

W.M.A.C.

SNOWSHOE SERIES 2000

THE WISDOM OF RACING

It has been a really rewarding winter so far in that I have had opportunity to participate at two 5km snowshoe events, Greylock Glen and Saratoga Winterfest. The evening before each I was asked to go out for a little snowshoe action by two good friends, Paul Hartwig and John Scalise. Neither time did I ever think that not going was an option. At this point in life, losing a half-minute or so over the span of 3 miles in a race in exchange for an evening adventure with two friends is a more than fair swap. It seems like I have reached a point where I will trade potential quality for quantity.

I embraced snowshoeing many years ago. Like others who snowshoe I try to extend its short season longer than allowable by shuffling through the drifts every possible chance. If this means suiting up late in the night to frolic under the stars with short notice then that's just fine with me. If it means that I have questionable "smart running tactics", that's fine too. I realized long ago that I leave a lot to be desired regarding serious running practices.

I really don't have a clue whether going out the night before a race to run a few miles on snowshoes is a wise choice. Common sense tells me that it might be better to just kick back and rest, leave the energy for the race the next day. Wisdom of racing isn't why I passionately throw myself at opportunities to travel the forest at night during the coldness of winter; the stark beauty of snow covered smooth rolling curves and a sky decorated with enough lore to fill civilization's journal is the wise that grips me.

I understand that snowshoeing is a much slower activity than running. Add in the darkness of night and it compounds the difference even more so. Your movement is about as slow as running can be; sort of an efficient glide across space that allows everything to function in slow motion except your pounding heart.

I also understand that it is the woods that I love and not so much the running. This is why it was an easy transition for me to start snowshoeing. I never minded slowing down due to the extra effort snowshoeing took. The brilliance of the many forest I visit during the winters is well worth slowing down for. I have often read an account of a race where the writer mentions the beauty of a course or forest, and that a return trip was in order to make "time for the views..." I know from my own past experiences that it usually never happens that you return to give proper time to these places. After all, the

following week usually has another race scheduled, or there is another trail to explore during training. It's often a hurried life we lead. I decided that I didn't want to be handicapped that way any longer.

Loving the woods and not the running also allowed me to make a seamless jump from once training at an all out hearty pace to doing a lot of hiking with my soon to be 14 year old dog. The years of each of us running 8 to 10 minute miles through the woods for hours on end together have been replaced over the last few by slow jogging with walk breaks on the uphill. Having this animals company while enjoying the forest is a bonus that a chance at being able to run harder or faster doesn't match. It is this same principal that makes it easy to chose between staying in to rest for a race or hitting the trails with friends.

Even in this age of growth and many people's limited understanding of the value of open space, of trails being lost to development daily, I feel that most forest will outlast those of us playing in them. Snowshoeing opened up my eyes and allowed me to hit a point in life where I feel it completely necessary to take a little time to enjoy the ordinary things that for so long I had taken for granted.

I have learned to emphasize the value of friendships. Along with that, I have made an effort to not always think that "tomorrow" will be there for taking time to "catch" that special view from that peak you trained on last month.

In the end, I doubt that it will be the 10th place finish or the 40th place finish I remember. What I will remember will be running along the Metacomet Ridge underneath Orion and the Milky Way with John Scalise sprawling headfirst into a snowbank. I will remember Paul Hartwig and I blasting along under a full moon and a frozen Greylock. I will remember the smile on Dusty's face as we skip across fields snow covered and lit by the stars on our way home. In the end I will remember. Until then I will take the time to do all those things that I always said I would come back to do.

*Edward Alibozek
February 9, 2000*

SARATOGA WINTERFEST SNOWSHOE RACE

On February 6th I had the delightful experience of running in the Saratoga WinterFest 5K snowshoe race. I wasn't going to go because of the distance from Woodstock, CT, but several fellow WMAC members talked me into it. The deciding factor was an email from "Blue Eyes" (not Stan Tiska) which pushed me over the edge. I'm glad I did!

I've never been to that part of New York and found it to be really beautiful. The view of the mountains as you drive north of Albany is something to see. I hitched a ride on the Bozekmobile van along with Karl Molitoris, Ken Clark, Rich Busa, and the Farmer. Busa and I met the others off I-91 in Holyoke. We saw Richard's truck parked there, but no sight of Richard. As we got close we noticed that he was "sleeping" in the seat. We wondered if this iron man's ticker had expired and whether his life insurance policy was paid up. On the way, just before getting to the exit off the NY Thruway for the race Carol Kane passed us listening to some sort of music on headphones while bobbing her head up and down and dancing in her seat. We were making bets as to what type of music it was. Karl's guess was Lawrence Welk; I opted for the Andrews Sisters. We'll never know, but she was waving a sock to the beat of the music.

Arriving at the Saratoga Spa State Park was like parachuting into the movie, "The Road to Wellsville." This place was like a college campus with all these great old buildings and people strolling to and fro on cross-country skis. Standing in the middle of a road was the race director Laura Clark directing people to the correct parking lot. We started seeing all these people from WMAC land; I think there were at least 15 people from WMAC in the race, almost 25%.

The day was fantastic. The sun was shining brightly, and if you weren't in the shade and you were running it was warm. At noon we all lined up to run the first quarter mile around this quadrangle of buildings. It reminded me of the "Lawn" at the University of Virginia. I started right behind the group of guys that were contenders to win. There were Dave Dunham (winner), Ken Clark (second place), Leigh Schmitt (third), and Bob Dion (fourth). A woman I had never seen before strode confidently to this front group and took her place with these heavyweights. I don't know who she was, but she finished in the top eight, maybe higher.

One thing I noticed was that Darlene McCarthy did not have a long ribbon of toilet paper hanging out of her clothes this week. Perhaps she had decided that there would be no place to duck off this course for a minute here in crowded Saratoga Spa Park as there would have been in Greylock Glen.

The race instructions by Laura reminded me of Saturday Night Live's "news for the hard of hearing." Laura would squeak out a sentence of instructions, then her husband would holler them out so people could actually hear them. I think that might be a useful thing at Wapack.

The course was not like the wilderness trails that I am used to racing on in the middle of nowhere. After the initial quarter mile it entered into a wooded area within the park and popped out from time to time into open areas. It was relatively even terrain with uphill and downhill not too steep. There was plenty of flat areas where passing was easy if you stepped out into slightly mushy snow for a few steps. The trail had been broken by other shoers, and you didn't sink down in too far. The scenery was interesting in this big park; the course is actually a cross country competition course in the fall.

Speaking of cross country, Karl Molitoris got lost because he was following some women cross country coaches from the area who supposedly knew the course, and they led him astray. I bet they were really trying to lead him off course where they could get a closer look at his bare legs under those orange shorts.

As I approached the finish line people shouted, "Where's your number?" As I started peeling up layers to find my race number three deep, people started clapping and cheering. Meg Dunne tried to slip a 10\$ bill into my pants. While I stood there catching my breath Farmer Ed came over, having

finished two positions in front of me. I asked if I could hold onto his shoulder while I stretched my calf muscles. In jest he said fine, but to make sure I kept my hands above his waist. Several Saratoga ladies at the finish line jerked their heads around and wondered whether or not they should laugh.

We enjoyed hanging around the van changing into dry clothing in the middle of the parking lot next to Carol. She tactfully averted her eyes during the good parts. The chili and cookies were good after the race, and there was Saratoga 2000 bottled water to go around. The after-race accommodations were luxurious compared to South Pond and Greylock; they were inside with porcelain bathrooms. Beth Herder had to leave early because her dad, Curly, wanted to go to Home Depot.

So a big thanks to Laura Clark, her husband, and the other helpers who put on the race. It was a fun day and a real adventure for us WMAC easterners to travel out to Saratoga Springs. I'm glad I went.

It was so much fun with my friends on the trip back that the time flew by. I tormented Karl trying to convince him that the percentage calculation for the Grand Tree standings didn't make sense. He was so perplexed that he was actually quiet for a stretch of several minutes. Karl can calculate the trajectory of Apollo 13 to the moon, but he can't understand that the Grand Tree percentage doesn't make mathematical sense. The Farmer just smiled through it all repeating to himself, "Numerator on top, denominator on the bottom." Two hours into the ride Busa cracked us all up when he said that Meg Dunne gave him two hugs goodbye, and he's still warm. That Meg is hot stuff.

We realized that Ken Clark and Dave Dunham are tied for the series lead. We were brainstorming about how we could give Kenny an advantage. The Farmer said that's easy. Dave hadn't registered for Hawley Kiln and Kenny had. All he had to do was close registration now. It should be an interesting last two races with these two fine racers battling it out for first place in the final standings. See everybody at Hawley Kiln, the next snowshoe race, a beautiful seven-miler in the middle of nowhere.

WorShamer
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1ST Annual SARATOGA WINTERFEST 5km Snowshoe Race February 06, 2000

AGE GROUP WINNERS			
01 - 19	Brittany Burdick	10	54:33
20 - 29	Lisa Deggendori	26	38:55
	Leigh Schmitt	27	22:54
30 - 39	Tracey Van Dyke	35	26:52
	Dave Dunham	35	22:26
40 - 49	Beth Herder	41	30:21
	Bob Dion	44	26:07
50 - 59	Carol Kane	54	35:35
	Bob Worsham	54	28:47
60 - 69	John Pelton	60	23:32
70 - 79	Richard Busa	70	43:43

1ST ANNUAL SARATOGA WINTERFEST 5KM SNOWSHOE RACE

FEBRUARY 06, 2000**SARATOGA SPA PARK****SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY**

01	Dave Dunham	35	Bradford, MA	22:26	66 Pts
02	Ken Clark	37	Somers, CT	22:35	65 Pts
03	Leigh Schmitt	27	S. Deerfield, MA	22:54	64 Pts
04	Bob Dion	44	Readsboro, VT	26:07	63 Pts
05	Jim Preite	35	N. Adams, MA	26:24	62 Pts
06	John Pelton	60	W. Rupert, VT	26:32	61 Pts
07	<i>Tracy Van Dyke</i>	35	<i>Lake Luzerne, NY</i>	<i>26:52</i>	<i>60 Pts</i>
08	Sean Garvey	28	Dalton, MA	27:17	59 Pts
09	Edward Alibozek	37	Suffield, CT	27:52	58 Pts
10	Philip Borgese	40	Niskayuna, NY	27:56	57 Pts
11	Bob Worsham	54	Woodstock, CT	28:47	56 Pts
12	Larry Dragon	39	Cheshire, MA	29:21	55 Pts
13	Scott Bradley	45	Pittsfield, MA	30:14	54 Pts
14	<i>Beth Herder</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>Pittsfield, MA</i>	<i>30:21</i>	<i>53 Pts</i>
15	Ed McBain	35	Saratoga, NY	30:51	52 Pts
16	David Boles	53	New Paultz, NY	31:17	51 Pts
17	Gust Svenson	54	Greenfield Center, NY	31:31	50 Pts
18	<i>Marcia Whitney</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>Saratoga Sprng, NY</i>	<i>34:38</i>	<i>49 Pts</i>
19	<i>Elaine Lutzker</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>Saratoga Sprng, NY</i>	<i>34:42</i>	<i>48 Pts</i>
20	Kelly Harrington	25	Schenectady, NY	34:44	47 Pts
21	Karl Molitoris	44	Stafford Sprg, CT	34:51	46 Pts
22	Rich Flaherty	37	Saratoga, NY	35:04	45 Pts
23	Keith Decker	37	Clifton Park, NY	35:09	44 Pts
24	<i>Darlene McCarthy</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>N. Adams, MA</i>	<i>35:12</i>	<i>43 Pts</i>
25	Bill Taylor	53	Gansevoort, NY	35:17	42 Pts
26	<i>Carol Kane</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>Weston, CT</i>	<i>35:35</i>	<i>41 Pts</i>
27	Chris Dunne	40	Rosendale, NY	37:43	40 Pts
28	<i>Lisa Deggendori</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>S. Deerfield, MA</i>	<i>38:55</i>	<i>39 Pts</i>
29	<i>Aurora Lamperetta</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>Saratoga Sprg, NY</i>	<i>39:31</i>	<i>38 Pts</i>
30	Jeffrey Allen	54	Saratoga Sprg, NY	39:48	37 Pts
31	Jim Carlson	52	Gansevoort, NY	41:16	36 Pts
32	Chuck Trimarchi	53	Albany, NY	41:33	35 Pts
33	<i>Kathy Frezese</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>Balston Spa, NY</i>	<i>41:56</i>	<i>34 Pts</i>
34	James Gilmer	50	Glenmont, NY	42:28	33 Pts
35	Richard Busa	70	Marlboro, MA	43:43	32 Pts
36	<i>Anne Okerman</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>Amherst, MA</i>	<i>44:09</i>	<i>31 Pts</i>
37	Chris Muller	39	Saratoga, NY	44:12	30 Pts
38	<i>Lisa Swan</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>Albany, NY</i>	<i>44:47</i>	<i>29 Pts</i>
39	Scott Hunter	54	S. Deerfield, MA	45:56	28 Pts
40	<i>Eileen Battle</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>Saratoga Sprg, NY</i>	<i>46:26</i>	<i>27 Pts</i>
41	Rob Trimarchi	30	Albany, NY	46:27	26 Pts
42	Konrad Karolczuk	47	Windsor Lcks, CT	46:45	25 Pts
43	<i>Cathy Taylor</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>Gansevoort, NY</i>	<i>47:34</i>	<i>24 Pts</i>
44	Paul Beiter	40	Ballston Lake, NY	47:35	23 Pts
45	<i>Pat Swim</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>Saratoga, NY</i>	<i>48:21</i>	<i>22 Pts</i>
46	Randy Palmer	45	Saratoga Sprg, NY	48:24	21 Pts
47	<i>Regina Mahoney</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>Amherst, MA</i>	<i>48:49</i>	<i>20 Pts</i>
48	<i>Deborah Crotty</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>Ballston Spa, NY</i>	<i>49:18</i>	<i>19 Pts</i>
49	<i>Marge Rajczewski</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>Ballston Lake, NY</i>	<i>49:34</i>	<i>18 Pts</i>
50	<i>Lisa Valentine</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>Ballston Spa, NY</i>	<i>49:38</i>	<i>17 Pts</i>
51	<i>Meg O'Leary</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>Saratoga Sprg, NY</i>	<i>49:54</i>	<i>16 Pts</i>
52	Ron Dinicola	49	Salem, NH	51:12	15 Pts
53	<i>Elaine Humphrey</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>Glenmont, NY</i>	<i>52:09</i>	<i>14 Pts</i>
54	<i>Kate Hayes</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>S. Deerfield, MA</i>	<i>52:39</i>	<i>13 Pts</i>
55	<i>Maria Capella</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>Suffield, CT</i>	<i>53:25</i>	<i>12 Pts</i>
56	<i>Brittany Burdick</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>N. Adams, MA</i>	<i>54:33</i>	<i>13 Pts</i>
57	<i>Dee Shufelt</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>Ballston Spa, NY</i>	<i>54:55</i>	<i>10 Pts</i>
58	Phillip Capella	38	Suffield, CT	55:25	09 Pts
59	<i>Diane Gulbrandson</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>Saratoga Sprg, NY</i>	<i>59:42</i>	<i>08 Pts</i>
60	Perry Burdick	35	N. Adams, MA	60:15	07 Pts
61	<i>Kim Burdick</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>N. Adams, MA</i>	<i>60:25</i>	<i>06 Pts</i>
62	<i>Claudine Preite</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>N. Adams, MA</i>	<i>60:30</i>	<i>05 Pts</i>
63	<i>Lori Christina</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>Clifton Park, NY</i>	<i>62:53</i>	<i>04 Pts</i>
64	<i>Debra Choinere</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>Stillwater, NY</i>	<i>63:19</i>	<i>03 Pts</i>
65	Robert Columbine	69	Saratoga Sprg, NY	87:54	02 Pts
66	<i>Suzanne Wonder</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>Saratoga Sprg, NY</i>	<i>87:54</i>	<i>01 Pts</i>

GREYLOCK GLEN 5K SNOWSHOE RACE 2000...SIBERIAN MOUSETRAPS

I think that when it is cold at Greylock, it must be the coldest place on earth. This is how it was at the Greylock Glen 5K Snowshoe Race. How cold was it? Come on!!!!

Observations of the Day.....

No one was out doing a warm-up run.....lotsa cars....no people....

If you did run into someone, you had to identify them by the color of their eyes, height, sound of their voice, brand of socks....

The question of the day was, "What are we doing here?"...if one was able to force their lips to form words....

And who in their right mind would register the day of?...

The sun was too warm for such a cold day, however the "solar-powered" bathroom was frozen.....what?...no line?...ahhhh, an oasis of warmth in this frozen tundra....I don't think so.....

No formalities, chit-chat, or instructions on this start line...not even a "ready-set"...just go!...no time to set my watch to "chrono"...darn!...

A turn around the pond and we were on our way across the fields into the trails.....Stan had so much clothing on, it was hard to see past him, let alone get around him...he took up the whole trail... managed to give him a shove as I beat him up a short little incline....swear I heard him chanting on my way by.....

What a contrast to Savoy...you actually had to do some flat-out running here...what I call a no-excuses course...okay, where are the trails so I can take a break?....

Snow conditions varied....from drifted snow that one sank in up to ones knees (isn't that the point of snowshoeing...to keep on top of the snow) to hurricane-force wind-swept open areas of dirt and rocks that one had to traverse, to streams that were just a bit too wide for comfort....

Thought I would be smart and wear a neck gaiter so I could pull it up and cover my mouth to warm the air that would be freezing my lungs....and it worked just fine until the whole gaiter froze solid to my face and also to the back of my neck that was drenched in sweat, so that I wound up with a this full, stiff, neck brace that was smothering me...it was not pleasant....

Knew there was something wrong when I passed Bob Worsham on the trailnever can catch that guy...didn't get 10 feet past him when I heard this big "whoomff"...he was just trying to get my attention as he lay there face first in the snow....trying to get me to feel sorry for him...holding his calf muscle and complaining to beat the band...well, I left him in the dust, er snow..."Yes! I can finally beat Bob Worsham, as I raced off.".....

The farmer lost not only his snowshoe in a most spectacular fall....(this competition between Ed and Bob is really getting out of hand)....his running shoe was attached to it....on June 18th, we all must be on the lookout for Ed's toes.....

A few times I swore I was right behind someone, but tracks of those who had gone before totally vanished in the gale-force winds....a frozen tundra....that's what it was....a freakin frozen gale-swept minus 35 degree Siberian tundra!!!!

It was a hearty-son day as Stan's and Bob's sons came out in the cold....so impressed with these young people!...

Quite a few brave people stayed to enjoy the after-race festivities and watch the hot dogs blowing off the grill.....stick a fork in them and they'd shatter into a million pieces....

Good HOT Chocolate...and frozen smiles....

Forget the bonfires in the barrels...all the warmth got blown away, before you could feel any of it...who was it that said they always thought it was "barnfires," not bonfires....

Richard can't wait till the snowshoe season starts so he can wear his race # on his hat....

It sails and flaps merrily in the breeze....and matches his jaunty, cavalier personality....

Stan's beard came in handy as a mini-fridge....wonder if he set his heater to defrost on the way home....

I realized I still had my keys in my hand at race-time, so I had tossed them into a box, which blew away from under the gazebo and 20 people were looking for my keys that turned up in the back of the pick-up truck...shades of the Greylock-blue-sky-tornado last year?.....except I believe that had to do with undergarments or some such thing....

Race director Paul Hartwig along with Poncho Mach and Gotha Swann braved the cold and orchestrated the race from their heated pick-up....while everyone kind of milled around the engine...it's so much harder to run a race, than run a race in this weather...thank you all....

How many more conditions can one expect to experience in this snowshoeing business?... It certainly is not a boring sport....who talked me into this, anyhow?...said I would love it?

Oh...one more thing....before you drive to Greylock again....call Town Hall and make sure they haven't changed the names of the streets again.....

Off to Hawley!!!!

Carol (Cadillac) Kane

NEWS FLASH

Peter Waters from Redfeather Snowshoe Company is allowing us to sell the used REDFEATHER snowshoes we have in our possession.

There are two types, basically it boils down to this:

"Red" which have a neoprene decking that is a little more flexible and the "yellow" which have a harder "plastic like" less flexible decking. The bindings are the same as are the cleats.

Several of us have used both type and haven't noticed any performance differences. The "red" shoes are supposed to be a little more rugged over time. The largest difference is that the "red" shoes are selling for \$135 a pair while the "yellow" are \$100 a pair.

Whichever type you may be interested in, Redfeather will still honor their lifetime warranty against defect. This means that if something breaks you just contact Redfeather for a return authorization number and mail your shoes out to them - they in turn repair the problem free of charge. Just like if you purchased the shoes at your favorite retailer brand new.

The shoes are in very good condition as most were only used at the five events we held. If you have any questions or are interested you can contact me at:

Edtrnews@yahoo.com

860-668-7484

Last year we sold about 35 pair of the loaner Sherpa Shoes we had for the 1999 season and have really had no problems this season with them. Buying the used models saves you about 50% off the normal retail price for "new" snowshoes.

Edward Alibozek

HAWLEY KILN KLASSIC 7 MILE SNOWSHOE PLOD

Snow? Cripes!.... Driving up the night before in the snow storm and staying over in Northampton was definitely the way to go... after all... my goodness..... **some** people were late to the start and **some** people drove 100 miles... imagine that?.... when you put your lips to ice, don't they stick?

Observations of the Day.....

A weasel crossed the road in front of me on the drive over from Northampton.... a weasel!

Directions were a little shaky again folks... by the third time I asked directions from the gorgeous man in the gorgeous brand new green John Deere tractor..... "Well," he says... "just follow your nose.".... follow my nose.....

More people were falling in the parking lot than on the trails....

RD Ed was so patient as the race was held up by a latecomer... who was no latecomer on the trails.... woow, that Tracey was fast!!

We took off in clouds of newly fallen snow... it became apparent real quick how difficult it is to snowshoe in snow..... can't imagine being the front-runners in so much snow... definitely pays to be a middle-of-the-packer here.....

This was the race I was going to cream..... now I had 10.2 miles of snowshoe race experience behind me and this was going to be a piece of cake..... or at least easier...

There were several fatal mistakes I made this day...

1. There is no "right" way to dress.... it doesn't matter...you are going to sweat to death and freeze to death no matter what you do.....
2. Falling too much.... I fell 50 thousand times with bare hands, up to my elbows... I fell so much that I kept thinking I must have my snowshoes on the wrong feet (the "R" I marked them with is under my running shoe... so now I am not going to stop and take them off to check.... plus I wouldn't have done such a stupid thing as to put them on the wrong feet, right?.... right!... how in the world can the little tips on one snowshoe get hooked into the hole in the back of the other one.... is this some sort of technique that I've got wrong?..
3. Make sure gaiters are secure... early on, my left gaiter slipped down past my calf and started filling up with snow, melting with the heat and sweat of my leg and turning into a custom made ice pack.... so that by the end of the 1:58 and change, I was carrying around another Carol Kane on my left ankle.....
4. I had taken off every accessory and stuffed them into my tights.... so.... my earmuffs slipped down the back of my leg and were supporting my hamstrings.... my mittens, complete with heater packs were keeping my belly warm in the front..... and the neck gaiter that I ripped off my neck was stuffed into my tights and had worked it's way down so that it felt like a soggy diaper....
5. Oh yes...fatal mistakes... had not even a clue as to where the water stops may have been.... ate snow along the way and by the time I came in, I had snow blindness and terrible delirium..... gosh, that was fun!
6. Never let them see you sweat and never fall on the ground at the finish.... fatal mistakes!....

I definitely am coming away from this series with a total respect for the sport and the strong strong people who choose to beat themselves up in this manner.....

It was soooo much harder than the Watery Hill 6 Hour Race and makes Boston look like a tea party.....

What and where the heck is the Kiln... some people say it has special powers and some people are known to meditate in it....

Firehouse was fun... walked into the building with my snowshoes attached.... sat with Greg and Ken..... thanks Ken... I think I called him my Grandmother cause he saw how bad off I was and took off my snowshoes, gaiters and shoes... he must have children of his own.....

Heard the Bickersons put on quite a show.... missed that.....

Steve had a great first snowshoe race.... 11th overall.... wow!..... Debbie had never had snowshoes on before that day, but she is a strong runner and did exceptionally well her first time out....

Conversation came up re Stan and Andy and a possible accident... everyone was concerned... they should have been there.....

Firehouse chat was cool... got to talking about falling... funny some orally describing their falls...

Deb S said she fell a thousand times.... "Foommph"... she said she'd just get into a rhythm and then "Foommph"... say that again Deb.....

Darlene kept falling in front of me as I trailed her most of the race..... She fell a lot on the uphill and would exclaim "Foomm" everytime.... funny, she had the same technique as I, getting the tips tangled up... I had to physically unhook hers one time.... we got to laughing.... how in the world is that possible???.... try running pidgeon-toed Darlene... works for me..... "Foomm".....

My falls were more like "Flummp", followed by a loud Sh_ _!..... not every time, but after the first couple hundred falls, it got a little frustrating..... sorry to all those within earshot.... another nice quiet day on the trails.....

I explained that Bob Worsham's falling noises sound more like "Whoommf"... he says he lets this out every time he falls..... strange group.....

Firehouse food was great.... hot dogs and chili and cookies and hot chocolate... thank you to people who brought so that others could partake... it was nice...

Thank you to Farmer Ed and Company.... thank you Ellen for being out there on the trails... you were a welcome sight.... thanks again Ken..... thank you Laura.... Laura brought copies of the Saratogian (that covered the Saratoga race) for everyone.... and there was a fine young man, Tim Clark that was a huge help....

Meg and Chris did not come to Hawley because Meg had ankle surgery that week and is recovering nicely..... you were missed....

Richard was there with his number flapping from his hat... his trademark..... he just makes you smile.....

Ed... your Dad is one amazing person.... he had such a great run....

By the time everyone left, there was finally a nice path beaten to the firehouse door.....

Off to Moody...can't wait!

Carol (Cadillac) Kane

3RD ANNUAL HAWLEY KILN KLASSIC 7 MILE SNOWSHOE RACE

FEBRUARY 19, 2000 DUBUQUE S.F. HAWLEY, MA

01	Leigh Schmitt	27	South Deerfield, MA	1:17:49	90 Pts
02	Ken Clark	37	Somers, CT	1:18:04	88 Pts
03	Greg Loomis	25	Framingham, MA	1:26:58	86 Pts
04	Tracey Van Dyke	35	Lake Lazerne, NY	1:29:17	84 Pts
05	Dave Hannon	28	North Providence, RI	1:29:52	82 Pts
06	Bob Dion	44	Readsboro, VT	1:30:19	80 Pts
07	Jim Preite	35	North Adams, MA	1:30:23	78 Pts
08	John Pelton	60	West Rupert, VT	1:32:18	76 Pts
09	Beth Herder	41	Pittsfield, MA	1:33:10	74 Pts
10	Steve Sylvestro	50	Fairfield, CT	1:36:45	72 Pts
11	Bob Worsham	54	Woodstock, CT	1:37:54	70 Pts
12	Ed Buckley	41	Southampton, MA	1:40:04	68 Pts
13	Deborah Schieffer	25	Prospect, CT	1:44:04	66 Pts
14	Larry Dragon	39	Cheshire, MA	1:45:33	64 Pts
15	John Carey	38	Webster, MA	1:50:08	62 Pts
16	Kathleen Aubin	44	Manchester, NH	1:51:03	60 Pts
17	James Ruddock	32	South Deerfield, MA	1:55:10	58 Pts
18	Ed Alibozek Jr	60	Adams, MA	1:55:30	56 Pts
19	Marc Lombard	35	Greenfield, MA	1:56:50	54 Pts
20	Bob Wurtele	55	Manchester, NH	1:57:47	52 Pts
21	Darlene McCarthy	37	North Adams, MA	1:58:20	50 Pts
22	Carol Kane	54	Weston, CT	1:58:39	48 Pts
23	Karl Molitoris	44	Stafford Springs, CT	1:59:02	46 Pts
24	Laura Clark	52	Saratoga Springs, NY	2:01:46	44 Pts
25	Gene Primomo	41	Delmar, NY	2:04:30	42 Pts
26	Paul Evangelista	30	Albany, NY	2:06:39	40 Pts
27	Lisa Deggendori	25	South Deerfield, MA	2:09:37	38 Pts
28	Lisa Mentzer	31	Millbury, MA	2:12:48	36 Pts
29	Richard Busa	70	Marlboro, MA	2:13:30	34 Pts
30	Art Gulliver	61	Leominster, MA	2:20:48	32 Pts
31	Leon Beverly	73	Stamford, VT	2:25:53	30 Pts
32	Martin Glendon	53	Windsor, MA	2:29:24	28 Pts
33	Deborah Sylvestro	49	Fairfield, CT	2:34:48	26 Pts
34	Andy Illidge	34	Piscataway, NJ	2:57:00	24 Pts
35	Bryan Dragon	16	Cheshire, MA	3:00:04	22 Pts
36	Konrad Karolczuk	47	Windsor Locks, CT	3:08:30	20 Pts
37	Fran Mach	57	Adams, MA	3:16:39	18 Pts
38	Maria Capella	38	Suffield, CT	3:31:40	16 Pts
39	Phillip Capella	38	Suffield, CT	3:31:41	14 Pts
40	Mark Syrett	51	Hampden, MA	3:33:44	12 Pts
41	Nancy Syrett	53	Hampden, MA	(5 miles) 2:39:52	10 Pts
42	Jeff Clark	50	Saratoga, NY	(4 miles) 1:48:12	8 Pts
43	Ellen Mach	57	Adams, MA	(4 miles) 2:45:00	6 Pts
44	Denise Dion	40	Readsboro, VT	participated	4 Pts
45	Steve Attwell	35	New Haven, CT	participated	2 Pts

3rd Annual HAWLEY KILN KLASSIC 7 Mile Snowshoe Race February 19, 2000 AGE GROUP WINNERS

01 - 19	Vacant		Bryan Dragon	16	3:00:04	
20 - 29	Deborah Schieffer	25	1:44:04	Leigh Schmitt	27	1:17:49
30 - 39	Tracey Van Dyke	35	1:29:17	Ken Clark	37	1:18:04
40 - 49	Beth Herder	41	1:33:10	Bob Dion	44	1:30:19
50 - 59	Carol Kane	54	1:58:39	Steve Sylvestro	50	1:36:45
60 - 69	Vacant			John Pelton	60	1:32:18
70 - 72	Vacant			Richard Busa	70	2:13:30
73 - 75	Vacant			Leon Beverly	73	2:25:53

H.K.K. 2000

"SNOW AND GO"

It was treacherous driving to the February 19th running of the Hawley Kiln Klassic 2000. The day before had dumped a bunch of fresh snow on New England, and some of it was still drifting down early Saturday morning when I left Woodstock, CT for Hawley, MA. The Mass Pike was terrible from Palmer to Springfield; the right lane was snow covered but at least had tracks worn down to pavement. The left lane had about an inch of slush on it. Several people had discovered this in trying to pass in that lane and spinning gracefully into the deep snow of the median.

But guess what? This snowfall produced perfect conditions for what turned out to be a fantastic day at Hawley Kiln. The woods were beautiful and running on the fresh soft snow was like running on a cloud. I loved the downhill parts where it was sort of a combination of running and skiing. I don't have any idea what it was like for Leigh Schmitt and Ken Clark to be breaking that trail, but at least it wasn't hard crust they had to face. Leigh nipped Kenny for the win.

We were fortunate to have the trail-building guru in our midst riding around on his four-wheeler keeping an eye on things. This was Tom McCrumm who is responsible for forging much of the mountain biking trail we enjoyed running on.

We were also lucky to have such nice weather to hang around in at the start and after the race. It was not windy and it wasn't brutally cold, so you could actually eat the hot dogs that Curly Voll cooked and the special Donnalee chili that Tim Clark (Ken's son) was stirring. We also had use of the upstairs of the fire department that the race director, Farmer Ed Alibozek, had somehow secured. He must have bribed the fire chief with a copy of TrailRunner magazine and a ziploc baggy full of Hammer Gel samples. "Chief, these little packets of energy would be great while your volunteer firemen are fighting fires!"

One highlight of the day was when we were all lined up at the starting line waiting for the gun. A mini-SUV blew into the parking lot, slammed on it's brakes stopping right in the middle, and a tall long-haired beauty jumped out screaming, "I just drove a hundred miles for this race. Can you give me five minutes?" Of course the Farmer obliged. We were starting about 15 minutes late anyway because of the bad driving conditions, so what difference did it make to wait another five. You wouldn't find this kind of hospitality at a road race.

"SNO AND GO" {CONT}

It turns out that this woman is Tracey Van Dyke from Lake Luzerne, NY, and she is one strong snowshoer. She ended up finishing fourth overall, only behind Schmitt, Clark, and Greg Loomis. She crunched top runners like Dave Hannon, The Dion, Jim Priete, and John Pelton. Afterwards Dave Hannon was overheard saying that he had to re-assess his training regimen after being beaten by a girl. This was after he took a graceful fall on the ice in the parking lot at the finish.

Beth Herder finished 9th overall, adding lots of points to her series total. Although she is not in her usual top form now, she can still leave me in her wake, as I finished 11th.

Somewhere out there around mile three I was running with The Dion for awhile. I kept thinking, "Wow! I'm doing great, I'm going to finish near The Dion." Then he must have woke up, as he took off like a shot and I never saw him again. He must have been sorting through his grocery list in his mind, and when he got it all straight he decided to run like usual. Or then again, maybe he was giving the leaders a headstart and was trying to catch them as part of some strange training ritual.

Steve Sylvestro from Fairfield, CT bumped me out of my age category by placing 10th. However, he paid for it when his wife, Debbie, came across the finish line and chewed him out for talking her into a seven-mile run with leg weights (snowshoes) and foot impediments (snow). It seems this was her first time on snowshoes, and what other way to start than a seven-mile jaunt through the woods in deep soft snow. The fact that she persisted in the face of such adversity attests to her apparently strong abilities as a "normal" runner. We want you back Debbie, now that you know what it's like, but starting with one of the shorter races might have been less of a shock to your system.

Darlene McCarthy usually has something funny to contribute to snowshoe races, and this one was no exception. While running just ahead of Carol Kane Darlene's snowshoes kept getting stuck together at the back tips. Carol would have to reach down and unstick them for her. Now how in the world can one get the back tips of her snowshoes stuck together? That would be difficult to do if you were actually trying to do it, much less if you were running along in the snow. What would have happened if Carol had not been there? Would Darlene have just camped there overnight and hopped out in the morning? This could start a whole new sport.

Scott Hunter, race director of Mt. Toby, had the honor of finishing dead last when he showed up Sunday for the race. At least there were tracks in the snow for him to follow.

Although it was difficult driving Saturday morning it was well worth the effort to get to Hawley. It was an easy drive home by the afternoon. The 45 people who were in the event seemed to love playing in the new white stuff. Ellen Mach was out on the course cheering everyone on while Poncho was eating hot dogs with mustard on his face. One thing that I regret is that I totally forgot to walk up to the end of that first straightaway to see the "Hawley Kiln." This engineering marvel is a sight worth seeing. Next year I will personally lead a tour of the Kiln before the race for all the women who have not seen it (one at a time). Thanks to Ed for providing a great day to have fun in the middle of Massachusetts wilderness.

WorShamer

THE BAD LITTLE BOYS GO TO SARATOGA

Started out from Connecticut early on that beautiful Saratoga Snowshoe Sunday. What a day...crisp blue sky, flying across Route 84 into New York and up the Northway...what a great morning for a drive. Favorite music blasting, coffee mug full, feeling invincible, anticipating a beautiful romp in the snow through Saratoga Spa State Park. Nothing could ruin this outta sight day. Well, almost nothing....

We probably all have had an unpleasant encounter such as the one I'm about to describe. There I was, driving along, minding my own business, just below Saratoga, eager to arrive and see everyone. I had just passed a vehicle and made sure it was clear for me to change lanes. Looking through my rear view mirror, it was 1955 and there in the reflection, was a carload of teenage boys, out cruisin' and lookin' for trouble...not big trouble, I could tell, but just teenage boys being typical teenage boys. The kind who pull up next to you and laugh at you and make faces? And then double up with their own particular brand of self-serving, low-life humor? In that reflection, I could see the car fairly rocking back and forth with animation from within. They were literally jumping out of their seats. What the heck? As their car picked up speed, I dropped my speed, hoping they would shoot ahead and I could avoid what I began to dread and was probably the inevitable. No such luck, timing was perfect, and as they pulled up alongside me, I chanced a quick glance hoping it wouldn't be so in this day and age, and if it was to be so, let's get this over with. Sure enough, there they were, making faces, you know the kind, thumbs in ears, waving fingers, tongues stuck out...eyes crossed.... typical little boy stuff...such immaturity..... then the car rocked again as they jumped up and down in their seats, howling....they were having the best time...they thought they were so funny. Do I look like that much of a target? Why me? But wait a minute, something is familiar about these goons..... first of all they look much too old to be doing this sort of thing and secondly they look a bit familiar.... hard to tell, going 65 mph. Holy cow...it's Ed and Karl and Bob and Ken and Richard. Now this is too much...but in retrospect makes perfect sense....of all the nerve! The highlight of their day! Well, I just flip them the... sock (Smartwool, of course) and smash down on the accelerator to blow them off. Ed checks his speedometer and resumes 45 in a 65mph zone and I leave them in the dust....the car is still rocking....I can see them in my mirror as I exit for Saratoga Spa State Park. Wait till we get to the parking lot!

Wait!...where is the parking lot? It's somewhere around here.....15 minutes later, I'm still going in circles looking for the parking lot...while Ed and crew are still looking for the entrance to the park. Yes! How does it feel to get lost going to a race, Ed? And how about mile marks from the exit?.....Bob insisted that the odometer be set at the precise moment to accurately assess the distance from the exit to the turn into the park....he couldn't deal with the term "approximately 6 miles". Now I don't know the method that race directors use for measuring miles when giving directions to races, but I guarantee that they have been wrong every single time....guaranteed!!!!....Bob says the miles are more like 3 point something and I think they are all nuts....it wasn't even 2 miles...I don't get it at all..... Anyway, now they arrive and pile out...a bunch of raucous, immature schoolboys... guffawing and arguing about miles and something about point systems...just so typical... The race itself was just spectacular. Laura Clark put on one fine day and everyone had a great time....I couldn't stay for the great post-race festivities, but as I was leaving, the little boys were still up to their antics....making public spectacles of themselves, still arguing and guffawing, changing their clothes right out in the open, in front of everyone. ...no shame, these exhibitionists..... but you know what they say...boys will be boys.....

Carol Kane

COMING SOON IN SNO-NEWS

In three weeks we will have the next results packet done, including:

Moody Springs Results and Stories.

WMAC Snowshoe Series 2000 Final Standings.

Blue Mountain, Tymore Snowfest, Mt Prospect, Empire State Games and more!!.

Googolplex of Form.

Tentative Schedule for 2001, including some new races!!

Whatever else we can come up with....

*Thanks,
ed*

HKK - RACE DIRECTOR REPORT

Hawley Kiln lured the faithful out on a day many opted for warm covers over their heads. While the drive to the event was a chore for everyone, the conditions were about optimum for snowshoeing. It isn't often that we get about a foot of fresh snow dumped on a course the night prior to a race.

We had been out in these woods the previous week's Friday, and the snow was pretty wet, heavy and deep then. After we did our marking in 3.5 hours the cut in the snow was fairly firm. If things stayed the same it would be another fast day at HKK.

On Thursday before the race, my father and I snowshoed the course and made some adjustments. We had a fairly easy time of things, with the one exception being the Bog Trail which has in previous years been used by snowmobilers, but this season was unbroken single track. All in all the course looked about 5 minutes slower than last season.

Friday was time to place up the arrows and finalize the details that most trail races don't have to concern themselves with; a warm place for participants, a rescue vehicle, someone to plow the parking lot, getting water out to the middle of a course for aid, etc.

About a mile into the course it started snowing pretty good. Big old flakes coming down obscuring the tracks as quickly as they were made. If this was going to keep up for any length of time the course was not going to be 5 minutes slower, that was for sure.

It was another 3 hour day on the HKK course. I left the parking area of the Hawley Firestation in a blizzard and physically worn out. It had been three times around the deep rugged snow of that course in the last 7 days for me, along with a Moby Dick up Greylock factored in that time frame also. I now just hoped that people would actually show up the following day in what was becoming a decent winter storm.

The weirdest thing that happened prior to the race was a prank phone call I had on my machine Friday night. Some joker pretending to be Richard Busa stated that he wouldn't be able to make the event. This was a true shocker, Richard not making a snowshoe race? Well, at 9:45 am who is in line waiting for his number but Rich!

The drive back to the Kiln was slow but enjoyable on Saturday morning. I had Andy Illidge with me, he offered to start early to break a path for the racers. Andy took a Wide World of Sports "Agony of Defeat" fall into a brook at the South Pond Shuffle with temperatures below zero, and hadn't run a step since. His theory was that if he started with everyone, he would go out racing and have to walk 6 out of the 7 miles after tiring out. His decision was that he might as well just leave early to enjoy the solitude and pristine nature of the woods and walk the whole thing.

The snow was incredibly deep. Luckily for the shoers in the race, not only Andy was breaking the path but also K2, Phil and Maria Capella, and Bryan Dragon all volunteered to start early to help out. For those reading who haven't been to a snowshoe race, if you think trail racing events are low key and laid back you ought to see this offshoot. The amount of volunteer help is staggering, I can't say enough about each and every one lending a hand in some regard.

We had some late arrivals to the race, and everyone waited politely for the two young ladies to ready themselves. Both the ladies who arrived just as we were going to blow the whistle on the start were pre-registered. We had their numbers all filled out with pins attached. This seriously sped up the process of getting them ready. Race Directors love nothing more than pre-registered runners! We all know that schedules at times make it tough to commit sometimes until the last minute. But if there is even a remote possibility that you think you are going to an event a quick phone call or email to the director with your name, age and the rest really can help out the whole registration process. Last year Karl Molitoris wrote a wonderful piece about the "Rules of Trailrunning". He included tons of wisdom from both a running and directing perspective. I will try to get the article reprinted soon.

So, minor halt of the start but soon the crowd was off and kicking up a cloud of snow on their way towards the kiln. If you have no clue what the kiln is I won't spoil it by trying to relate into words the experience it holds. Come on out next time. Climb into it's belly and do your thinking before the race, it worked once for *the Worsham*.

The coolest thing about a snowshoe race is from year to year there really is no clear idea what kind of time will win the event, even with the same participants racing it. Again, that insightful wizard of wit Karl Molitoris wrote a fine tale of snowshoeing course records once upon a time, and how meaningless they really are. Our first race this season, the South Pond Shuffle 4 miler had the same winner as the year prior, but the time was *30 minutes* faster this time!! Most people felt that the HKK course would be slow this time, but how slow is always hard to judge.

The answer came fairly quickly as Leigh Schmitt appeared out of the confines of the woods lined trail in just under 1:18. This is Leigh's second consecutive year winning this event, with this season being 20 minutes longer. Leigh was followed by WMAC Snowshoe Series points leader Kenny Clark, who was only 11 seconds back. Even with the crew of shoers starting early and breaking trail it wasn't easy for Leigh and Ken, who took turns leading throughout the 7 mile course. In third overall was Greg Loomis, about 9 minutes behind. It was good to see him have such a good day place wise as he had some misfortune with his shoes at South Pond.

Tracey Van Dyke finished 4th overall, taking the woman's crown back home to Lake Lazerne, NY with her. Beth Herder topped the 40+ division and finished 9th overall (2nd woman). Beth is currently leading the WMAC points series for the ladies, by a huge margin as she has managed two 1st and two 2nd place finishes so far. In third place was Deborah Schieffer, 13th overall.

As hard as it is to believe, there were some new age group course records set. Tracey Van Dyke knocked a couple minutes off Sweep Voll's old 30+ ladies mark. This was a second consecutive win in our snowshoe series for Tracey, she also finished first at Saratoga Winterfest. The amazing John Pelton took 16 minutes off the prior record for 60+ on his way to an 8th place finish overall. The two silverbacks battling it out also set age group course records. Richard Busa set a beauty of a mark for 70 - 72 and Leon Beverly added the benchmark for 73 - 75. It is good for my spirit to see that five of the 45 participants were over 60 years old. There were also five ladies 49 and over snowshoeing this day.

There are some really cool individual races going on at these things. Marc Lombard and Farmer Ed the elder have gone back and forth at each event through the series, and the pair of dynamos known as Laura Clark and Carol Kane have really had some amazing races. Carol certainly left nothing on the course Saturday.

While it never gets truly easy snowshoeing, it usually does tend to get a little easier the further back in the pack you are under deep snow conditions. There was so much snow Saturday though that it never really got easier no matter where you were in the pack, as the snow just kept filling in and stayed slippery for all the competitors. Finishing these 7 miles was easily the time equivalent of doing twice that number, and for energy expenditure Andy Illidge thought it was equal to the marathons he had done. Carol Kane placed it in context as she said "Well that was soooooo much harder than the Watery Hill Six-Hour, 34 miler."

The amount of strength it took these 40+ participants to shuffle through the rugged slopes of Hawley at a pace that basically was only a walk is a testament to each persons ability to appreciate the forest and conditions we are given each day. While the times and pace per mile for each contestant won't boggle anyone's mind when looking back at the results, the fact that each person had their heart rate redlined from the word go until crossing the finish line which was in all its glory a plowed snowbank should be remembered. Finishing this race this day is an accomplishment everyone can be proud of.

Edward Alibozek

BURIED AT HAWLEY

Apparently Jeff and I weren't the only ones with the same thought -- "Could a snowshoe race be cancelled because of snow?" Emails were drifting down almost as thickly as the snowflakes over Race Director Ed's computer terminal, as he spent a good portion of Friday afternoon reassuring everyone that Hawley, although buried, was still accessible to snowmobiles, huskies and helicopter pilots. Hopefully, there would be a small contingent of these various transportation modes awaiting nerve-wracked travelers at the Hairpin Turn Restaurant on Route 2... well, something to think about for next year, Ed.

Perhaps some of you had a choice: whether to play in the mountain of snow rapidly forming in your own backyard or to drive up twisty mountain roads and play in someone else's snow. For most, this would be a no-brainer. But to WMAC snowshoers, this "weather event" (gotta love the current radio weather-speak) presented a dilemma that was in no way related to common sense. After all, Hawley was double points and there was only one more race to go after that! Luckily, Jeff and I didn't have to resort to mathematical calculations to make our decision. We were stuck, having in our possession six pairs of loaner snowshoes that were desperately needed on race day.

We briefly considered driving up Friday night and building an igloo next to the kiln, but we first had to shovel our way out of our own driveway. We began in the late afternoon, finished in time for a late pizza break and then did it all over again. Good thing we wouldn't be running on our arms! Dawn again saw us with shovels in hand. Driving would actually be a relief. At least it's done from a sitting position.

Once on the road, we were forced to admit that we truly were out of our minds. So we decided to punctuate occasional moments of sheer driving terror by seeing if we could find other people who were at least as insane as we were. This wasn't hard. We noticed someone with a heavy-duty plow who forgot that even the lightest snow tends to accumulate weight when being pushed around in huge quantities. He was standing at the top of his driveway trying to shovel out his plow. Probably took him the rest of the day, too. We saw a teenager pedaling his bike on the side of the road, holding a cigarette in his gloveless hands. But mostly we saw lots of twisty road. We could sympathize with Tracey Van Dyke, who skidded into the parking lot after nearly three hours on (and sometimes off) the road and promptly exited her vehicle and kissed the ground. Perhaps Ed might consider rewarding all the Hawley adventurers by calculating another point system based on travel time, mode of transportation and stress encountered en route.

Once out of the car, things were not much better. The freshly plowed parking lot was not exactly the home-free zone it appeared to be. On closer inspection, Jeff noticed it was pockmarked with human-sized bathtub indentations revealing the glassy surface underneath. He got to observe this rather close-up from the prone position as he lay buried under six pairs of loaner snowshoes. But once the race began, all the hassles were quickly forgotten. The trail, under all that newly fallen snow, promised to be a special treat. Still, something seemed different about our send-off over the snowbanks. After a while, I figured it out. You could hold an actual conversation (once you caught your breath) with the person nearest you. Our snowshoes weren't making any noise! The snow was so fluffy that it muffled all but the loudest sounds, those made by out-of-control humans crashing into nature. And the only nature available to crash into was the trees. Everything else - rocks, twigs, even streams-was buried. However, for the mid-and end-packers, the downhill were slippery enough to provide ample colliding and hugging opportunities.

After a while, I found myself with roughly the same group of people who watched me fall into the water at South Pond. It's really odd how we tend to end up in the same groupings even when we don't start out that way. For a while Carol Kane and I played tag, alternating between following and leading. But our pattern was puzzling. For a while, I'd be happily shadowing Carol, grateful that someone else would get to do the crashing and sinking ahead of me. But invariably Carol's pace would slow and I'd pass her. After a while, I'd surreptitiously glance behind me and she would be nowhere in sight. A bit longer, and she'd be right behind me again, breathing hard. Her pattern was uneven. Sometimes the uphill would do her in, but sometimes it would be the downhill. I finally figured it out-she must be a sprinter needing to catch her breath between rounds. It was disconcerting, to say the least, never being able to predict just when she would appear or disappear. I figured that, being a sprinter, she would probably beat me on the final straightaway. I wish. At least then I would have seen her finish! As it was, we were several minutes apart. Later on, in the wonderfully warm firehouse, she told me that she was having trouble with her asthma. So if you hear heavy breathing behind you and glance back to find no one there, it might just be Carol and not the dreaded Trail Ghost.

Meanwhile, Jeff was having his own encounter with Truth and Honesty. Having opted for a shorter course, he was sorely tempted to eliminate the return loop in the woods and take the firmly packed snowmobile trail back. However, Conscience prevailed and he decided upon the more scenic, albeit tougher route. Later, back at the fire station, he had his own light bulb moment when the owner of the snowmobile, revealed that road not taken, while flatter, was most definitely a few miles longer. Sometimes righteousness gets rewarded.

On the way home, the driving was definitely slipping into the mundane once again. Just as my sleepy eyes were about to close (It's OK, I wasn't driving), I spotted the same man on the same tractor, still plowing away at his buried driveway. And now a riddle: Who was the craziest - the person who spent all morning working on the same small patch of land with nothing much to show for his effort or the persons who spent that same amount of time engaging in exciting adventure opportunities, both on and off the road?

Laura Clark

THANKS

As is always the case, these things don't happen without help from many. It may not make for interesting reading, but we believe that those who give so freely and unselfishly of their time should be singled out. Thank you for being receptive of the honor role of volunteers at this seasons Hawley Kiln Klassic:

Tom McCrumm, Greg Cox, Hawley Firefighters Association, Dennis Moore, Massachusetts DEM, K2, Andy, Jiaan, Donnalee, Poncho, Ellen, Tim Clark, Curly, Old Farmer Ed, Judy, Slugrunner, Phil and Maria, Laura and Jeff, everyone who has handled snowshoes through the year for us, the great officers and people of WMAC, the competitors and the wanderers who just want to get out in winter and enjoy the snow. Thanks everyone!

For each participant who has walked away with a raffle award, the thanks go to Beth Herder. She has managed to supply all the prizes and has handled the raffle portion of the events at South Pond and two years at Hawley Kiln. It appears she may take the day off of racing at Moody Spring so that I may have a chance to enjoy that course. This is the leader of the woman's division for the series points. I am a very fortunate person to have so many caring people around me. The snowshoeing crowd is among the most unselfish group of folks I have ever met.

Finally, those who write so wonderfully for the newsletters, a great big Thank You!! The first snowshoe results flyer was basically written by Laura Clark and Carol Kane. I can not say enough about the support these two ladies have shown to the series. And to Bob Worsham, thanks always for being there in my times of doubt, you can dry your eyes on my sleeve good buddy.

I realize as usual I will have slighted mentioning someone. If this has happened please let me know as this is not my intention!!!!

For Stan and Andy, thanks for your attempt. It was most rewarding to find out the two of you are ok. Your passion for adventure left you sidetracked this time, but Moody Springs is right around the corner.

Edward Alibozek

**WMAC SNOWSHOE SERIES
93 BRANDYWINE LANE
SUFFIELD, CT 06078**

THANK YOU ALL FOR PARTICIPATING AND SUPPORTING THE SNOWSHOE SERIES!!

WWW.RUNWMAC.COM/SNOWSHOES

WHY I LIVE

After work I drove into Sherborn, MA (home of Bill Rodgers-still haven't seen him out running) and got on the BCT (Bay Circuit Trail) at 5:15pm. The sun was a big orange ball sitting on the hill to my right and its lowering caused the sky to go from blue to yellow-orange-pink-purple to black as it faded more and more.

I had my snowshoes in my trunk so I just got them out and shuffled off. So I try running and decide that it's quite hard for my frame of mind so I walk some - watching the white wet snow crush into clear watery ice slides as I stomp along. Many deer have used this trail too for their tracks are everywhere. I wonder how long the trail has been here and if the deer created it or was it the Indian/Native Americans?

I pass by houses from a safe distance in the woods but the warm glow of their yellow lights alerts their presence. I try to be quiet but the snowshoes are loud in this still night. I press on running until I feel like a break, walking until I feel like a challenge.

The sky is darkening and the stars begin to be visible - (they are there all day too, you just can't see em) Orion's belt stands up bright and bold and I wonder what the heck the rest of him is supposed to look like, and feel sorry for city dwellers who do not get to see this wondrous painting above.

I cross a road and dart back into the darkness as a car passes. I wonder if I look as foreign to him as he in his machine of modern day looks to me. I shuffle on thinking it will be good to run this hill strong as thoughts of Massanutten and Hardrock dance in my head. Will I be ready for those "events"? Is anyone really ever ready.?

I come to an overlook that lets one see the Charles River, iced up and looking cold in this surprisingly mild night. I have no gloves on but am not even cold. My feet are wet (darn cotton) but I am comfortable.

I turn around and track back in complete darkness yet the trail seems to glow. It is white and seems to be lit in the star's brilliance. What a great night, people just don't know what they are missing. For me, sleep - eat - work - TV - repeat is not enough. I need to see things... The squirrel scrambling on the snow- jumping up to the branch running full tilt with no fear of falling. The deer snort - to warn me that I am perhaps not where I should be. To feel the wind, the breath of Mother Earth, tinkle my ears and sway the trees as they dance around me.

Yes I run to be fit and healthy, to be fast and strong, to be able to accomplish feats that seem unobtainable to many, but mainly because it is fun. It is Why I live.

*Greg Loomis
02/24/00*

TIMES AND MILEAGE

I have had a few tree experiences recently. You see, I am hooked on snowshoeing so bad that I am an ultra snowshoe runner. I am in the woods all the time, bushwacking up small cliffs and mountains for 4 or 5 hours at a clip. The more difficult or deeper the powder the better. Deer are my friends now, I saw a hemlock den and then tracked a group - surprised the five them and gave a fun chase. They won.

But back to trees... Sweet and sour. Yesterday I was lucky to be shoeing in Vermont and came across a huge white pine. I gave this tree a hug (or tried to, as my arms were pitifully inadequate) I believe that the tree hugged me back in the very cool way that trees do and gave me a little of her power. But, sadly today, as I romped with deer and explored the Wilbraham Mountain ridge line, I found that all of the hemlocks are infested with what appears to be the disease I have heard about. It saddens my heart that this may be the end of the great New England hemlock, to follow in the path of the American Chestnut?

I have babbled on long enough about non-running, but I have two reasons for doing so...

One being that I remember Debra Reno is a true lover of nature and the other is that there is so much more to trail running than times and mileage and times and mileage.

*SlugRunner
02/23/00*