@comcast.net

E-mail Notice

If you want to start receiving Toot electronically, or change the e-format you receive, please let me know.
Thanks, Jan = jebbmarx@aol.com.

Old Toots

If anyone is missing issues of Toots from their collection, I may have them. I have organized the Historian Box and have spares of most issues.

AFTER DECEMBER 31, 2005, THE SPARES WILL BE RECYCLED.

Gift Idea = "Any Damn Fool Can Be A Farmer" by our very own Bob Knopes.

Kitty Imdahl, a member of PVS at one time – now a member of Columbia Ski Club, (and coordinator for the BRSC 2007 "Big Sky" trip) says in an e-mail, "**Please wish all the Potomac Valley Skiers a happy 40th Anniversary!**"



For those of you who do not have e-mail, this is the most recent letter from PVSer Bill Hager relating his stay and travels in Jordan. Bill periodically sends beautifully written of some of his experiences observations from all corners of the earth.

Hello PVSers,

I'm just about to conclude nine weeks in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, a bastion of stability and tranquility in the Middle East - up until the hotel bombings a week ago. Those Jordanians who sympathized with insurgents in Iraq who fought to throw out foreign occupiers have suddenly realized that they are just as much a target as the Americans, and the Jordanian people have rallied in the streets to denounce terrorism of all stripes. It's rather nice to be in a country where Americans are liked and terrorists are despised.

Otherwise, Jordan indeed is an oasis in this region. It's been a sort of R&R for me, a far cry from Qandahar, Islamabad, and Sana'a. I haven't been as busy as I like, but on the other hand, it's been pleasant to enjoy chances for sightseeing. Jordan offers wonderful and fascinating sites for the visitor, and I've found time to take advantage of some free days to visit them. The weather has been just incredible, better than I ever imagined. Mostly warm days with blue skies, low humidity, little pollution (despite plenty of ill-maintained vehicles spewing black clouds of smoke), and refreshingly cool at night.

Amman is one of the oldest cities in the world. The area has been inhabited for thousands of years, although the hill overlooking downtown was only fortified in 1800 BC. By 1200 BC, the Ammonites established a kingdom here, with their capital of Rabbath Ammon on this spot. The Ammonites were bitter enemies of the Israelites, and are mentioned many times in the Bible, starting with the Book of Genesis. This region boasts rich agricultural lands in the Jordan Valley, and is a crossroads for trade, sitting astride the ancient spice routes. Alexander the Great established a Hellenistic empire including Jordan, then the Romans conquered the region, followed by a succession of Islamic caliphates, the Ottoman Empire, and finally, in 1921, with the backing of the British, Emir Abdullah chose Amman as the capital of the new Emirate of Transjordan (meaning on the other side of the Jordan River).

By the time Abdullah showed up, Amman had been abandoned for centuries, with only Bedouin herdsman grazing flocks in the semi arid hills. In the late 19th century, Muslim Circassians from the Black Sea area of Russia, oppressed by Orthodox Tsars, migrated to the Middle East and settled in the abandoned area of Amman, establishing farms and building a small settlement, using the tumbled down stones from the great Greco-Roman city of Philadelphia, rebuilt and renamed in the 4th century BC by Ptolemy II Philadelphus as the "city of brotherly love". From those humble beginnings, modern Amman rose to become a great and modern city of nearly two million inhabitants. It's a thoroughly 20th century capital, with none of the history or grandeur of neighboring Damascus, Jerusalem, or Cairo.

I'm in a five star hotel in West Amman, home of business, banking, industrial and service enterprises, government buildings, embassies, and the ostentatious villas of the wealthy. Most people wear western dress, English is commonly heard, and woman in traditional garb are an oddity. Two miles away, down Rainbow Street, lies East Amman, crowded, dirty, noisy, with narrow, winding streets, many men wearing traditional galabeyas and women in western clothing only rarely seen. I walked there from my hotel one Saturday, and it was like entering into another city, still living in the middle ages - except for the buses and cell phones. My destination was the Roman theatre, the best preserved remnant of Philadelphia's glory days as one of the cities of the Decapolis (the ten cities), the great Roman commercial and cultural centers of Syria and Jordan. There are a few columns from the Temple of Hercules still standing in solitary splendor on top of the fortified hill, with its massive walls still intact in places, and the ruins of an 8th century Umayyid palace built on the site of a Christian cathedral, following the Islamic conquest of the region, but that's about it for ancient Amman.

Amman is situated on a hilly plateau at about 2500', more desert than farmland, but with a delightful climate. The city is built on hills and along the steep sides of the wadis (dry canyons) that separate them. Urban planning was conspicuously absent as the city expanded rapidly, following the arrival of waves of refugees, including Palestinians fleeing the establishment of Israel and subsequent wars, and Iraqis from two wars. Traffic is chaotic, especially around the traffic circles at many large intersections, and a lot of drivers were riding camels a few years ago. SUV's jostle for right of way with the ubiquitous yellow taxis. The narrow roads twist and wind up and down the steep walls of the wadis, and you look at the houses and apartment buildings being constructed on these slopes, and wonder how long before the rains undermine their foundations and they slide down the hill. Amman is surprisingly clean, especially for the Arab world, and most structures are built of concrete pillars (no forests here, and wood is expensive), filled in with concrete blocks, then faced with honey-colored limestone blocks, giving the city overall a very attractive appearance.

I headed one morning for the Dead Sea, 60 miles away and 1200' below sea level, the lowest spot on earth. En route, I stopped at Bethany Beyond the Jordan. Remarkably, both archaeologists and biblical scholars agree that

this was the spot where John the Baptist baptized Christ. Two thousand years ago, this was a calm backwater of the Jordan River. Today the river has shifted to the west a few hundred meters, and it's a dry, wide spot in a wadi, with the remnants of early Christian shrines and churches overlooking the baptismal site. Visually, it's rather disappointing, but historically and religiously, it's hugely important. We walked over to the mighty Jordan River, so famous throughout history, but now a shallow, muddy stream meandering from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea, hardly worthy to be the boundary between Jordan and Israel. The Jordan River valley is a rich agricultural area, whose vegetables and fruits are much prized by housewives on both sides of the border.

I then drove over to the Dead Sea, only a few miles distant. It's a different world from Amman, hot and humid, with a perpetual haze hanging over the water, surrounded by steep, bone-dry hills, occasional salty beaches, all brutally lifeless - except for some beachside resorts. The Dead Sea is shrinking, losing millions of litres a day to evaporation, while inflows of fresh water, mostly from the Jordan River, have been sharply reduced by the demands of irrigation on both sides of the border. There's a scheme afoot to dig a trench from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea, to provide enough new water to stem the current net loss of water, and there's a good chance it will come to fruition, as Jordan and Israel are in agreement on the need to do something, or this incredible natural wonder will vanish. Many visitors come to take advantage of the therapeutically proven benefits of the water and mud, rich in essential minerals for the skin. I opted to purchase some Dead Sea body lotion, instead.

Jerash, another great city of the Decapolis, lies an hour's drive north of Amman, on a good highway. It is one of the best preserved, most dramatic and explorable Roman cities in the Middle East, and its monumental and sophisticated public buildings attract many visitors. I spent a relaxing day strolling and photographing the excavated and reconstructed city. Just inside the monumental gate, one steps into the oval plaza, enclosed by two curving colonnades, creating one of the most impressive pieces of Roman urban design in the world. The half mile-long main thoroughfare, also lined with tall columns, leads from the plaza through the central part of the city. On both sides are magnificent remnants of impressive public buildings, markets and fountains. Jerash has two well preserved theatres, as well as a hippodrome, all still used for performances.

The King's Highway runs the length of the Jordan River Valley, and on to Aqaba, Jordan's only port, on the Red Sea. The Highway traverses a rich agricultural region, dotted with towns and farms, and has existed for many hundreds of years; it is mentioned in the Bible. Madaba is an important farming and commercial city lying astride the Highway, less than an hour from Amman, and is famous for its mosaics. I drove there one Saturday to see its renowned floor-laid mosaics, uncovered in the homes of the wealthy and in churches from the Byzantine period. Most famous is the fabulous mosaic map of the Holy Land, created in the 6th century in a Byzantine church. The original mosaic was nearly 50' long by 20' wide, and depicted all the cities and religious sites of the region in great detail in 3D style. The fragments that remain are still impressive, and the gates of Jerusalem are not much changed today from what they looked like at that time. Other excavated houses and churches contain even more striking mosaics with marvelous details and still vibrant colors.

Leaving Madaba, I headed to nearby Mt Nebo, the spot from which Moses was shown the Promised Land by God, on the opposite side of the Jordan River, and the single most important biblical site in Jordan, with a unique resonance for Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike. Although it's impossible to prove that this indeed is the exact spot on which Moses stood, it has been a pilgrimage destination since the dawn of Christianity, with remains of early churches dating back to the first century after Christ's death. The site was abandoned in the 16th century, as the entire region declined in importance and the population moved elsewhere. In 1933 the Franciscans purchased the site and commenced excavation, and today you can see probably the most striking floor mosaic in the area, surrounding the ancient baptistry. The view towards the Promised Land - Israel - is obscured by the haze lying over the Dead Sea, but perhaps the wind blew away the haze for the benefit of Moses.

Twenty years ago, while serving in Cairo, I came over to Jordan for the specific purpose of visiting Petra, the glorious capital of the Nabateans in southern Jordan. I skipped going there this trip, expecting that I may return to Jordan, and Kathy can come with me. Petra is truly worth a voyage. I had also visited Amman on the same trip, but the city has more than doubled in size the past twenty years, and except for the Roman theatre, I did not recognize the place. Jerash, too, has changed since my last visit, as more excavation has taken place and additional buildings have been restored. People think of Egypt and Israel when considering a tour to the Middle East, but Jordan has much to offer and would be a worthwhile addition to any itinerary.

This has been a good trip, and I enjoyed getting back to the Middle East, especially to a more civilized and tolerant country like Jordan. I may return in the spring, but that's a long way off. There's a ski season just around the corner, which I'm looking forward to. Snow is sparse so far in the mountains around Lake Tahoe, but there's still plenty of time for a couple of big storms to drop a few feet of snow before the holidays. Jordan is not a ski destination, unless you like schussing down sand dunes. I hope all is well with you, and look forward to hearing from you. Cheers, Bill

"The moral high ground offers the best field of fire."