

Volume 58  
Number 1

*Potomac Valley Skiers, Inc.*  
WASHINGTON MARYLAND VIRGINIA

January  
2023

[www.pvskiers.org](http://www.pvskiers.org)

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## President's Message



**Happy New Year** to one and all! Hope everyone had **a Merry Christmas**, **Happy Hanukkah**, and **Happy Holidays** in general, with the opportunity to gather with family and friends.

WOW, hard to believe that 2022 is already behind us, and we are now in 2023 and heading into ski season. Seems like 2022 just flew by, unlike 2020 and 2021.

As you get this TOOT, some of us will be departing on the Snowmass Trip; in a little over a week, the rest will follow in about a week and a half. The Snowmass trip dropped a bit to around 36, from 38 people going on various portions of the trip previously. The decrease means there is a King\_room available for a late comer, but you need to act fast!

I believe that the nominating committee is still looking to find candidates for some vacating leadership positions, so if you have interest, please reach out to Kerry Hines. Still on the list of the volunteer opportunities available are the Chair positions for Membership and Ski Trip Committees, in case you have interest in serving in those positions.

You may have noticed that we turned the Members' Corner column into a travelers column for members to write about any and all adventures that they may have undertaken, and we have had a tremendous turnout of write-ups to carry us into the new year. I want to thank those members for their participation, and look forward to many others helping out later in the year. If you have taken a fun trip/adventure that you would like to share with the other members, then by all means write it up and send along with any pictures to Ellie for publication.

We had a wonderful turnout for the **December Holiday** party hosted at the Jablon's home in Washington DC. Bob and Cara, thank you once again for hosting! Look for the party details later on in this TOOT.

In closing, if you feel comfortable in hosting a monthly membership meeting at your house, please reach out and let us know, so we can build up the calendar for the rest of the winter meetings.

*Cheers, Barry*

*Editor's Note:*

**There is NO Members' Meeting in January  
BYOB announcement on page 9. Jan 12 at 4:00 PM.**

## SKI TALK

Many of you may have heard that Rosemary Schwartzbard has decided to step down as Ski Committee Chair, although she has graciously agreed to perform some duties through the end of the March trip. This is a position that she has had for the past 11 years, and she was the one to start this column. We want to thank her for her hard work, time and efforts that she has put in to planning ski trips for the club. Over the years she has ensured that there were multiple trips for club members to participate in. Her enthusiasm promoting the trips has been superb.



*Thank you, Rosemary!* We appreciate all that you do!

The ski season has already kicked off. In just 10 days, 36 folks will be heading to Snowmass, a favorite for many of us. Currently 84% of the trails are open with more snow on the way.

In March, six PVSers will venture to the Club Med resort in Val d'Isere, France. It is supposed to be one of the best places to ski in Europe. We are looking forward to partaking in the all-inclusive amenities that Club Med has to offer.

Kathy & Barry Lake



## Ski Trip



## Potomac Valley Skiers

2023 Snowmass, Colorado Ski Trip

Wednesday - Wednesday

January 11 – 18, 2023

**One King Room Available due to a recent cancellation.  
Let us know ASAP, if interested.**

### **Trip Details**

Once again, we will be staying at the [Snowmass Mountain Chalet \(SMC\)](#), which offers a convenient ski in, ski out location. Check the web site at [www.mountainchalet.com](http://www.mountainchalet.com). The “**LAND ONLY**” package includes: transportation to and from Aspen airport (7am -11pm); 5- day Senior lift pass ([good for all four ski areas in the Aspen complex, free shuttle bus](#)) with option for extra days; 7 nights lodging (double occupancy); daily breakfasts; soup lunches; luggage handling; a welcome reception, a pizza party and a farewell group dinner to celebrate our trip. Additional nights at Snowmass are an option **based on availability**. **Trip insurance is available through Encompasse Tours and is [highly recommended](#)**. For trail information check [www.aspensnowmass.com](http://www.aspensnowmass.com).

**The basic package (Room price varies for King vs. Double Queen) includes a 5 day lift pass for skiers 65 and over. Skiers under 65 will have to add \$103.00.**

<b><u>Costs:</u></b>		<b><u>K-Price</u></b>	<b><u>QQ-Price</u></b>	
Basic <b>Land Only</b> Package (65 and older)		\$2,060	\$2,102	per person
Under 65	add	\$ 103	\$ 103	
Single Supplement	add	\$1,418	\$1,459	
Extra hotel night ( <b>pending availability</b> )	add	\$ TBD	\$ TBD	
Non-skiers	deduct	\$ 360	\$ 360	
Extra ski days (65 and older)	add	\$ 102	\$ 102	<b>6 day Senior pass</b>
	add	\$ 174	\$ 174	<b>7 day Senior pass</b>
Under 65	add	\$ 208	\$ 208	<b>6 day pass</b>
Silver Pass (70+ skiing 8 or more days)	add	\$ 269	\$ 269	

### **Payment Schedule**

**Final payment is past due - October 1st**

Kathy and Barry Lake are the trip leaders. For more information, feel free to contact us at 703-625-2715 or [kathylakehomes@yahoo.com](mailto:kathylakehomes@yahoo.com)

## Ski Trip

# VAL D'ISÈRE 2023-Trip is Full

BRSC Eurofest at Club Med's Flagship Resort



### Price Includes:

- Ground transportation in France
- All lodging, food & drink in Val d'Isère
- 6 day lift tickets
- Daily guide/ski instructor

Club Med has announced plans for its first **Exclusive Collection** mountain resort in Val d'Isère. The new five-star property will open on December 18, 2022 following a major renovation and expansion of the brand's existing hotel.

Saturday 11 March 2023 - 19 March 2023

The slope-side location provides ski-in/ski-out access. Mountain guides/instructors are available each day at no extra charge to take participants to the best runs on the mountains.

Rental equipment is extra. There are many options in the village.

Final prices are now available for this trip (double occupancy):

- **Land only:** \$3,050/person (includes ground transportation between Geneva & Val d'Isère **as long as** you synchronize arrival & departure times and your flight is not delayed.)



**Make checks payable to:  
Barry Lake**

**Mail to: Barry Lake  
11677 Fox Glen Dr.  
Oakton, VA 22124**

**FINAL FULL PAYMENT was due November 1, 2022.**

**Note—New Trip leaders for the final portion of this trip: Barry and Kathy Lake.**

**For info or questions you can contact us at [Barry\\_lake@yahoo.com](mailto:Barry_lake@yahoo.com), or via phone at (703) 929-1545.**

*Club Med Val d'Isère*

## Past Event

# *PVS Holiday Party*

Saturday, December 17, was a brisk, sunny, snowless day with thirty Potomac Valley Skiers and guests arriving at the home of Bob and Cara Jablon, happy that, although traffic was heavy, there were no icy spots to be found!



The beverage area (red and white wine, soda, and water) was the first to be visited and then on to the bountiful table of appetizers. Some of these included spinach dip in a bread bowl, shrimp, lox and bagels, cream cheese, a variety of salads, cheeses, deviled eggs, stuffed grape leaves, quiche, and small caviar treats. No one was noticed eating too much.

The many conversations included plans for the holidays, such as whether travel was near or far, whether people were driving, “training” or flying, what the weather forecast was for the next few weeks, which relatives were coming or were being visited; etc. Stories of medical treatments and hospital visits were met with appreciation of the wonders of modern science and the excellent care we have in our area.



Just before the meeting began, desserts and coffee were announced as available. A splendid array of cookies, brownies, cupcakes, candied nuts, and fresh fruit amply satisfied everyone’s sweet tooth. Barry Lake opened the meeting, welcomed members and guests, and thanked the Jablons for their generosity and hospitality in hosting the holiday party. Applause enforced that comment.

Marianne Sponis led the group through a holiday questionnaire, testing people’s memories and mental acuity such as figuring out what the name of this song was:

L- J- R- B- I- G- O- L- N- C- L- K- E- E.

You can contact any of the attendees if you can’t figure it out! Members also shared favorite holiday traditions for Christmas and Hanukkah, including the lighting of candles, kissing under the mistletoe, decorating the tree and waiting for “St. Nick.”

Rosemary Schwartzbard, John Smith, and Kathy and Barry Lake discussed plans for the upcoming ski season domestically and internationally. The Snowmass and Val d’Isere trips are full. Local ski trips are still to come. The one recommendation was to keep praying for snow, since it has been a light season so far.

***The meeting ended with many wishes for happy holidays and a happy, healthy new year!***

*Submitted by Marianne Sponis*

*Solving the puzzle*



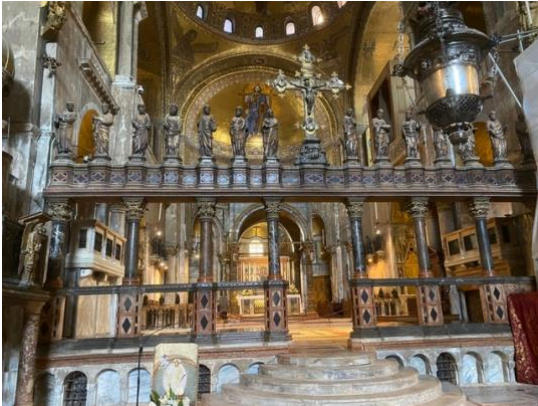
## MEMBERS' CORNER



By guest columnists Carolyn and Dave DeVilbiss

### Our Mediterranean Cruise

In July of 2022 we decided to brave the world of travel during Covid and reconnect with our British friends Martin and Julie for a Viking cruise, "Empires of the Mediterranean." We had heard that short staffing on the airlines was resulting in frequent schedule changes and delays. Our experience bore this out, with an unexpected all-day layover in the Frankfurt airport, and a six-hour delay before our return flight from Athens.



Our planned pre-trip in Venice was shortened by a day, but what a visit! We hope to make up some of the missed time when our next cruise disembarks in Venice in June 2023. The highlight was our entry to St. Mark's Basilica before it opened to the public. A friendly guard took pity on us, noting our advanced age and walking sticks and hearing about our limited time in the city. He allowed us early admission, and we were able to truly see the beauty of the nearly empty cathedral.

We then boarded our ship the Viking Sea for a nine-day cruise down the Adriatic Sea Coast, ending in Athens. On board we had the choice of four restaurants, lectures and shows, and played lots of card games as we caught up with the news from Martin and Julie. Quiddler is one of their favorites, and other staff and passengers often stopped by to watch. Each day we disembarked and toured by foot and by bus with excellent guides who shared information about the heritage, culture and history of the region. Although we had done many travels in Europe, the Adriatic Sea and Greece were new to us. The towns were charming and the views spectacular.



We were especially delighted with our tour in Koper, Slovenia, where we visited a most unusual castle, Predjama Castle, constructed in 1570, carved into a vertical cliff. Then we traveled to the Postojna Cave for a mini-train and walking tour through a vast cave system of stalactites and stalagmites. With more than 15 miles of passages, it is one of more than ten thousand registered caves in Slovenia. Following the coast, we stopped daily for visits to medieval towns of Zadar and Dubrovnik, Croatia; Kotor, Montenegro; Corfu, Olympia, and Santorini, Greece. Olympia impressed us with its vast ruins of the birthplace of the modern-day Olympic



Games.

*Julie and Martin*



Corfu, Greece (harbor view)

Olympia,  
Greece

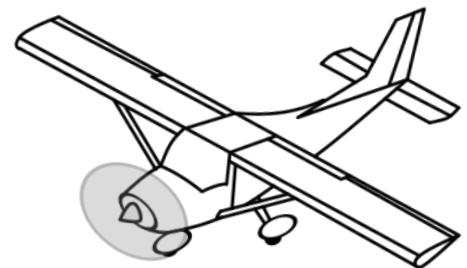
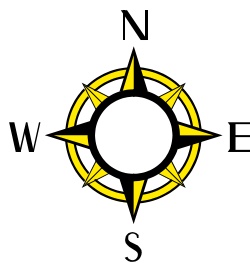


Our elegant hotel in Athens was within a (long) walking distance of the Plaka District, Hadrian’s Arch, and the Acropolis. We joined some bus tours to nearby sites: the Corinth Canal, the Peloponnese Peninsula with Mycenae’s Lion Gate, the foundations of Agamemnon’s Palace and Tomb, and the Epidaurus ancient amphitheater. On another day we travelled to Delphi, to explore the Temple of Apollo ruins. The town nearby reminded us of some of the ski towns we have loved with its tiny street passage and mountain scenery.

Next June we plan to go again on a Viking Sky cruise, “Mediterranean and Italian Sojourn, from Barcelona to Chioggia (near Venice). Dare we hope for temperatures that will be a bit less intense, and a calming of the State of the World aka viruses and all else?



Delphi, Greece, known as the  
“Bellybutton of the Ancient World”







## PVS - BYOB (Bring Your Own Book) group

Still going strong! On the 2nd Thursday of each month, book-loving PVSers gather on Zoom to chat about books they're loving and those that they're not. It's always a fun and informative discussion. Consider joining us and **see the info at the bottom for how to join in on Thursday, January 12th from 4 to 5 pm.**

**Here's what we chatted about in November:**

**Ellie Thayer** brought us "A Woman is No Man" by Etef Rum. Rum's semi-autobiographical novel showcases three generations of Palestinian families in Brooklyn and the cultural oppression suffered by the women in those families.

**Karen Knopes** told us about "Facing the Mountain" by Daniel James Brown. "Heartbreaking and intense" per Karen, the nonfiction work tells of Japanese American heroes in Europe during WWII and the Japanese in wartime America.

**Marianne Sponis** just read "Horse" a fictional tale about a very real horse named Lexington written by Geraldine Brooks. The well-researched story highlights the oppression of enslaved people who had no right of ownership and tells of the culture of rampant cruelty to horses.

**Jan Marx** read "The Night Hawks" by Ellie Griffiths, a murder mystery surrounding the moors in England. Night Hawks were foragers who went out on the moors at night with metal detectors and who happened upon a body on the beach.

**Mike Strand** brought us "In the Heart of the Sea," the true story of the whaling ship Essex by Nathaniel Philbrick. The story was the inspiration for Melville's "Moby Dick" and involved the loss of life and ship in the Pacific Ocean in the 1820s after the vessel was rammed by a sperm whale.

**Mary Ellena Ward** has been reading the series known as the Thursday Murder Club by Richard Osman. The three books are set in a Continuing Care Retirement Community where the clever residents investigate and solve the dastardly crimes.

**Ingrid Dallaire** chose "A Woman of No Importance" by Sonia Purnell, "The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo," by Taylor Jenkins Reid, and "The Second Life of Mirielle West" by Amanda Skenandore, historical fiction about the treatment of lepers and their hospitalization which continues to this day.

**Bob Jablon** brought us Haruki Murakami's "1Q84." Murakami is currently in vogue in the literary community and Bob describes the lengthy work as part love story and part mystery while also examining alternate realities.

**Nancy McKinley** shared "Endurance: An Epic of Polar Adventure" by Frank Worsley, the captain of the famed Antarctic journey led by Ernest Shackleton and his crew from which Shackleton famously kept his entire crew alive for months after the sinking of their ship.

**Our December gathering of readers is chronicled below by Marianne Sponis:**

**Karen Knopes** read "Zeke and Ned" by Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana. It's a historical fiction novel about two powerful Cherokee warriors, Ezekiel Proctor and Ned Christie, searching for their Indian future. The challenges of life in the West after the Civil War include stories of survival, trials, shootouts, death, and more in-depth stories about women in those times. McMurtry's books have been made into movies, such as "Hud" and "Lonesome Dove."

**Bonnie Sweeney** reviewed the book "American Dirt" by Jeanine Cummins. It's the story of a woman and her son who escape the massacre of her family but must continue to flee the cartel. Their journey covers the long, hard, dangerous road to America and can open one's eyes to what refugees endure in their quest for freedom and safety.

**Jan Marx** enjoys adventures in familiar territory. This book, "Open Season" by C.J. Box, is about a game warden in Montana with a wife and two daughters. They live in wide open spaces with interesting characters, good guys vs. bad guys, horses, and miller weasels, cousins of black ferrets. It sounds intriguing!

**Mary Ellena Ward** found the book "The Cross and the Lynching Tree" by James H. Cone to be a somewhat daunting read right before the holidays! It is a book of theology based on the black experience and dovetails into the story of racial injustice and judicial punishment. There is a chapter on poetry. It reinforces the notion that there were many bad times before now as well.

**Marianne Sponis** shared a book by Barbara Kingsolver, with Steven L. Hopp and Camille Kingsolver, called "Animal, Vegetable, Miracle, A Year of Food Life." The book contains information about the world of food and the importance of growing and eating it where we live. There are in-depth descriptions of various vegetables, recipes, growing seasons, etc. with humor to soften the losses that come with "progress."

**The next BYOB Zoom call will be held on Thursday, January 12th from 4 to 5 pm. Let Marianne Sponis know at [marianne.sponis@gmail.com](mailto:marianne.sponis@gmail.com) if you're interested in joining us and she'll put you on the list to get the link to the Zoom call. No commitment! Questions or comments? Contact Nancy McKinley at [nancymckin@gmail.com](mailto:nancymckin@gmail.com) or 703 595 8375.**

Calendar:

Thurs Jan 12 BYOB on Zoom. Nancy McKinley, 4:00 PM  
Tue Jan 24 ExCom Meeting via Zoom. 7:00 PM



Ski Trips:

January 11-18, 2023, Snowmass, Colorado: Kathy & Barry Lake  
March 11-19, 2023, BRSC Club Med to Val d'Isere: Kathy & Barry Lake

**ExCom Officers, Board Members,  
and Committee Chairpersons**

<p><b><u>Officers:</u></b>  President – <i>Barry Lake</i>  Vice Pres. – <i>Cara Jablon</i>  Secretary – <i>Ellie Thayer</i>  Treasurer – <i>Dick Schwartzbard</i>  Ex Officio -  <b><u>Board Members:</u></b>  <b><u>First Term:</u></b>  <i>Salli Diakova</i>  <i>Kathy Lake</i>  <i>Don Vierimaa</i>  <b><u>Second Term:</u></b>  <i>Manfred Boehringer</i>  <i>Jannes Gibson</i>  <i>Mary Rose de Valladares</i></p>	<p><b><u>Chairpersons:</u></b>  Ski Trip Committee –  Events – <i>Marianne Soponis</i>  Membership Records – <i>Vacant</i>    TOOT Coordinator – <i>Ellie Thayer</i>  TOOT Layout Editors – <i>Jan Marx, Kerry Hines &amp; Dave Warthen</i>  TOOT (E-Distribution) – <i>Barry Lake</i>    Webmaster – <i>Mary Ellena Ward</i>    Meeting Records – <i>Sue Lyon</i>    Historian – <i>Jan Marx</i></p>
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**Useful Ski “Links”**  
[Potomac Valley Skiers](#)  
[BRSC Sanctioned Trips](#)  
[DC Ski Online News](#)

**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.