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*Potomac Valley Skiers, Inc.*  
WASHINGTON MARYLAND VIRGINIA

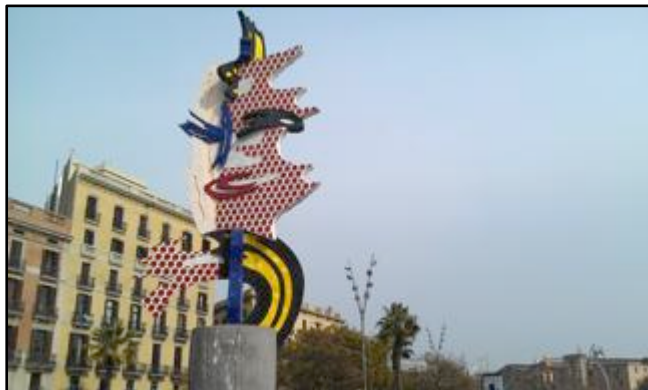
APRIL 2012

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### President's Message:

I am writing this column a week after our return from the whirlwind PVS trip to Barcelona and Andorra (we did not go to Madrid). My focus today is on the Barcelona portion of the trip. Bob and I had been to Barcelona two prior times, and had already seen some of the major sights. Nonetheless, there is much to see and do in Barcelona, and we enjoyed revisiting sights that we had previously seen, and discovering new parts of the city.



Barcelona is a beautiful city, with a multitude of tourist attractions, and is a wonderful walking city. Of particular significance and uniqueness, Barcelona is home to the fantastic architectural gems of Antoni Gaudi. The most famous Gaudi building is the yet unfinished Basilica of the

Sagrada Familia. This immense church, started as a neo-Gothic edifice in the late 1800s, is a masterpiece that is beyond description in the complexity of its forms and art. As one of the leaders of the Art Nouveau style, Gaudi not only based his novel structural designs on



naturally occurring forms, but also used themes from nature in the decoration of his buildings. For example, in the Sagrada Familia, Gaudi decorated the exterior of the building, not with traditional Gothic gargoyles, but with lizards, frogs and other reptiles, and topped the towers with wheat ears, lavender, palm leaves, olive and cypress. The interior of the building is largely complete, with its soaring columns, reminiscent of leaning tree trunks, and beautiful stained glass windows. On the exterior, two of the three facades are completed and eight towers have been built; ultimately the building will have eighteen towers, and is expected to be the world's highest religious building. A visit to Barcelona is not complete without visiting the interior of the Sagrada Familia, as well as seeing the exterior.

*--Cont. on page 2*

### **PVS Annual Meeting**

***Tuesday, April 17, 2012, 7:30 PM***

***Reston Town Center***

***Midtown Condo Party Room***

***11990 Market Street, Reston, VA 20190***

***Host: Reg Heitchue, 703-437-7611***

***heitchu@yahoo.com***

Join fellow PVSers at the annual business meeting, which will involve the election of officers for the coming year, the voting process for applicant members, and the perennially favorite social hour with friends.

Please **BRING** a favorite appetizer (A to L surname) or dessert (M to Z surname) to share. Beverages will be provided. As we are in a party room, please take your platter and whatever is left over home with you. If you wish to help, contact Melissa FitzGerald, 703-476-9259 or [thediehlhouse@gmail.com](mailto:thediehlhouse@gmail.com).

*--Melissa FitzGerald*

*Directions on page 2--*

**Annual Meeting cont. from page 1—**

Directions from the beltway:

- Take Route 267 West (toll road)
- Take exit 12 (Reston Parkway) and turn right at the end of the exit ramp
- Turn left at 2<sup>nd</sup> light onto Bluemont Way
- Go 2 blocks and turn right on Liberty Street
- Go 1 block and turn left on Market Street
- Midtown Condominium is on the right at 11990 Market Street
- Free valet parking at the front door (tips appreciated, but not necessary)
- The valet or concierge will direct PVSers to the Party Room upstairs



**A Treasure drawing will be held – see page 10**

We will be **VOTING** for the following Candidate Officers & ExCom positions, and Applicant Members:

Profiles of Candidates for Office	Profiles of Applicant Members
<i>President</i> , Cara <b>Jablon</b> , March '12 TOOT, p. 6	Ann <b>Cummins</b> , October '11 TOOT, p. 7
<i>Vice President</i> , Bob <b>Knopes</b> , March '12 TOOT, p. 7	Jane <b>Dealy</b> , April '12 TOOT, see Members' Corner, p. 6
<i>ExCom</i> , Carolyn Mauer <b>DeVilbiss</b> , March '12 TOOT, p. 7	Susan <b>Ives</b> , April '12 TOOT, see Members' Corner, p. 6
<i>ExCom</i> , Louann <b>Eadie</b> , March '12 TOOT, p. 7	Corinne <b>Moore</b> , November '11 TOOT, p. 8
<i>ExCom</i> , Liz <b>Warren-Boulton</b> , March '12 TOOT, p. 8	Cathy <b>Sands</b> , April '12 TOOT, see Members' Corner, p. 6

**--Nancy McKinley (Nominating Committee Chair)**

**President's Message cont. from page 1—**

Another must-see Gaudi opus is the Park Guell, with its undulating abstract mosaic-covered serpentine bench and large mosaic dragon on the main stairway. At the bottom of the park are two delightful buildings which look like cottages direct from Hansel and Gretel – one can almost feel the presence of the wicked witch trying to shove the children into the oven. At the top of the staircase is a forest of Doric columns with colorful mosaic medallions in the ceiling. Another feature of the park is a tree-like arcade covering a substantial portion of the area. The park is also home to a house in which Gaudi lived - the house contains a small collection of art nouveau furnishings and a nice gift shop.



Several Gaudi sculptural houses in the center of Barcelona are open to the public as museums. La Pedrera is an apartment house with an undulating exterior and abstract wrought iron railings. Gaudi designed this building without load-bearing walls, using instead a network of pillars and beams to support the structure – visitors can see these structural features in the displays in the attic of the building. From the attic, there is access to the roof, which has ingenious, abstract, strange, sculptural forms covering the chimneys and ventilation towers. One of the apartments is also part of the museum tour – an extremely spacious, airy, and unique living space.



Several blocks from La Pedrera is another Gaudi building which is open to the public as a museum – the Casa Batllo. Similar to Gaudi's other work, this building has sinuous, flowing lines, and a variety of textural elements.

A visit to Barcelona is not complete without a stroll through the Gothic Quarter, a substantial area with a Gothic cathedral, and narrow maze-like streets lined with many notable old buildings, good restaurants and interesting shops. We were fortunate that our hotel was in the Gothic Quarter, giving us easy access to this very interesting part of the city. We were also close to the major street called La Rambla, with a center walking area full of outdoor cafes and street stalls. La Rambla runs down from the Placa de Catalunya to the waterfront, with the impressive monument to Christopher Columbus.

Another highlight of Barcelona is the large park in the Montjuic hills, with its impressive views of the entire city of Barcelona. In the park are two major museums – at the top of the hill is the Fine Arts Museum with its collection of Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque Art, and, farther down the

hill, the Miro Museum. There are many other museums to visit in Barcelona, including the Picasso Museum, Maritime Museum, Textile Museum, Dali Museum, and a pre-Columbian art museum.

Quite simply, if the hills of Andorra did not call, we would have been very happy to have more time to enjoy Barcelona. We hope that those of you who were on the PVS trip enjoyed the city as much as we did. If you have not visited Barcelona, we recommend putting it on your travel list (think about going in the fall or spring, when the city is less crowded).

Another recommendation for your travel list is Toulouse, France. We went on the day trip to Toulouse – a distance of about three hours from Andorra, and were very pleasantly surprised by the loveliness of this city. Unfortunately, we only had time to experience a brief taste of Toulouse. The included walking tour took us through the heart of the old city, and we visited two churches - one Romanesque, the other Gothic, as well as the old city hall, and the courtyard of a mansion that is now a museum. The city is home to a number of notable museums – we only had time to do a very brief run-through of one museum. We hope that we will be able to return to Toulouse in a future European trip.

As the ski season is effectively at an end, I wish you happy non-skiing travels for the remainder of the year.

*Cara Jablon*

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**Coming Events:**

**PVS LUNCH OUT GROUP (LOGs)**

**Join John Smith and other PVSers for lunch at the Potomac Grill**

**DATE: Wednesday, April 11, 2012**

**TIME: 1:00 PM**

**<[thepotomacgrill.com](http://thepotomacgrill.com)> has many nice luncheon specials that are light, healthy, and very creative.**

**LOCATION: 1093 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852, The Talbott Shopping Center**

**PLEASE CALL: John Smith at 301-299-8376, or e-mail [johnhsmith@juno.com](mailto:johnhsmith@juno.com) for info and count.**

**DIRECTIONS: From the Beltway**, take exit 34 to Rockville Pike (MD-355) north and proceed about 4.5 miles. The Talbott Shopping Center and the Potomac Grill are on the left side of Rockville Pike (just past the Best Buy store that is on the right).

**From the north**, take I-270 south and exit at Rt. 28 going east to Rockville Pike. Go south on Rockville Pike about one mile. The Talbott Shopping Center and the Potomac Grill are on the right side of Rockville Pike.

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**THE TEXTILE MUSEUM**  
2320 S ST, NW, Washington, DC  
Saturday, April 28, 2012 at 1:00 PM



Jannes Gibson is a former staff member and a current Advisory Council member of the Textile Museum, [www.textilemuseum.org](http://www.textilemuseum.org). The Textile Museum has a large permanent collection of handmade textiles from all over the world plus special exhibitions. Jannes will give a tour of the Museum and exhibitions that will be on view on April 28, 2012. The major exhibit is: “Sourcing the Museum,” curated by Jack Lenor Larson. Other exhibitions are: “Woven Treasures of Japan’s Tawaraya Workshop” (these are Court textiles) and “Dragons, Nawas, and Creatures of the Deep.” To sign up, contact Jannes at 301-299-1157 or at [ttaylor\\_g@hotmail.com](mailto:ttaylor_g@hotmail.com).

Directions: <[textilemuseum.org/about/visitor.htm](http://textilemuseum.org/about/visitor.htm)>

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## Washington DC Ski Travel Show Friday Evening May 4, 2012

**11th year – New Location, Marriott Hotel –Tysons Corner**  
8028 Leesburg Pike, Tysons Corner, VA 22182  
I-495 (Beltway) South Exit 47A (Route 7 West)



**Hotel Parking \$6**  
**Free parking down the street in the Bloomingdale's Parking Deck 7**

**Show Hours 6:30 – 9:30 PM**

**Hors d'oeuvres**  
**Cash Bar**  
**Prize Drawing 9:30**

Please e-mail Rosemary [rosemaryschw@gmail.com](mailto:rosemaryschw@gmail.com), if you want to attend.

**Pre-registration Deadline of Monday April 30, 2012**

**It is usually a fun and informative evening and you may win a ski trip.**

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***THE MUSIC MAN***  
**AT ARENA STAGE**  
**Saturday, June 2, 2012 at 2pm**

**ONLY 12 TICKETS REMAIN**



PVS has acquired a block of 5<sup>th</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup> row seats for Meredith Wilson's *The Music Man*. This Arena Stage production is expected to follow in the steps of last year's record-setting production of *Oklahoma*. Our tickets are **\$60** each. (On-line price was \$99 per seat before this performance sold out.) Make out checks to Dick Laeser and mail to 1977 Lakeport Way, Reston, VA 20191. Questions: [laeser@comcast.net](mailto:laeser@comcast.net) or 571-490-3402.



**SYNOPSIS:**

Having exhausted all 102 counties in Illinois, "Professor" Harold Hill gives Iowa a try and soon enough convinces River City of its trouble with the "sin and corruption" of the pool hall, trouble that can only be stopped by forming a boys' band. Marian the librarian suspects he's a con man, but she begins to trust him after seeing how he's given confidence to her shy younger brother. Soon, this "Music Man" has transformed the entire town, not only turning the bickering school board into a barbershop quartet, but himself into an honest man. When the stage erupts with "76 Trombones," you'll be cheering along with River City for Harold Hill!

## Past Events:

### SNOWMASS 2012 POST-TRIP PARTY, MARCH 18, 2012

March 18th was a beautiful day for a drive to Frederick, MD for our Snowmass post-trip party. Sharon Mulholland had graciously offered to host the party. However, a last minute venue change occurred as Sharon's mom had emergency surgery (she's doing fine, last report). Annie Cummins stepped in and opened her lovely home to us. Annie's friend Pete had flown in from Maine for a visit and found himself presented with a "honey do" list to help get ready for the party. Settling in to a fun afternoon, we shared memories with sixteen members of our Snowmass trip plus two (good sport) spouses. Wine, cheese and delicious cake, cookies and brownies added to the afternoon. We all enjoyed Bob Gleeson's video of skiing down Snowmass trails via his Go-Pro helmet camera. The room became quiet as we skied along, remembering a perfect ski trip. As a memento, we all received a copy of the group photo taken by Bob Knopes the last night of our trip at the Snowmass Club. Great photo - thanks Bob! And, thank you Sharon and Annie for carrying your guitars all the way to Colorado. It was worth it, the sing-along was so much fun. Special thanks go to Carolyn and Sharon for all their planning and effort for a most memorable ski vacation.



*--Jane Dealy*

### POTOMAC VALLEY SKI CLUB MEETING, MARCH 20, 2012

The attendees at the March PVS meeting held at the home of Eugenia and Phil Ufholz were treated to special sights and tastes. First, the cherry blossom trees in the environs of the Ufholz' Bethesda home were stunning in their fragile beauty. More importantly, the hungry PVSers were swept off their feet by Eugenia's homemade spanakopita. The tasty spinach and phyllo triangles just kept appearing on the appetizer table. After savoring these and other treats, President Cara Jablon called the meeting to order. There were 22 attendees, not counting the hosts.



Cara reported that the annual meeting will be held on April 17 in the party room of the building where Reg Heitchue lives in Reston. Attendees will be asked to bring appetizers and desserts. Melissa FitzGerald is coordinating the meeting. Jan Marx announced that she found an old PVS Cook Book <[pvskiers.org/cookbook/](http://pvskiers.org/cookbook/)> with very good recipes, and there will be a drawing for the Cook Book at the annual meeting.

Ray, looking chipper, reported on upcoming events. He handed the microphone to Dick Laeser who stated that he has 20 tickets reserved for PVS for the June 2<sup>nd</sup> performance of the Music Man at Arena Stage. There will also be a guided tour, by Jannes Gibson, of the Textile Museum in Washington DC, on Saturday, April 28. Jannes is on the board of directors of that museum. John Smith said that the first group luncheon of LOGS was held March 14 with six attendees and the next one will be on April 11 in Rockville at the Potomac Grill. The March ExCom meeting will be held by conference call on March 27.

The evening ended with another special treat – Eugenia's homemade baklava. Delicious.

*--John Holt*

# Members' Corner

By J. David Warthen, Jr.  
[dwarthen@verizon.net](mailto:dwarthen@verizon.net)



## **Getting to Know You:**

**Jane Dealy (Applicant Individual)**

My trip to Snowmass (2012) broke the hiatus of having not skiing for 20 years. Previously I had skied probably 15 times out west - Colorado, Idaho, Utah, but mostly Colorado. I am single with three grown sons and seven grandchildren. After 30 years with a management consulting firm, I retired only to retire to a less stressful job working for The ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis) Association <<http://www.alsa.org/>> four days a week. I belong to a book club, play bridge, exercise daily and am very active in my church.



*Jane with son, Chris & family at Christmas 2011*

**Catherine Sands (Applicant Individual)**

My skiing career began as a teenager attacking those big, tall hills they call mountains in Upper Michigan and Wisconsin. I had to keep up with my brother (3 years older) and his friends or be left behind to navigate the blue ice!

The big reason I chose to attend Middlebury College in Vermont was that the college had its own ski hill.....one could put their skis in a snow bank and after class hitch a ride up to the Snowbowl. Sounds like a well thought out intellectual pursuit!!!!

My husband and I met on a train in Austria and, after marriage, spent weekends skiing in VT/NH. At that time, I was introduced to western skiing and, as a family, we would have a week vacation in Colorado/Utah where the children very quickly passed us by on runs we would take together.

The most special time was three generation skiing in Telluride, where my daughter worked in the local school

system. Will (age 7+) spent most of his time skiing in the woods with his grandpa and mom. He would very unexpectedly "pop" out of the trees, crying, "Come on Gammie; you're too slow!"

Mary (age 3+), dressed in a pink snowsuit, sporting a princess hat with flowing ribbons on her helmet, would snowplow under the lift, loving the attention of the skiers in the chairs whooping in delight, watching this child in her own world smiling and singing.

When Caroline and family left Colorado for Arizona, my skiing took a hiatus until this past January when I joined the PVS group in Snowmass. Mastering the new way of skiing proved challenging, but it all came together on the last two days!

Sporting a very elegant, purple cast (broken wrist), there will be no more skiing this winter. Hopefully, by 2013, I will be ready to go!!!!

**Susan Ives (Applicant Individual)**

It was a hot evening last July when I ran into Sharon Mulholland outside of the Kentland's diner in Gaithersburg. Sharon mentioned PVS and Snowmass and I was ready to go! Skiing out West was on my list of things to do and I've learned not to question a serendipitous opportunity.

I thoroughly enjoyed Snowmass and skiing in the West really does spoil you. It was great to get to know the PVS group and I received some great ski and shopping tips. Next time, I'll bring an empty suitcase and fill up with consignment bargains. Snowmass is so skier friendly that it didn't take long to get my ski legs back although it had been awhile. I began in childhood and continued with long gaps due to children and other responsibilities. In fact, the last time I skied was at Seven Springs with the Cub Scouts when my son, Ross, was ten. He's turning 20 this month.

When not skiing, I work at the U.S. Agency for International Development as an interior designer on projects for their headquarters. I am also involved in the International Interior Design Association (IIDA) and served as President of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter for two years. I look forward to joining PVS on future trips and look forward to participating in club activities.

## **TOOT Distribution to 147 Members:**

-pdf: 115; Text (Att.): 1; USPS: 8

**Roster Changes:** (notify [dwarthen@verizon.net](mailto:dwarthen@verizon.net))

-Susan Ives (Applicant Individual)

7820 Mystic View Court

Derwood, MD 20855-2276

240-481-5834 c, 202-712-1075 w

S\_O\_Ives@yahoo.com

-Dan & Betty Churchill (Applicant Couple)

5105 39<sup>th</sup> Street, NW

Washington, DC 20176-2335

202-686-1701 h,

202-270-2334 c (Dan), 202-360-3345 c (Betty)

[dchurchill100@gmail.com](mailto:dchurchill100@gmail.com), [betty.churchill@gmail.com](mailto:betty.churchill@gmail.com)

## **SKI TALK - APRIL 2012**

We have just ended a great ski season with an outstanding trip to Spain and Andorra. I loved Barcelona and Madrid but, since this is a ski column, I will focus on Andorra. Skiing in Europe is always an adventure and sometimes not for the faint of heart. The snow, the grooming, the signage and the mountain facilities are not as predictable in Europe as in our West. You have to go with different expectations than you would have for a western trip. What you get in Europe is wide-open expanses; extraordinary views; gourmet restaurants; long, wide runs; ice bars on the mountain; and a very different experience. To get to the ski area in Andorra, we had to take the Funicamp, an 18 passenger gondola, which is the longest ski lift in the world. It took about 20 minutes to get from the mountain base to the peak and the views of the valley were fantastic. Once on top, it was a different world. While in Andorra Ville, the temperature was in the 50s, but on top of the mountain the wind was often gusting and it was in the 20s. The conditions varied each day with a couple of very high wind days. One day we found mostly icy terrain but the next day the slopes had fairly decent snow. We even had a couple inches of powder one morning. Lunches were fun. We had onion soup at a little town on the border of France one day. Mid mountain there was a circular restaurant with 360 degrees views. At the top of the gondola was a lovely restaurant where the views alone were worth the ride, as attested to by some of the non-skiers who came up for lunch. Every day was a new adventure – as skiing should be.

Please send me your ideas and preliminary proposals for next year. We look forward to hearing from you and receiving more proposals for 2013. It is important that we continue to have quality ski trips.

The approved trips will be published in the June TOOT. Please send questions, ideas and/or proposals to me <[rosemaryschw@gmail.com](mailto:rosemaryschw@gmail.com)>.

***--Rosemary Schwartzbard***

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## **Ski Trip:**

***ANDORRA, March 1-12 or 16, 2012***  
***by Linda & Jack Sloan, with a Ski Report by Bob Gleeson***

In March, PVS added another star to its international ski trip map with its much heralded "See and Ski Andorra 2012." Actually, PVS earned numerous stars because in addition to skiing in Andorra, the trip included visits to Barcelona and Madrid, as well as side trips to Carcassonne and Toulouse in France, and Segovia and Avila in Spain. The weather was just about perfect with successive days of sunshine and blue sky, and ranging from temperate in Barcelona to appropriately cool in Andorra, and nearly balmy in Madrid!

Three themes characterized the trip:

- (1) PVS skis! Numerous trip goers conquered the slopes in Andorra (and did so despite less than ideal conditions) -- see ski report from Bob Gleeson below.
- (2) PVS enjoys! PVS fits with the Spanish philosophy -- eat, drink, engage with people, and enjoy life.
- (3) PVS cares! Numerous health issues, travel challenges, and language barriers befell the group. But PVS members are resilient and resourceful and looked out for each other, demonstrating wonderful compassion and leadership. PVS MVPs overall were Nancy and Ray McKinley (Barcelona and Andorra) and Rosemary and Dick Schwartzbard (Madrid).

In total, our group included 44 PVSers -- the largest PVS group to travel abroad in some time. And the PVS community was even bigger. Rosemary and Dick Schwartzbard hosted their son, Aaron, and his girlfriend, Martha; while Nestor and Pat Delevaux hosted Nestor's cousin from Switzerland and his family. And that's not all! The trip was organized in conjunction with the Blue Ridge Ski Council. So, in Andorra we were with numerous other ski groups. (Early on in Andorra, a small group of PVSers adopted two skiers from the Pentagon Ski Club, and they all found themselves on top of each other more than once trying to get on the less-than-predictable Andorran chair lifts!)

First stop -- Barcelona. Barcelona treated us to many a sensory delight. Barcelona boasts an eclectic array of architecture -- old and new. The city's signature works are by architect Gaudi. You can't miss them. Gaudi's buildings have a playful character and, with long drippy columns, look as if they may dance down the street. The Gaudi masterpiece is a church called Sagrada Familia, which the group visited. Bob and Louann Eadie can regale you in greater detail about the church as they spent hours inside!

Barcelona has a walking promenade with shops and kiosks called La Rambla, and PVS feet left many a souvenir impression on it. Rumor has it that PVS also made a mark on the famous Mercato in Barcelona -- especially the chocolate booths! As a group, and individually, PVS took in the parks, Catalan dancing, and museums of art, history and maritime.

About half of the group went to a flamenco guitar concert. What an intimate and exquisite cultural experience it was! Picture this: the concert was in the small side chapel of a centuries-old basilica. The guitarist sat in a silhouette framed by the altar, seemingly within reach. Our ears were treated to beautiful music. Our eyes not only saw the guitarist's facial expressions and his plucking of the strings with his right hand, but we also witnessed a veritable ballet as his left fingers danced on the neck of the guitar in impossible ways.

High in the enjoyment category of any PVS trip is -- what else -- the food and spirits! Ray and Nancy kicked off the trip with happy hours at the hotel in Barcelona, which provided a nice opportunity for people to share tips, plan the next day, and imbibe in local wines. The meals in our package were fit for a king. Any king, for they consisted of massive buffets with all kinds of fresh fruits, seafood, yogurt, tuna, ham, salami, cheeses, olives, olive oil and numerous daily features. This made it possible to actually eat healthy! Tapas and paella were the native delectables of choice, and we learned that paella is not the rice mixture in the pan, but rather the pan itself!

So okay, this is a report about a SKI trip. Onto Andorra. On the way to Andorra, our group bus twisted and turned up up up the windy spectacular mountains to Montserrat -- a famous monastery dating to the 800s. Once there, while the rest of us took in the breathtaking views and visited the chapel, John Lyon scampered UP UP UP to the peak high above -- and had to run back down to make the bus's departure -- winning him a McKinley Award!

Situated in the Pyrenees Mountains, Andorra is a small principality just twice the size of Washington, D.C. with only about 75,000 people. Though independent for hundreds of years, Andorra has been governed over time by rulers from its two neighbors -- France (to the north) and Spain (to the south). Many of its traditions continue today, including primogeniture (the family home and wealth pass to the eldest child, even if the eldest is a girl!). But Andorran women were not allowed to vote until 1951.

Visually, the old and new are readily apparent in Andorra. Topographically, Andorra is a series of deep gorges and narrow valleys punctuated by ragged-edged mountains. In juxtaposition to its ancient "landscape," and agricultural, isolated past, Andorra today is modern and high-tech. The whole place is an engineering feat with bridges, buildings and roads that mystify. And Andorra has some beautiful-looking slopes -- wide open bowls high above the tree line. As a testament to "PVS Skis!" -- here is **Bob Gleeson's summary:**

#### *Skiiing in Andorra:*

*Andorra has over 187 miles of ski runs in an area of approximately 7,600 acres. They have 112 lifts providing access to 177 slopes, comprised of 15% green (easiest), 35% red (more difficult) and 15% expert (black). The highest altitude is 8,660 feet and the lowest altitude is 5,085 feet. The mountain range appears very rugged and majestic.*

*Our lodging in the town of Andorra did not provide for "ski-in, ski-out." We did, however, have excellent, reserved bus arrangements that provided us direct transport to the gondola. One ski equipment rental shop gave us 30% discounts as well as equipment storage. From that shop, we had to walk only about 200 feet to the gondola. So, getting onto the mountain was relatively easy.*

*Unfortunately, weather conditions did not provide for ideal skiing. The primary weather issue was strong winds. Andorra did not get very much snow this year, and the strong winds blew off much of the man-made*





snow, creating icy conditions on many of the slopes. The worst snow was probably located in the mountain areas surrounding where the gondola dropped us off. Not everyone, however, was completely dissatisfied with the snow conditions. One could ski for about one hour over several mountain ranges to lower elevation areas where the wind did not blow off the snow. At these lower elevations, most people said the snow conditions were good.



Some specifics on weather/snow conditions are as follows:

•Tuesday (1<sup>st</sup> day): Everyone was surprised and somewhat unprepared for how cold it was at the top of the mountain. Contributing to the cold were a strong wind and cloud cover. It had not snowed for several days, which left a lot of bare spots on a number of slopes.

•Wednesday: Probably the best ski day of the week for many of us. It had snowed the night before, so all the bare spots were filled in. The mountain looked great, with lots of sunshine and minimal winds. It was also a lot warmer and, consequently, the snow got rather soft at lower elevations.

•Thursday: Winds became very strong, but the bright sun kept the day from feeling as cold as it had felt on Tuesday. Some of the red runs that were really enjoyable on Wednesday had

most of the man-made snow blown off, so these slopes were very icy.

•Friday: Sunny weather with increasing winds. The best skiing was at lower elevations.

•Saturday: A relatively good day like Wednesday, with diminishing winds and bright sunshine.

•Sunday: Many folks didn't ski, because we didn't have the convenience of the reserved buses. Those who did ski said that the weather was relatively good on the mountain.

A number of club members had minor accidents/incidents on the slopes. On the first day, Jannes Gibson fell topside before she started skiing, bruising the bottom of her spine, and she decided not to ski anymore. On the second day, Melissa FitzGerald hurt her knee and decided not to ski for the duration of the trip. Trip leader Nancy McKinley was thrown onto a safety net by the high winds, but fortunately did not get hurt. On Thursday, Rosemary was blown over by the strong winds, but also did not get hurt. Kathy Felmey did a face plant that resulted in a minor concussion and a painful shoulder and thumb injury, as well as a slightly bloody nose. Bob Sweeney strained his knee on Thursday and gave up the goose after that. On the plus side, Maryann Rozzell took a gondola ride to the top and enjoyed the spectacular view. Betty Lawrence, Suzanne Boisclair, June Read, and Marianne Gustafson also took the gondola and met Liz Warren-Boulton on the top for a spectacular lunch.



Most of our members summarized their ski experience at Andorra as somewhat disappointing. In particular, the lack of good snow conditions and the high winds made for challenging skiing. In addition, as in many ski locations throughout Europe, the facilities and lifts supporting Andorra were not on par with those in the United States. There was no ski patrol to be seen. However, there were plenty of ski instructors with lots of darling tykes who seem to have skiing in their European genes.

--Bob Gleeson

And it wasn't the United States either in terms of communication. When traveling abroad, we Americans have been accustomed to English-speaking people in foreign countries. This trip was different. Who knew that in Spain, the Spaniards are serious about their Spanish -- and their Catalan (similar to, but distinctly different from, Spanish). And in Andorra, the natives intermittently speak Catalan, Spanish, and French. (Do I say "gracias," "merci," or what? -- Oh My!) Fortunately for all 44 of us, we had four Spanish speakers -- Melissa FitzGerald, Suzanne Boisclair, Jim Arnold, and Jack Sloan. They saved the day daily, including during some serious situations. (A stomach bug and bronchitis were on the trip too, so there were several visits to the ER in Andorra, and the plentiful pharmacies everywhere.) Jim Arnold, an expert on Spanish history and Mike Strand, a Spanish resident at one time, brought Spain more to life for us with facts and stories.

The day trip to the walled town of Carcassonne, France, included a bus ride winding through the Pyrenees on snowy roads, and the next day many PVSers ventured to Toulouse, France, a bigger city known for its rose-colored light.

The official trip ended the last night in Andorra. Ray and Nancy treated the group to the famous (and amazing) "McKinley PVS Award Ceremony." Ray and Nancy must have had spies everywhere on the trip, for they captured and covered everything from the "O" ring event at Dulles airport to events on the slopes and in the towns. There were 44 awards, each incredibly clever and funny. One wonders how Ray and Nancy had a spare second to prepare the awards with everything else going on. Perhaps writing the awards so over-exercised the pun section of Ray's brain that his brain selectively turned off -- for the next morning, Ray had his close encounter with "Transient Global Amnesia."

On a serious note, this experience more than any aspect of the trip demonstrated "PVS Cares!" Everyone was quite concerned about Ray; Nancy was characteristically calm (and brave); several PVSers jumped into emergency response mode; and the Schwartzbards seamlessly picked up the tour leader baton for the excursion to Madrid.

Wow, what a city! Madrid has royal palaces, art museums, and city parks to rival Paris, with the electricity of

New York City. And it stands alone in its vibrant night-life (museums open until 11:30pm, restaurants serve into the wee hours). Madrid is rich in history and culture. It has a trinity of art museums that bring man, woman, and child the gift of art from the masters (Picasso, El Greco, Monet, and even Richard Estes and Georgia O'Keefe). They train them young in Spain. The museums were overflowing with school trips, ranging from tiny tots to high school students. One particular group of little ones sat on the floor under a Salvador Dali painting titled "Endless Enigma" -- dark and complicated -- and listened patiently as the teacher pointed to figures in the painting; offering gosh knows what possible explanation!



The Schwartzbards arranged two happy hours, and various groups had no problem finding sights to see and places to eat in Madrid. PVS Enjoys! A group of 10 had an exquisite evening enjoying opera singing while eating antelope and fried milk. Twenty people took a bus trip to the countryside towns of Avila and Segovia. Both are so picturesque that literally the images look like a page out of a fairytale book, and you don't know if you are looking at a painting or something real.

You know a trip was good when you want to go back, even before you leave. That is the feeling Madrid evoked. It was good despite the significant airline fiasco at the Madrid airport that Rosemary magically straightened out! PVS Cares.

A terrific exhibit at the Maritime Museum in Barcelona sums up the 2012 PVS trip best. It says, a "voyage is productive if it brings about change . . . Voyages have helped us to . . . know how diverse is nature and the people who inhabit the planet. Like in a huge jigsaw puzzle, each voyager takes away a small piece of this picture, a story which helps to understand others. When we end a journey, we are different."

Thanks PVS for making a difference in our lives!

*--Linda & Jack Sloan*



*Ahh, contentment!*

**A Treasure is found** - PVS' Historian (Jan Marx) unearthed the very last, albeit incomplete, original, PVS Cook Book. She has restored it, and will have it at the Annual Meeting this month. It will be available for a **drawing**. Those who never had a chance to buy one, or those who want to replace their dog-eared, grease-spotted, finger-smudged copy, may put their names in the pot for the drawing during the meeting. The book is full of excellent and favorite recipes from PVSers. The following is the most unusual recipe, especially formulated for groups. However, it has never been served at a PVS event because of our member limit of 200.

**Elephant Stew**

- 1 elephant (medium size)
- 2 rabbits (optional)
- 1 freight car potatoes
- Dash of tarragon
- Salt and pepper to taste



Cut elephant into bite-size pieces (this will take about 3 months), place pieces and the potatoes in a rather large pot and simmer gently for about 7 weeks. This should feed approximately 4,682 people. Should it be necessary to stretch the recipe to feed more people, add the rabbits. However, some people do not like hare in their stew. --Stolen and translated from Swahili by Lu Beale

*--Jan Marx*



# THE KNEE

by [Ray McKinley](#)  
[RaysKnee@gmail.com](mailto:RaysKnee@gmail.com)

I simply can't remember—not a moment. Seven hours gone from my memory. I don't remember waking up in Andorra on March 12, 2012; I don't remember packing or even a minute of the three-hour bus trip down from Andorra to Barcelona. I do remember, vaguely, the ambulance ride to the hospital with [Nancy](#) some seven hours later.

Temporary Global Amnesia, or TGA, is what it's called. Short-term memory goes to about a second, and the situation lasts two to eight hours. Lots of symptoms like those of a stroke, but it's completely unrelated. In most of us, TGA never recurs. And TGA doesn't lead to any other worse conditions—like a stroke. There is almost always a 100% recovery. If only I could recall the name of this column...

On to some other, hopefully less serious, PVS happenings...

Oh to be Older: The last week in March, [Ellie Thayer](#) and [Jack Chapman](#) hosted a small birthday party for [Rosemary Schwartzbard](#). It was her 70<sup>th</sup>. Had [Rosemary's](#) birthday been two weeks earlier, she could have skied free in Andorra where 70+ ski free. Several others on the trip were able to take advantage of the perk!

What is Snowflex? [Charles Huggins](#) sent along a piece from Powder Magazine about the British sensation designed to mimic the slip and grip effects of snow. It looks like a bunch of upside down scrub brushes, which are set in multiple layers of cushion to provide padding. Snow simply isn't necessary. Snowflex is reminiscent of something they put on a hill at Jerry Falwell's Liberty University a bit ago. The problem with the Falwell installation was that Jerry would only let you turn to the right! Now really, would the [Knee](#) tell you a fib?

After attending an ExCom Meeting, one of our newer members, [John Holt](#), announced that he would miss the next ExCom meeting, as he would be out of the country. When questioned as to where, [John](#) said he would be visiting his daughter in Massachusetts! The [Knee](#) certainly hopes you have your visa, [John](#).

[John Holt](#) came back from Andorra, worked a few days, and is now retiring. But he will be back at work as a consultant in a few weeks.

Also retiring is our March hostess, [Eugenia Ufholz](#). She will be leaving her position at a local Junior College. A hardy tip of the ol' [Knee](#) cap to both of you.



## A 1500's woodcut heralds ski cartooning

This 500-year-old woodcut, found in a museum collection by [Marvin Hass](#), shows nobles riding in a sled from one of those remote northern tribes known generically as Finns. A reindeer is pulling the sled. Two allied foot soldiers (small figures at right) have short, broad skis and spears that double as ski poles. They thrust the pole between their legs to propel themselves, and dig the sharp end into the snow when necessary to brake.

The third foot soldier (center) is using his pole-spear to threaten the first two. The fourth soldier (left) is shown bowled over by the reindeer. One ski has been knocked off, and the other is waving in the air. This is the first skiing fall in history, a tumbling figure guaranteed to elicit a smile. It qualifies the woodcut as a forerunner of ski cartoons to come.

Since we discovered that PVS had overpaid for our ExCom teleconference in February, [Pres Cara Jablon](#) held our second ExCom teleconference in three months. The wine was much better at this meeting!

Ubiquitous PVS: [John](#) and [Polli Brunelli](#) were at the same performance of [Brother Russia](#) at the Signature Theatre as [Dick](#) and [Rosemary Schwartzbard](#). The [Brunellis](#), along with several critics, didn't much like the show and left at intermission. When they next met, [Dick](#) rushed up to [John](#) and [Polli](#) and said that the second half was spectacular!

And finalKnee, here's another installment of our [kneet knew Knee](#) feature. It's called "Ask the [Knee](#)" where you ask the [Knee](#) your most perplexing, ski-related questions. Our first question: Why, late in the season, is there snow on the ski runs but not on the surroundings? Simple, early in the season, when snow is abundant, it is saved and stored in a snow bank.

## 2012 PVS Calendar

Apr 11	Wed	LOGS Luncheon, Potomac Grill; 1:00 PM (Smith, Rockville, MD)
Apr 17	Tue	Annual Meeting; 7:30 PM (Heitchue, Reston, VA)
Apr 22	Sun	Andorra Post-Trip Party; 2:00 PM (Hines, Delaplaine, VA)
Apr 24	Tue	ExCom Meeting; 7:30 PM (FitzGerald, Reston, VA)
Apr 28	Sat	The Textile Museum; 1:00 PM (Gibson, DC)
May 04	Fri	Washington DC Ski Travel Show; 6:30-9:30 PM (Tysons Corner, VA)
May 15	Tue	May General Meeting; 7:30 PM (June Read's daughter, Potomac, MD)
May 22	Tue	ExCom Meeting; 7:30 PM (TBA)
Jun 02	Sat	The Music Man, Arena Stage; 2:00 PM (Laeser, DC)



## Capital Golden Skiers

(PVS and CGS have enjoyed participating in several of each others' events. This is a list of CGS upcoming events. They are a fun group. More information is available at [capitalgoldenskiers.com](http://capitalgoldenskiers.com)

- April 10, 2012 (Tuesday): An Evening of Bridge (VA)
- April 15, 2012 (Sunday): Walk from Alexandria to National Harbor and Return (VA)
- April 15, 2012 (Sunday): Dance at the Elks Lodge (VA)
- April 19, 2012 (Thursday): Hike the Billy Goat Trail (MD)
- April 20, 2012 (Friday): Dance Night at Hollin Hall (VA)
- April 21, 2012 (Saturday): Membership Luncheon, Pier 7 Restaurant (DC)
- April 25, 2012 (Wednesday): A Stroll through the National Arboretum (DC/MD)

## Useful Ski "Links"

Potomac Valley Skiers	<a href="http://potomacvalleyskiers.org">potomacvalleyskiers.org</a>
Capital Golden Skiers	<a href="http://capitalgoldenskiers.com">capitalgoldenskiers.com</a>
BRSC Sanctioned Trips	<a href="http://skicouncil.com/tripsbydate.htm">skicouncil.com/tripsbydate.htm</a>
DC Ski Online News	<a href="http://dcski.com">dcski.com</a>

## PVS Board - 2011-2012

### Officers, Board Members, & Chairpersons

President - <i>Cara Jablon</i>	EXCOM:
Vice President - <i>Jan Marx</i>	First Term:
Secretary - <i>Mary Beale</i>	<i>Melissa FitzGerald</i>
Treasurer - <i>Dick Laeser</i>	<i>Reg Heitchue</i>
Ex-Officio - <i>Sharon Mulholland</i>	<i>John Holt</i>
Ski Trip Committee - <i>Rosemary Schwartzbard</i>	Second Term:
Events - <i>Ray McKinley</i>	<i>Mary Beale</i>
Membership Records - <i>Dave Warthen</i>	<i>Dick Laeser</i>
Membership PR Rep - <i>Carolyn DeVilbiss</i>	<i>Dick Schwartzbard</i>
TOOT Content/Proof Editor - <i>Ellie Thayer</i>	Webmaster - <i>Dave Lerner</i>
TOOT Layout Editors - <i>Jan Marx, Marvin Hass, &amp; Dave Warthen (+ e-distribution)</i>	Meeting Records - <i>Sue Lyon</i>
TOOT (USPS) - <i>Barb Leonhardt</i>	Historian - <i>Jan Marx</i>



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Happy  
April Fool's Day!