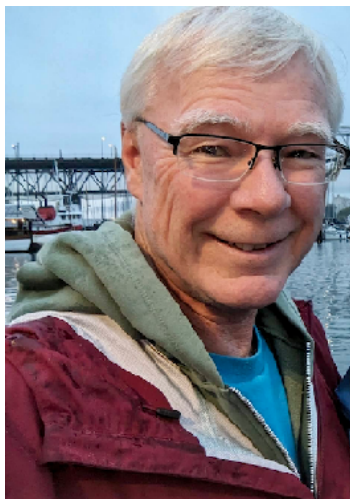


SKI TRACKER

50th Anniversary of the BSC!!

From the President

Dan Purdon



Welcome to the first newsletter of the 2026/27 Bruce Ski Club season. In this newsletter will be important information on the dates and process for renewing your membership or for the younger ones, registration dates for the Jackrabbit program. This is the first of three seasonal newsletters arriving by email to inform you of what's been happening since you put your skis to "bed" in the spring, in

addition to plans and events the club has for the upcoming season. This year is a special one in the history of the club as 50 years ago a small group of keen skiers held an organizing meeting, the result of which was the formal start of the club the following season. 50 years later from this grass roots start, the continuing efforts of generations of volunteers continues to expand upon the mission of the club to "establish and maintain , on a volunteer basis, cross country ski trails for the benefit, education and enjoyment of members and nonmembers". Look for information in the newsletter on ski and outdoor apparel you can order in time for Christmas with the club and 50th logo on them.

As always, volunteer work continues after our trails close down in the spring and this year an exceptional spring runoff left our parking lot impersonating a swimming pool! Quick work by Rick , Fred and others kept the impact to a minimum. One change you will see this season is the rebuilding of the change room in Gerry's Cabin which moisture and drainage damage required. Off season changes you may not see is the re levelling of the parking lot and upgrades to our security system (thanks Andrew and Fred). Once you resume skiing you will get to enjoy a new trail (Trillium Way) on the former Skidoo trail. The Kiwanis Club of Owen Sound is allowing us to add to our trail system at the Sawmill

Nordic Centre. Both the Colpoys and Sawmill Trails will have new Scandic grooming snowmobiles as the club moves toward the replacement of all three older such machines and we continue efforts to enhance our trail grooming overall. Feedback on these efforts is always welcome.

Inflation, equipment repair and replacements have resulted in the decision by the Directors, and approved by the membership, to raise membership and day pass fees for the upcoming season. After a review of fee schedules of similar clubs in Ontario we see this year's increase as the 1st of a two year process to balance our expected operating budget and restore funds used from our reserve, to purchase two new groomers. Our new rates remain significantly lower than the norm and continue the club's mission "to keep the cost of operations of the trails and programs affordable". We do welcome donations made to the club as we anticipate the purchase of a third and final Scandic groomer to be on site for next season.

As always we are welcoming new volunteers to the club, so welcome to Adrian Hussey, a new Director, and Tasha Schmidt, our new Registrar. Eli Heyden Thomas and Andy Cox have stepped up this year and will jointly assume responsibility for maintaining the Colpoys trails. I do want to highlight a need for lead coaches and "want to be" coaches who we can support in receiving their certification for our Jackrabbit program. This wonderful program can only continue if we continue to have volunteers who step up to lead this 10 week program.

New volunteers also means recognizing members who have stepped by from their longtime presence in the club. This includes Ruth Scheel, where does one start on her roles in the club, who finished up her Director's term in September, and Heidi Tones our longtime Registrar. As most know, Heidi was involved in a serious road biking accident three months ago and our thoughts and hopes have been with her and her family over this time. Wishing her a continued recovery and looking forward to seeing Heidi and Tim on the trails this winter.

Bring on another snowy winter! _____



Upcoming Events

Registration

Oct. 15, 2026 - Early Bird Registration

Nov. 30, 2026 - End of Early Bird Registration

Trail Clean Up

Nov. 7, 2026 - Colpoys trail clean up 10:00am

Nov. 7, 2026 - Sawmill trail clean up 10:00

Ski Swap

Nov. 7, 2026 - Suntrail Source for Adventure
9-12am

Ski Club Exchange Dates

Jan. 3 - 9, 2027 Sauble Beach

Jan. 10 - 16, 2027 Glenelg

Jan. 17 - 23, 2027 Owen Sound

Jan. 24 - 30, 2027 Beaver Valley

Interclub, Southern Ontario District Races

Jan. 24, 2027 - Community Classic

Feb. 14, 2027 - Suntrail Special

Feb. 15, 2027 - King's Court Sprints

Jackrabbits' "Rabbit Report"

Erin Scheel and Tara Harpur

Hello all! We're gearing up for another great Jackrabbit season, with snow, skis, and smiles!

For a little refresher, and some history, the Jackrabbit program is Canada's official national youth cross-country skiing skill development program. It takes its name from legendary ski pioneer Hermann "Jackrabbit" Smith-Johannsen, who blazed many trails, skied thousands of kilometres, and lived by the motto "never rust and never rest" until he finally did at age 111—officially the oldest living man on Earth at this time - in 1987!

In that spirit, every year we welcome the generation of Jackrabbits to the sport. **Registration for the 2027 Jackrabbit program opens October 15 @ 8AM.** Our program will accept 100 skiers, and is best suited for ages 4-14. Sessions run Saturday mornings, 10AM-12PM, January 2 through March 6 @ Sawmill Nordic in Hepworth.

The program is also volunteer run, and this requires new coaches and coordinators to join our ranks every season. The Bruce Ski Club will connect any willing coaches to courses and accreditation, and will reimburse your costs.

If you've got two feet and a heartbeat, we can find you a role... reach out to jackrabbits@bruceskiclub.ca.

The program is about community, fundamentals, and fun! I mean, who could deny this magic? _____ 



Race Director Report

Marilyn Suke

After a nearly perfect season of racing at Sawmill in 2026 we are looking for a repeat in 2027!

Bruce Ski Club hosts a number of races over the season. Some are hosted primarily by our local High Schools and Elementary schools. Others are official Southern Ontario District races and attract a large number of racers from our neighbouring Nordic ski clubs (Orangeville, Duntroon, Orillia, Parry Sound). Indeed, due to the excellence and accessibility of our trails and grooming, we also have London area schools holding their races on our trails. This year we hope to host a small sprint race in addition to these established races to provide more sprint learning opportunities to our youngest skiers.

With the exception of the London school races, all these races require volunteers! That's where you come in! Volunteering for races, and becoming a part of our race support team is an excellent way to contribute to BSC and

to support a dedicated group of skiers and racers (young and old).

To volunteer, all you need is enthusiasm. Races are held both during the week and on weekends. There are inside and outside jobs, jobs that require some skiing ability and many that require none. There are jobs that happen days before the actual race day (so you can volunteer and participate!) and jobs that require only a small amount of time on race day.

While no prior knowledge of racing is required, it is very helpful to the club if members have their Officials Course. This is offered by Nordic Canada through the website www.coach.ca. If you choose to take this course and volunteer at races, BSC will cover the cost. Here is the link

<https://thelocker.coach.ca/onlinelearning#CC-O-E>

Please refer to the race schedule in this newsletter and check off 'will volunteer at races' when you buy your BSC membership this year.

Looking forward to having you join our fun and friendly racing crew! mpsuke@gmail.com 

Registrar

Tasha Schmidt

It's that time of year again! Online registration opens on October 15th, with the Early Bird Fees ending November 30th. You can register on zone4.ca: search for Join Bruce Ski Club 2026. We will also have an Ipad set up at Suntrail Source for Adventure, in Hepworth, where their friendly staff can assist you. After you register, we will email a parking pass to print off and put on your dash. (See example below)

Visitors can access day passes at both Colpoys and Sawmill trails.

When registering, be sure to check off some volunteer activities. Volunteering is a nice way to get to know other members, give back and keep our fees down since we are a volunteer club.

If you are a teacher or community leader please contact me at registrar@bruceskiclub.ca for paperwork. No

skier/snowshoer may be on the trails **without the signed paperwork.**

If you plan to help with any trail clean up, you **must be registered for insurance purposes**, before you can be on the trails. 



**Sawmill
Nordic
Centre**

Trail Captain

Rick Graham

We're getting excited for another Nordic ski season and hoping for lots of snow. Despite a wet spring, all the hard work put in over the summer at the trails has us looking good for the season ahead. Looking forward to seeing some of you at our fall trail cleanups. Here's to a snowy winter and lots of great days on the trail.

Sawmill Groomers. 

Do you have a Truck?

Dave White

We are gearing up for the upcoming winter season and need a helping hand to get our community ski trail in top shape. We are looking for a volunteer (or two!) with a **personal pickup truck** to help transport and distribute wood chips along the trail on the Georgian Bluffs property. Please contact Dave at newskitrail@gmail.com if you can help out. 

Facilities Manager

Fred Schlenker

It has been a busy and productive summer. The uncharacteristic spring flood instigated some repairs at Gerry's place. As it turns out our parking lot is in a low spot with no drainage other than straight into the ground. We had a canoeable lake for a while! You may be aware that Gerry's place had 6 inches (15 cm) of water in it for the better part of a week, the equipment shed had closer to a foot and in places the parking lot was waist deep. When the water receded we were fortunate to receive some help from Dennis Both. He was able to lend us professional drying equipment from Georgian Bay Chemical.

As it turns out the main part of the cabin fared very well. The bottom course of logs seemed unconcerned about soaking in water for a week. It's a good thing they're cedar logs. The wooden electrical race that powers the baseboard heaters also survived. This was an opportunity to remove it and inspect it. A few minor mouse holes were plugged up as a result. Dan Purdon and I added stain which will help with the longevity of this race.

The change room was another story. Upon removing the lower course of inside boards it became evident that there was significant damage to the wall structure. This was not from the flood. It was from a combination of squirrels and a leak in the roof that had been fixed a long time ago. The decision was made to rebuild the change room walls. Rick Graham and I worked away at this over the summer. We added a concrete sill to the original pad such that the new wall sits up off of the floor. The new wall is much better insulated than it was and has that type of insulation that squirrels and mice don't like to eat (rockwool). Chris Hodgkinson spent a day with his backhoe and nicely reshaped the contour of the soil behind Gerry's place. The water should run away rather than towards the building. There is also a plan to add an eaves trough. At the time of this writing, the right hand gable of Gerry's Place is still in need of fixing. The fascia has managed to take on water and has rotted. More effort to keep the squirrels out will be helpful. Several garbage bags full of unwanted pine cones tucked away in the ceiling were removed during the process for reinsulating the change room!

We had a round of bulldozing later in the spring. Randy Robertson once again did his magic. We did a

reshaping of Christmas Tree Run, and more significantly, we finished the new trail section that attaches Grunt to the junction of trails just inside the Georgian Bluffs property. This new trail follows what used to be the snowmobile trail. It is easily accessible from the short connector that joins Christmas Tree Run / Kiwanis Loop to Grunt. There's only a small hill to climb once you make a left on Grunt to get to the new trail.

With respect to level of difficulty it's hard to know if this trail should be red (moderate) or green (easy). After some consideration, the decision has been made to label it red. Personally I think it's more of a green but could become red on an icy day. There is a long gentle downhill curve leading back to the trail junction. On an icy day this could become fairly fast. I think to be more precise this should be labeled a "Red Green" trail. The trail has been named "Trillium Way". I hope you have the opportunity to walk there sometime in the spring. There is an amazing abundance of trilliums!

As for the trail up to the top of the old landfill hill, there are some logistical difficulties keeping this trail groomed anywhere close to the same level of grooming found on the other trails. It cannot be groomed for skate, or track set with our current equipment. This trail will be groomed more by chance than on a regular daily schedule. The trail will be marked on the trail map with dashes and added to the map legend. I would consider it a black (difficult) trail.

I would like to thank Greg Rodger and the Kiwanis Club of Owen Sound for their help and encouragement to take this section of trail on. Greg Rodger has retired from his role as caretaker of many years. Many thanks for his help and the permission he gave us on many occasions to let us do what we needed to do to make our ski trails work on their property.

I hope you are looking forward to the ski season. I hope the snow gods are in our favour. Our Trail cleaning day is Saturday November the 7th. Please meet at the parking lot at 10:00 a.m. There will be a need for pruners and few small hand saws as well as the usual shovels and rakes. This is the same morning as the ski swap at Suntrail Source for Adventure.

A reminder that for insurance purposes, you will need to be registered with BSC before participating in the trail clean up day.





Spring Flood 2026



Ski Swap 2026

Andrew Howlett

Suntrail Source for Adventure is hosting our ski swap on Saturday November 7th. Bring your stuff for sale to Suntrail Source for Adventure between Sunday November 1st and Friday November 6th, between 10am and 4pm. On Saturday morning we will start handing out numbers at 8am. We let people have a look at the available equipment between 8:30 and 9am. The sale starts at 9 and ends at noon.

I will phone everyone who has unsold stuff between 1pm and 2pm.

YOU MUST PICK UP UNSOLD STUFF BEFORE 5PM.

Abandoned equipment becomes the property of Bruce Ski Club.

See you in November _____





Colpoys Ski Trail

Eli Heyden Thomas
and Andy Cox

This year, we can use lots of help for the Trail clean up day taking place on Nov. 7, 2026 beginning at 10:00. This is the same date as the trail clean up at Sawmill and the Ski Swap at Suntrail Source for Adventure. Pruners, small hand saws, shovels and rakes would be useful tools to bring. You may also want to bring water and some snacks.

Please take some time to register with the Bruce Ski Club prior to participating in the clean up day to meet the club's liability requirements.

See you at trails!



Congratulations to Shawn Radcliffe who received a BSC jacket for his volunteer contribution to the club. The award was presented by Mike Campbell. (left)



New BSC Gear!

Marianne Waito

Good news for anyone looking to show their BSC pride on the trails and around town: we have two ways to get club gear this year, and both are available in adult and junior sizes.

1. **Suntrail Source for Adventure: Daehlie jackets, full-zip pants, toques and headbands.** Suntrail is one of our club's patrons and a generous supporter of the BSC so we're thrilled to partner with them on this gear. We'll be placing one large order on **November 15th** so everything arrives in time for Christmas. Stop in to try things on and make sure you get the right size. When you're ready, place your order here: [\[Suntrail gear\]](#)
2. **Hometown Sports (Owen Sound): made-to-order casual clothing.** Looking for something for off the trails? Hometown Sports offers made-to-order casual wear, and you're welcome to stop in and try things on for size. Orders can be submitted all year long and typically take 3-4 weeks to arrive. Browse and order here: [\[BSC casual clothing\]](#)

Questions about gear? Reach out to mariannewaito@gmail.com. _____



GBN Report

Nora Scott

The 2026–2027 ski season is off to a great start for Georgian Bay Nordic! Dryland training is underway, and we are excited to welcome four new members to the club, all of whom have graduated from Jackrabbits. A big welcome to Graydon, Evelyn, Evey, and Parker!

Our coaching team for 2026–2027 includes Matt Nelson as Head Coach, along with Jason Angus, Jack Van Dorp, Chris Hodgkinson, and our newest coach, Victor Hopper. We are very excited to welcome Victor to the team! Victor joins us from the North Bay area and brings experience as both a coach with Walden Ski Team and Nipissing University and as a competitive skier.

GBN skiers continue to shine across the province! Aidan, Caleb, Santiago, and Mackenzie were nominated to the SOD Team for the 2026–2027 season. They have been busy attending dryland camps throughout the summer and fall, putting in some great training as they prepare for the season ahead. These camps also provide valuable opportunities to train and connect with skiers from other SOD clubs.

Santiago and Mackenzie applied for and earned spots on the Ontario Development Team (ODT). In July, Santiago attended a three-day ODT camp in Parry Sound, where he trained alongside skiers from across Ontario, including members of the Ontario Ski Team.

Lastly, congratulations to Liam Law who earned a spot on the Ontario Junior Ski Team through his performance during the 2025-2026 season. Congratulations, Liam!

Of course, summer for GBN skiers involves much more than dryland training. Our athletes have been busy paddling, hiking, climbing, camping, cycling, running, swimming, and playing a variety of other sports. We are excited to be training together again and look forward to another fantastic season with Georgian Bay Nordic!

We would also like to congratulate Julian Smith on an outstanding ski career as he retires from competitive racing. Julian got his start with Georgian Bay Nordic and has gone on to compete on the international stage, an incredible achievement that our club is so proud to celebrate. His journey from GBN to the highest levels of cross-country skiing is an inspiration to our young athletes, showing them what dedication, hard work, and a love of the sport can lead to. Julian, thank you for inspiring the next generation of GBN skiers. We wish you all the best in this exciting next chapter!



GBN in action!



50th Anniversary

Bruce Ski Club

As we are celebrating 50 years of the BSC, there will be a little information included in this season's newsletters about the history of the club and the people involved in making it what it is today.

Marcy McGill

In **1976** an organizational meeting was held at Al and Mary Searle's place at Colpoys with Fred Thom, Ruth Arnsberger and Bruce McGill. This was the first discussion about the formation of the Bruce Ski Club.

Bruce Ski Club Executive 1977-1978:

Fred Thom, Directors: Bruce McGill Ruth Arnsberger, Laura Robinson, Al Searle

The first and only trail at the time was **Colpoys** on Ron Gatis' property, or property he "managed".

Around **1978-79**, the **Groundhog Ski Loppet** began and went from Colpoys to the Purple Valley Hall. Ruth Arnsberger (Cliffside Resort) totally looked after that on her own for many years. It was a very successful and fun event.

In the meantime (**1978-79**) **Clark Birchard at the Outdoor Ed Centre** had received an Opportunities for Youth Grant. He hired Carolyn Campbell (Red Bay area) and they roughed in the concept of the **Rankin**

Feb. '87 Bruce Ski Club Jackrabbit Fun Day held at Joy Ward's farm, north of Wiarton. There was an obstacle course and a scavenger hunt for SOD Jackrabbit clubs. Orangeville Jackrabbits came up for the day as well as the local clubs. Picture is of Karen Ward scaling the hay bale.



Ski Trail. The first part was just north of the Outdoor Education Centre (OEC) and included the section north to the Red Bay Road (Hodgkin's Lake). I remember Bruce carried young Bob on his back and doing the hills there I was slightly nervous. Then the section north to Red Bay Lodge area was added and finally the last section up to Beattie Lake.

Cerca **1979-1980**, **Skarama** started with thanks to Tom Norris who wanted to add a ski event to the snowmobile Snowarama fundraiser. John Houghton organized it the first year, and it was under the auspices of all the seven local Rotary Clubs. (Meaford, Owen Sound, Port Elgin, Southampton, Hepworth, Wiarton, Lions Head/Tobermory). The event was very successful! It was the first Skarama in Ontario. It became an Ontario event for the then Crippled Children Society and later the Easter Seal Society.

Cerca **1981**, **Laura Robinson** (Ski Haus at Hepworth) scouted out the Hepworth Dump/Kiwanis area and came up with the **Sawmill** which we adopted circa **1982**.

That covers the three trails....

From that grew the **Jackrabbits** in **1982**. I remember the very first meeting and Laura Robinson and Norm Tennant had Bob McGill and Daryl Goldsmith plus 2 others before I took it over and ran it until 1991.

We initially used both the OEC and the Wiarton Hospital Hill with the Board Room for our snacks. 



Feb. '83 Bob, Marcy and Dave McGill on the hospital hill, venue of all Jackrabbit sessions before they built the new hospital when the venue switched to the Sawmill Ski Trail.



Peninsula Mountain Biking Club (PMBC)

Fred Schlenker

If you have been to Sawmill this summer you most likely noticed the new sign on the kiosk. It was produced by the Peninsula Mountain Biking Club. They have become our partners in leasing the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Hepworth property. Their first official year is off to a smooth and successful start. I've had casual conversation with quite a few cyclists over the summer and they report they are very pleased with the trails. This fall, the Bruce Ski Club and the PMBC are collaborating on a replacement for the old bus shelter. It will be slightly larger than the old one! Something to look forward to when we are finally on the snow!



Thank you to the following

October 2026



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For my friend AV and her kids!

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The Bruce Ski Club would like to thank

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for the printing of this newsletter.