

# BLUE MOUNTAIN NORDIC CLUB

WINTER 25/26



## THE BIG WIND STORM OF NOVEMBER 2024

Every October our volunteers clean up the trails, but last year...it didn't last. In mid-November Mother Nature challenged us with wind, ice, and snow in a storm that caused 100 large and small trees to fall across the trails. Yes, that's right, one hundred! Intrepid club members rolled up their sleeves and went back out there in early December to set things straight. The only trail that didn't get cleared until later that month was Tillicum which was, by then, under 2 feet of snow. That was a lot of work! Moral of the story—don't wait to clear trees that have fallen in storms.

## SNOWSHOE HARE TRAIL

Thanks to Dave Komlosi for putting in the energy and time to get a new snowshoe trail at Meacham identified, and the Umatilla USFS Office for authorizing us to clear a new trail. We hope to have signs in place soon, and this will give our snowshoeing members a new place to explore off the Loppet Trail.



**THANK YOU DONORS!**

**SOME OF YOU WENT "ABOVE AND BEYOND" LAST SEASON, AND YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE. WE NEVER WANT OUR TRUSTY MACHINE TO BREAK DOWN, BUT INEVITABLY AT LEAST SOME SURPRISE COMES UP. YOU'VE ALLOWED US TO ENTER INTO THIS SEASON IN GOOD FINANCIAL SHAPE.**



**THANKS TO STEVE ANTELL FOR COORDINATING WITH ODOT TO GET SKIER SIGNS POSTED ON I-84 AT THE MT EMILY EXIT. WITH THIS NEW EXPOSURE WE EXPECT TO SEE MORE DAY PASS USERS THIS YEAR AND INTO THE FUTURE.**



## YOUTH SKI PROGRAM

This is the 4th year of our Youth Nordic Ski program for skiers aged 4-17. Last year, we had 17 young skiers participate in lessons, and we're hoping to add a few more this year. We are again able to lend skis to any kids who need them for the winter season and will be purchasing some new equipment soon.

This year, we will meet once a week on Thursdays (5:00-6:00 pm) at Meacham Divide Nordic Ski Area during January and February. Skiers will be placed into groups by ability to learn classic skiing technique (advanced skiers may also learn skating technique). Parents are welcome to join in or take the opportunity to leave their kids with us and ski on their own. The cost per skier is \$25 for 8 lessons. Proceeds go to BMNC to offset costs for kids' skis, volunteer instructors, and to organize a fun "race" and BBQ at the end of the season.



If interested, please contact Andy Baltensperger: [abaltensperger@eou.edu](mailto:abaltensperger@eou.edu), 907-347-0175  
Or register online at: <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/youth-ski-club-membership>



### Adult Lessons

Andy B will again be offering free classic and skate lessons to interested adults. You can contact him at [abaltensperger@eou.edu](mailto:abaltensperger@eou.edu) or 907-347-0175. The club will send out emails as well, once dates and times are set. Thanks Andy!

## GROOMING REPORT

The snow was slow to arrive, but then February came and all was well. We groomed nine times over the winter as snow conditions were variable to say the least. There were two periods where the jet stream was such that Meacham received a large amount of snow with cold conditions, resulting in excellent skiing. During those times we groomed every few days. You may also remember that there were two periods of 2-3 weeks each where it did not snow (or it rained), and we did not groom.

Thanks to Mark Hodgson and Sons, LLC for plowing the roads and ODOT for providing the funding to clear the way to the Mt Emily Sno-Park. The road was plowed 11 times, including during the late-winter melt-off period when big ruts appeared.

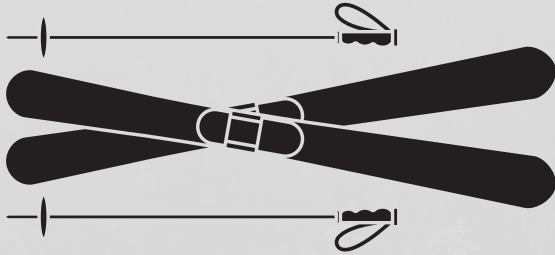
The Imp and grooming equipment worked well all winter. Thanks to all the club members who helped with machine maintenance, trail clearing, and grooming. Let's look forward to a La Nina winter!





## NORDIC GEAR SWAP

Have Nordic gear to sell? Have something that you want to lend out or borrow? We have the solution for you! Check out our webpage ([onc.org/bmnc/](http://onc.org/bmnc/)) and scroll down to the links for the "Lending Library" and "Equipment for Sale" spreadsheets. You can post information there, too, and you'll find contact info for lenders and sellers as well.



Sno-Park permits are required at the parking lot at Meacham Divide Nordic Ski Area. The Oregon Department of Transportation provides funds from the Sno-Park permits to keep the road and parking lot cleared. Mark Hodgson and Sons, Inc. has provided the equipment and skilled drivers needed to plow the road and parking lot since the trails were developed 20 years ago. Remember to check out the club website ([onc.org/bmnc/](http://onc.org/bmnc/)) once the snow starts falling for current road and trail conditions at Meacham.

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## BMNC INFORMATION

100% of donations and member dues go towards keeping the Meacham Divide Nordic Ski Area open, supporting our youth skiing program, and encouraging Nordic skiing in northeast Oregon. As in past years, we hope to groom every time that it snows this year. Please spread the word about our club, and forward this newsletter to any skiers that you know. Thank you for your support!

Our membership form is attached, or you can download it from our website ([onc.org/bmnc/](http://onc.org/bmnc/)). PLUS - we now have a secure way that you can join with a credit or debit card. Information about that process will be sent by email. And don't forget, we maintain TWO Facebook pages: Blue Mountain Nordic Club (for club news) and the Northeast Oregon Nordic Snow and Road Reports (for regional information about ski and travel conditions in Union, Baker, Wallowa, and Umatilla counties).



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**For our snowshoeing friends:** When possible, diagonal ski tracks will only be set on one side of the trails at Meacham Divide, leaving the middle area for skaters and the other side for snowshoeing. No walkers, runners, sled-haulers (but kid pulks are allowed and encouraged), or bikers on the trails, please! And remember to check out the new Snowshoe Hare trail, which offers some great views of the Elkhorns and passes through some old-growth forest on relatively flat ground.





## MEMBERSHIP

Your membership pays for our Oregon Nordic Club affiliation, which provides liability insurance for the ski area and the groomer and hosts the website. We would not exist without it! Additionally, your dues enable us to plan ahead for grooming opportunities. We have many other expenses beyond insurance, such as a La Grande P.O. box, property taxes and insurance on the pole barn where the grooming machine and club supplies are stored, stamps for our newsletter, and fuel and parts for the groomer.

Our "pay as you go" dropbox (suggested donation of \$7 per day) at Meacham Divide is a convenient way to help with club expenses, especially for visitors, but if you want to see this club continue to thrive, please consider becoming a member. We run our club solely on volunteer time, including the many hours spent grooming trails, so all funds go into keeping the ski area in business. Go to: [onc.org/bmnc/](http://onc.org/bmnc/)

## BMNC BOARD

President - Ryan Toohey  
Membership Coordinator: Anne March  
Secretary/Treasurer: Mary Rowland  
Webmaster: Dan White  
Grooming and Trails: Bruce Johnson, Mike Boldt  
Newsletter Design: Nicole Howard  
Youth Club and Events Coordinators: Andy Baltensperger, Max Koltuv

## CONDITIONS REPORT

Check the BMNC website at [onc.org/bmnc/](http://onc.org/bmnc/) for current snow and road conditions of the FS Road 31 into the ski parking lot and ODOT's TRIPCHECK (<https://www.tripcheck.com>) for I-84 road conditions. If you are a current member you will receive email updates about trail and road conditions. Be sure to check your spam folder if you don't hear from us after you become a member. AND we won't share your email address with anyone.

## DOGS: YES! (AND NO)

Dogs are allowed on all trails below Moose Huff Hill (Lower Loppet, Kansas, I Scream, Roller Coaster, Whitman Whip and Pendleton Plunge, Snowshoe Hare), providing a diverse set of trail conditions to enjoy with your canine friends. However, all trails above Moose Huff Hill have a "no dog" policy. These conditions arose from a landowner request on our outer loop trails, and the fact that many of our members would like to ski (and skate) in a dog-free zone. (For skate skiing in particular, dog tracks can ruin a carefully groomed trail). If you encounter skiers with dogs above Moose Huff, please politely inform them about the rules; there are plenty of trails available for canids lower down!



## ABOUT MEACHAM DIVIDE

Meacham Divide Nordic Ski Area is located 1.7 miles northeast of Interstate 84 on Forest Service Road 31 (Mount Emily, Exit 243) between Pendleton and La Grande in the Blue Mountains. The Blue Mountain Nordic Club (BMNC) offers 18 kilometers (about 10 miles) of groomed ski trails at Meacham, with varying levels of difficulty. At 4,100 feet in elevation and with expansive views of the 1,400-foot deep Meacham Canyon and Spout Springs Ridgeline, Meacham Divide offers great skiing - both classic and freestyle - and snowshoeing for all ages and abilities. There's no better ski area when conditions are good in the Blue Mountains!

