

Volume 55
Number 5

Potomac Valley Skiers, Inc.
WASHINGTON MARYLAND VIRGINIA

May 2020

www.pvskiers.org

info@pvskiers.org

President's Message

Mary and I have been quarantined for almost two months now and are coping well. Thank goodness for books, the internet, long distance calls, television, streaming, Zoom, and spring. I enjoy the blossoming of the dogwoods, azaleas, irises, daffodils, tulips, and the renewed explosive hostas that are filling the bare spots in the gardens. As for the deciduous trees that appeared so dead as we skied through winter, they are remarkable as their limbs leaf out in a multitude of greens, yet again.

The wildlife in and near our yard is spectacular! We have three (3!) Red Tailed Hawks that soar with grandeur. (They were "officially" identified by a dedicated "birder" neighbor, species.) Two of where we park our seems to have the surrounding tree to tree, and, to evidence these to the nest). been significantly



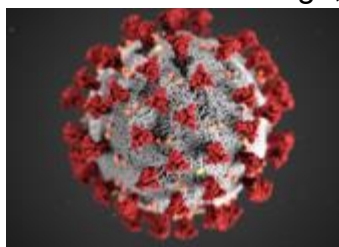
(They were "officially" identified by a dedicated who reminded us that they are an endangered the hawks nest in a tree located 20 yards from cars in the driveway. At least one of the hawks made it a rule to land on our cars every day to scan area before flying on and up, almost hopping from finally, to the nest. (The cars have claw scratches visits and have been parked further from the path Sadly, our community of playful chipmunks has depleted, prey for the Red Tailed Hawks and more.

Above us, these hawks are majestic with their 4-foot wing spans and are a wonder to watch from our living room windows as they circle above on the hunt; sometimes, all three at once.

From the kitchen windows, we occasionally see the five (5!) fox kits that were born and live under the shed. Again, gone are the chipmunks. Periodically the kits come out to frolic in our back yard, with Mom Fox vigilant as she stands guard. They will be leaving our yard soon to begin their life journeys, but I expect they will most likely stay in the area.



Meanwhile, our life appears to be on hold. Though, we've had telephonic, Face Time and Zoom doctor and other appointments, reports are indicating that the mid-May. So, we still have a plateaus and declines and is about promising plasma with the disease. This may defeat of the virus. We remain



meetings, and social engagements. News COVID-19 should peak in our region about significant way to go before COVID-19 under some control. There are reports treatments that will help those who are ill decrease the death toll and expedite the hopeful that the situation will come to an

end or, at least, to a point where we can go on with our lives somewhat “normally.” The new normal, however, may be with numerous safety measures as we emerge from our quarantined existences.

The ExCom cancelled the May PVS meeting due to this COVID-19 situation. During the May ExCom teleconference meeting, the possible cancellation of the June PVS meeting will be on the agenda.

I am pleased to report that PVS has elected, through the email process, three new ExCom Members for the 2020 to 2022 term: Cara Jablon, Kathy Lake, and Don Vierimaa. I congratulate them on their election and look forward to working with them over the next two years.

I hope everyone is able to enjoy the spring weather and the glories it brings, and that everyone will remain healthy and safe during this difficult time.

Tom Tycz
President

Editor's Note

I was pleased to read Tom's account of Nature in *My Backyard*. Spring is progressing and is paying us no-never-mind. I feel I have a little more time to watch and appreciate it and will add a couple of pictures to Tom's of birds that I don't see too often. Besides the usual song birds and woodpeckers, I have recently seen the return of the Rufous Sided Towhee, the Catbird, and the Wood Thrush. Fox comes trotting through and, Tom, I saw one chipmunk two days ago. Hmmm.
Jan



Fun to watch how Pileated lands on feeder and maneuvers itself to reach the suet.

Immature Red-tailed or Sharp-shinned (??) hawk recovering from missed lunch and hitting my window.

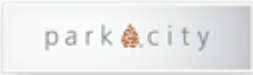


Two baby House Finches on neighbor's porch.



SKI TALK MAY 2020

What a year 2020 has been so far. Unlike any I have experienced. The ski season ended abruptly on March 15 for most people in the world. That is the day most ski resorts closed. I, for one, was shocked since we were skiing in Park City the week of March 7-14. While we listened to the news, we were thinking how safe we were at a ski resort all covered with gloves, goggles, and gators. Little did we know that ski resorts had entered into the realm of public health hazards.

park city

Skiing has significantly factored into the spread of Covid-19. See the article in The New Yorker magazine on April 30, 2020 about Sun Valley. The first week of March nearly 700 skiers from the Black Ski Council visited Sun Valley from around the nation and from overseas. There was a parade and parties most evenings. We all know how ski council trips go with lots of socialization. Few people were concerned about the virus the first week of March but over 100 people from that trip contracted the virus and at least two people died.

A beer pong table in the Austrian ski resort of Ischgl is blamed for a high number of cases in Germany. A group of business leaders from Mexico contracted the virus in Vail early March. Sun Valley and Vail have had some of the highest infection rates in the country.



So, while we were in Park City thinking we were safe, the invisible virus was making the rounds. I shudder when I remember having lunches on the mountain in very crowded restaurants. Most evenings we were also packed into restaurants in town. Each day we took crowded buses to different resorts. Fortunately, none of us on the trip contracted the virus.

On a more uplifting note, the ski industry has helped in the search for PPE (Personal Protective Equipment). A call went out for ski goggles to protect the eyes of medical personnel. More than 30,000 goggles have been donated to doctors. See articles on [Goggles for Docs](#).

So, stay safe. Do get out every day, and keep fit for next year's ski season.



We will be going back to Snowmass in early January, and will join the BRSC Eurofest to Davos in late February. See '*Save the Date in this TOOT.*' Full fliers will be in the June TOOT.

Rosemary **Schwartzbard**, rosemaryschw@gmail.com

Tom Tycz



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY WASHINGTON, D.C.

ENFORCEMENT NOTICE REGARDING REFUNDS BY CARRIERS
GIVEN THE UNPRECEDENTED IMPACT OF THE
COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY ON AIR TRAVEL

The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings (Aviation Enforcement Office), a unit within the Office of the General Counsel, is issuing this notice to remind the traveling public, and U.S. and foreign carriers, operating at least one aircraft having a seating capacity of 30 or more seats, that passengers should be refunded promptly when their scheduled flights are cancelled or significantly delayed. Airlines have long provided such refunds, including during periods when air travel has been disrupted on a large scale, such as the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks, Hurricane Katrina, and presidentially declared natural disasters. Although the COVID-19 public health emergency has had an unprecedented impact on air travel, the airlines’ obligation to refund passengers for cancelled or significantly delayed flights remains unchanged.

The Department is receiving an increasing number of complaints and inquiries from ticketed passengers, including many with non-refundable tickets, who describe having been denied refunds for flights that were cancelled or significantly delayed. In many of these cases, the passengers stated that the carrier informed them that they would receive vouchers or credits for future travel. But many airlines are dramatically reducing their travel schedules in the wake of the COVID-19 public health emergency. As a result, passengers are left with cancelled or significantly delayed flights and vouchers and credits for future travel that are not readily usable.

Carriers have a longstanding obligation to provide a prompt refund to a ticketed passenger when the carrier cancels the passenger’s flight or makes a significant change in the flight schedule and the passenger chooses not to accept the alternative offered by the carrier.¹ The longstanding obligation of carriers to provide refunds for flights that carriers cancel or significantly delay does not cease when the flight disruptions are outside of the carrier’s control (e.g., a result of government restrictions).²

¹ See Enhancing Airline Passenger Protections, 76 Fed. Reg. 23110-01, at 23129 (Apr. 25, 2011) (“We reject . . . assertions that carriers are not required to refund a passenger’s fare when a flight is cancelled if the carrier can accommodate the passenger with other transportation options after the cancellation. We find it to be manifestly unfair for a carrier to fail to provide the transportation contracted for and then to refuse to provide a refund if the passenger finds the offered rerouting unacceptable (e.g., greatly delayed or otherwise inconvenient) and he or she no longer wishes to travel.”)

² U.S. Dept. of Transportation, Aviation Consumer Protection, Refunds, <https://www.transportation.gov/individuals/aviation-consumer-protection/refunds> (March 4, 2020) (“Am I Entitled to a Refund? When the airline is at fault: Passengers are often entitled to a refund of the ticket price and associated fees when the airline is at fault. . . . **Cancelled Flight** – A passenger is entitled to a refund if the airline cancelled a flight, regardless of the reason, and the passenger chooses not to be rebooked on a new flight on that airline. . . . **Schedule Change/Significant Delay** – A passenger is entitled to a refund if the airline made a significant schedule change and/or significantly delays a flight and the passenger chooses not to travel.”).

The focus is not on whether the flight disruptions are within or outside the carrier's control, but rather on the fact that the cancellation is through no fault of the passenger.³

Accordingly, the Department continues to view any contract of carriage provision or airline policy that purports to deny refunds to passengers when the carrier cancels a flight, makes a significant schedule change, or significantly delays a flight to be a violation of the carriers' obligation that could subject the carrier to an enforcement action.⁴

In recognition of the fact that the COVID-19 public health emergency has had major impacts on the airline industry, the Aviation Enforcement Office will exercise its prosecutorial discretion and provide carriers an opportunity to become compliant before taking further action. Specifically, the Aviation Enforcement Office will refrain from pursuing an enforcement action against a carrier that provided passengers vouchers for future travel in lieu of refunds for cancelled or significantly delayed flights during the COVID-19 public health emergency so long as: (1) the carrier contacts, in a timely manner, the passengers provided vouchers for flights that the carrier cancelled or significantly delayed to notify those passengers that they have the option of a refund; (2) the carrier updates its refund policies and contract of carriage provisions to make clear that it provides refunds to passengers if the carrier cancels a flight or makes a significant schedule change; and (3) the carrier reviews with its personnel, including reservationists, ticket counter agents, refund personnel, and other customer service professionals, the circumstances under which refunds should be made.

The Aviation Enforcement Office will monitor airline policies and practices and take enforcement action as necessary.

Questions regarding this notice may be addressed to the Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings (C-70), U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20590.

By:

Blane A. Workie
*Assistant General Counsel for
Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings*

Dated: April 3, 2020

³ *Id.*

⁴ See Enhancing Airline Passenger Protections, 76 Fed. Reg. 23110-01, at 23129 (Apr. 25, 2011) (*citing* July 15, 1996 Industry Letter which advises carriers that “applying . . . nonrefundability/penalty provisions in situations in which the change of flight time or travel date has been necessitated by carrier action or ‘an act of god’, e.g., where the carrier cancels a flight for weather or mechanical reasons . . . is grossly unfair and it violates 49 U.S.C. 41712, as would any contract of carriage or tariff provision mandating such a result” and putting carriers on notice that the Department “will aggressively pursue any cases of this type that come to our attention”).

Snowmass, Colorado 2021

Save the Date

January 6-13, 2021

We are planning to go back to Snowmass next year from January 6-13, 2021. Once again, we will be staying at our favorite Snowmass Mountain Chalet which offers a convenient ski in, ski out location. As in recent years, it will be a "Land Only" package which will include lodging and a 5-day lift pass. Pricing and other details to follow.

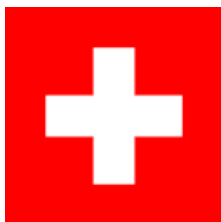
Those interested can register by sending a \$300 deposit payable to Kathy Lake, with PVS Snowmass 2021 written on the memo line. Please send your deposit to us at:
11677 Fox Glen Drive, Oakton, VA 22124. Reserve your room now!

- *Snowmass offers direct access to 3,100 acres of skiing, just outside the door.*
- *The skiing terrain totals more than 5,000 acres, with interchangeable lift tickets and free bus service to Aspen Mountain, Aspen Highlands & Buttermilk ski areas.*

For further information, please contact us at
KathyLakehomes@yahoo.com or
703-625-2715.

Hope you will join us!

Kathy & Barry Lake
Trip Leaders



SAVE THE DATE
BRSC EUROFEST
DAVOS, SWITZERLAND
FEBRUARY 26- March 6, 2021
Led by Inge Lesjak and John Hotaling
See full flier in June TOOT



Coming Event

Imagining Our 55th Anniversary



Since we all have some time (or maybe a lot!) on our hands, I thought I would ask for program ideas for our celebration of Potomac Valley Skiers 55th Anniversary, planned for some time in the Fall of 2020. Our committee members (Carolyn **DeVilbiss**, Nancy **McKinley**, Jan **Marx**, Rosemary **Schwartzbard** and **me**) have discussed a possible location, potential dates, and program ideas for a luncheon. The current situation has us on “hold” but with enthusiastic thoughts nevertheless!

Some Possibilities

- Is there someone with expertise in setting up a slide show with pictures of ski trips and other events?
- Does someone have talent for singing or organizing a songfest?
- Who would make a great “MC” (Mistress or Master of Ceremonies)?
- Would Inge be willing to do another “Pole Dance”?
- What type of quiz would get the table groups into a friendly competition?
- Could we set up a “ski slope” at the entrance for ambience?
- Would we all fit into our ski outfits after being so close to the refrigerator these past months?!!

Let your imaginations soar! If you have comments and/or ideas or want to volunteer, please let me (or anyone on the committee) hear from you. Planning ahead, having some fun, and looking to the future are things I think will benefit us all!

-----*Marianne Soponis*



Looking Back

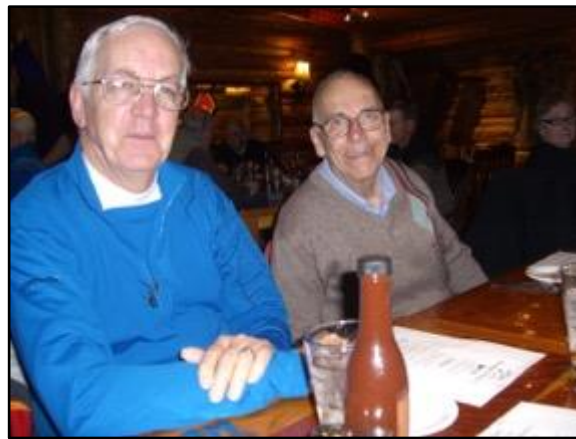
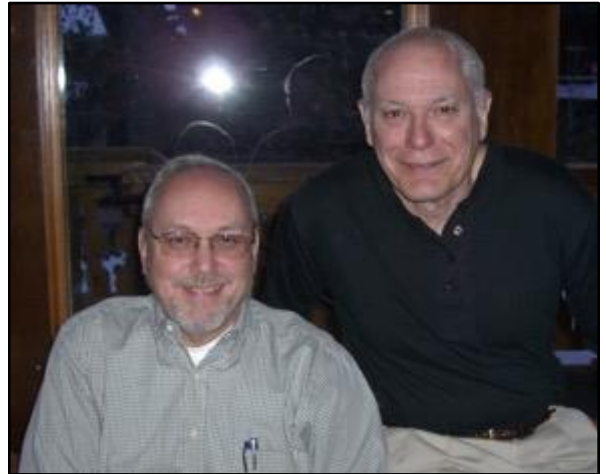
**Jackson Hole/ Grand Targhee Ski Trip ~~~~~ February 18-25, 2010
Led by Dottie Villers and Marty Rine**





Sleigh Ride in the National Elk Refuge





The Two Daves



Downtown Jackson Hole

Members' Corner



J. David Warthen, Jr.
dwarthen409@gmail.com

The first, and hopefully last, virtual **Annual Meeting** occurred in cyberspace last month. Voting by Active Members was achieved via e-blast for 3 new Board Members. Congratulations go to Cara Jablon, Kathy Lake, and Don Vierimaa on being elected for 2020-2022. President Tom Tycz and Vice President Kal Nossuli will continue to serve in the 2nd year of their term.

Colorado Shuts Down Ski Slopes Mid-March as Coronavirus invades the State:

[The Denver Post](https://www.denverpost.com/2020/03/31/coronavirus-colorado-ski-resorts/)
<https://www.denverpost.com/2020/03/31/coronavirus-colorado-ski-resorts/>

[UCHealth Today](https://www.uchealth.org/today/outbreak-coronavirus-colorado-ski-areas-communities-very-serious/)
<https://www.uchealth.org/today/outbreak-coronavirus-colorado-ski-areas-communities-very-serious/>

[The New York Times](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/18/us/coronavirus-colorado-ski-country.html)
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/18/us/coronavirus-colorado-ski-country.html>

[AP News](https://apnews.com/34f485da4b18ffe3da77cccc458d433b)
<https://apnews.com/34f485da4b18ffe3da77cccc458d433b>

In the two weeks since Colorado's ski resorts closed abruptly, mountain communities have seen some of the highest coronavirus rates in the nation — showing just what a ticking time bomb the resorts' confluence of tourists from across the world turned out to be.

Colorado health officials as of Tuesday have confirmed that 2,966 people have tested positive for COVID-19, the highly infectious respiratory disease caused by the virus. Hundreds are hospitalized, and the state's death toll reached 69.

Four counties with the most cases per capita — Gunnison, Eagle, Pitkin and Chaffee — all have ski resorts and other draws for winter adventurers. The hardest hit, Gunnison and Eagle, have case rates that are more than eight times the state average — and rank among the highest in the nation, according to a recent analysis by USA Today.



May

TOOT Distribution to 119 Members: pdf: 107

Thanks to:

- TOOT Coordinator - E Thayer
- TOOT Layout Editor – J Marx for May
- TOOT (Electronic) - - J D Warthen

Roster Changes: (dwarthen409@gmail.com)



PVS 2020 Calendar

May May General Meeting CANCELLED
 May 19 Tue ExCom Meeting/telephonic, 7:00 PM
 Jun General Meeting/SummerFest, TBD
 Aug 15 Sat Steak & Swim, Hines, Delaplane, VA



Tom Tycz

2021 Ski Trips



January 6-13, 2021, Snowmass, CO, Kathy and Barry Lake

February 26 - March 6, 2021, Davos/BRSC,
 Inge Lesjak and John Hotaling

Useful Ski "Links"

[Potomac Valley Skiers](#)
[BRSC Sanctioned Trips](#)
[DC Ski Online News](#)

ExCom

Officers:	Chairpersons:
President – <i>Tom Tycz</i> Vice Pres. – <i>Kal Nossuli</i> Secretary – <i>Ellie Thayer</i> Treasurer – <i>Dick Schwartzbard</i> Ex Officio - Board Members: <u>First Term:</u> <i>Cara Jablon</i> <i>Kathy Lake</i> <i>Don Vierimaa</i> <u>Second Term:</u> <i>Jannes Gibson</i> <i>Jan Marx</i> <i>Mary Rose de Valladares</i>	Ski Trip Committee – <i>Rosemary Schwartzbard</i> Events – <i>Marianne Sponis</i> Membership Records – <i>Dave Warthen</i> TOOT Coordinator – <i>Ellie Thayer</i> TOOT Layout Editors – <i>Jan Marx, Kerry Hines & Dave Warthen</i> TOOT (E-Distribution) – <i>Dave Warthen</i> Webmaster – <i>Mary Ellena Ward</i> Meeting Records – <i>Sue Lyon</i> Historian – <i>Jan Marx</i>

Reminder: It is club policy that contact information in the club's roster not be used for promoting personal business, for advertising, or for personal financial gain without the advance permission of the individual member to be contacted. Membership contact information shall not be distributed outside PVS.