

WINTER WINTER IN MAINE in Maine

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KENNEBEC JOURNAL | MORNING SENTINEL
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Intriguing getaways dot the central and western Maine landscape



Photos contributed

AT LEFT: Once a Christian Science Church in Gardiner, the Stone Turret B&B features the original 1905 stained glass windows that have been incorporated into the modern shingle-style architecture popular in turn-of-the century Maine. The original tin ceilings, woodwork and furnishings of the period have been preserved. **AT RIGHT:** The Mountain Village Farm B&B offers six Maine cottage-style bedrooms, each with private baths, a cozy guest living room with fireplace and a mountain view breakfast cafe with cathedral windows. The Garage Pub (pictured) offers a place to relax after a day of skiing, snowshoeing or shopping.

Spas, dog kennels, modern amenities are offered

BY VALERIE TUCKER
Correspondent

For winter travelers, central and western Maine offers many excellent lodging options for recreational and romantic getaways.

Kingfield, a designated Appalachian Trail Community, is described in *Ski Magazine* as “the Aspen of the East.”

One destination, the Moun-

tain Village Farm B&B, offers six cottage-style bedrooms with private baths, a cozy guest living room with a fireplace and a breakfast cafe with cathedral windows and mountain views. New and returning guests have been enjoying the latest addition to the establishment. The Garage pub opened in November and provides a great place to relax, hear live music and enjoy refreshments.

“We’re also right on the snowmobile trail, so it’s a great chance for folks to get an early start and have a fun place to go in the evening, as well,” said owner Lisa Standish.

Visit mountainvillageinn.com or call 265-2030 for information or reservations.

The Inn On Winter’s Hill has 20 guest rooms with modern amenities. Many of the rooms are contempo-

rary, but some offer a truly historic experience, according to owner John Banta.

“We have authentically preserved sleeping quarters with Victorian furnishings and pressed-tin ceilings, just as they were over a century ago,” he said.

Visitors in the winter can snowmobile directly from the inn’s backyard on the Black Fly Loop, which connects to hundreds of miles of scenic trails. Others will find a winter wonderland snowshoeing in the Bigelow Mountains.

“When they return to the Inn, they’ll cozy up in front of the fireplace with a warm beverage,” Banta said.

Call 340-1020 or visit wintershill.com for reservations and information.

Ninety minutes north of Augusta, in West Forks, the 15 Mile Stream Lodge offers trail-side cabins, snowmobiling on ITS (Interconnected Trail System) 86, 87 and 89, a full-service restaurant and bar, a recreation room, satellite TV, and a great fireplace. The region is popular with snowmobilers, as well as snowshoers and cross-country skiers.

“The restaurant and bar are open daily, and we serve breakfast, lunch and dinner,” said owner Rachel Crommett. “We also sell retail gas on site.”

More GETAWAYS, PAGE 3

Getaways

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

She and her husband, Shane, say the addition that is a big hit with customers is their heated dog boarding facility. The kennel features spacious indoor and outdoor runs; daily, nightly and weekly rates are available.

"Whether you're hunting, spending some time in our cabins, recreating in the surrounding area or going on a family vacation, your pet will be safe and comfortable here," she said.

The Maple Hill Inn and Conference Center has renovated its rooms and offers some of the luxurious extras usually found in pricier hotels. All rooms are furnished with country antiques. Some rooms offer gas fireplaces, private decks and large whirlpool tubs. All guests are welcome to use the outdoor hot tub and sauna.

"We serve a full country breakfast every day," said owner Scott Cowger. "One very popular choice is our Eggs Benedict Arnold, which is our nod to Maine's links to Revolutionary War history and made with our own farm-fresh eggs."

Cowger and his partner, Vince Hannan, were awarded Maine's first certification for Environmental Leader In Green Lodging by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. Their renewable energy system pays for about half of their electricity usage. They heat with wood pellets and have charging stations for electric cars. For more information, visit maplebb.com or call (800) 622-2708.

The Stone Turret B&B in Gardiner is in a beautifully-restored 1905 Christian Science church. Architect and owner Shawn Dolley said he was committed to preserving the shingle-style building with a fieldstone turret and priceless stained glass windows. Featuring the original architectural finishes, the guest rooms highlight the historic design of the property, but he's added all the modern conveniences



Photo contributed

The Inn on Winter's Hill in Kingfield is a restored Victorian mansion with a historic pedigree and just the right number of modern amenities. Guest rooms come equipped with Wi-Fi, TVs and phones but the true draw, said owner John Banta, is the serenity that comes from living quietly with nature.

travelers expect. He shares the history of the building and its previous owners' connections to the founders of Christian Scientists, and the history of Gardiner.

"Caroline and Gideon Noyes were very close to Christian Science leader Mary Baker Eddy," he said. "Visitors really enjoy learning about that part of history and how this church is part of it."

He serves a hearty breakfast that includes warm homemade blueberry muffins straight from the oven.

For more information about the Stone Turret B&B, visit thestoneturret.com or call 319-4010.

Downtown Hallowell is designated as a National Historic District and is a well-preserved example of a late 1800s riverfront community. The town is a Mecca for antique hunters and offers restaurants, galleries and specialty shops. Local architecture has been preserved, and a detailed historical walking tour brochure is available.

Downtown Gardiner is home to many buildings on the National Historic Register, including the Christ Episcopal Church, Gardiner Railroad Station, Laura Richards House and the entire downtown historic district. Visitors can study the architecture of the Johnson Hall Opera House and Gardiner Public Library, with its vaulted ceiling and restored stained glass window.



Photo contributed

Ninety minutes north of Augusta, in West Forks, the 15 Mile Stream Lodge offers trail-side cabins, snowmobiling on ITS (Interconnected Trail System) 86, 87 and 89, a full-service restaurant and bar, a recreation room, satellite TV, and a great fireplace. The region is popular with snowmobilers, as well as snowshoers and cross-country skiers.

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WINTERPALOOZAH!

Pond Hockey Festival kicks off new year in Rangeley



Valerie Tucker photo

From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., on Sunday, Feb. 17, 2019, Rangeley's 4th Annual Winterpaloozah! promises to be a day filled with outdoor activities for all ages, skill levels and interests. A team of organizers has planned all activities within easy walking distance between Haley Pond Park and the town park on Rangeley Lake. One of the many free activities that will be demonstrated is curling, in keeping with the 2018 Winter Olympics. Visitors will have a chance to take a ride in a horse-drawn wagon, toast marshmallows over a bonfire and enjoy the dog keg pull.

Paloozathon also on tap

BY VALERIE TUCKER
Correspondent

From Feb. 1-3, 2019, the 12th Annual New England Pond Hockey Festival will offer a weekend of socializing and competition for amateur hockey players, their friends, families and spectators. The event has grown, according to organizer Linda Dexter, because word has gotten out that it is such a great time and that all players bring their best.

Volunteers build 12 rinks on Haley Pond. Each one is the 75-foot-by-150-foot universal size, Dexter said. Participants are organized into seven-member teams, each with four players and three standbys. Those arriving without a team are matched with players of equal ability.

"There are no 'ringers,'" she said. "Everyone comes to the festival to have fun." Hundreds of spectators come to watch spirited competition.

Some teams have played together for more than a generation. Others played in high school or college, and they travel from as far away as Minnesota, California and British Columbia.

Dexter said the weekend starts with a Friday welcoming gathering at the Rangeley Inn. Players will meet again at the Inn from 4 to 7 p.m. on Saturday to share the day's stories and highlights. The winning team's trophy remains on display at Sarge's Restaurant, and participants take home a commemorative puck. There's also an auction and raffle to raise money for the Rangeley Skating Club to buy equipment and maintain the Haley Pond public rink. Team registration ends on Jan.

10, 2019, Dexter said. Tournament divisions include Open Men's (35+ years), Master Men's (50+ years), Open Women's (any age), Wide Open Co-ed for 21+ years and Women's Masters/Just For Fun (any age).

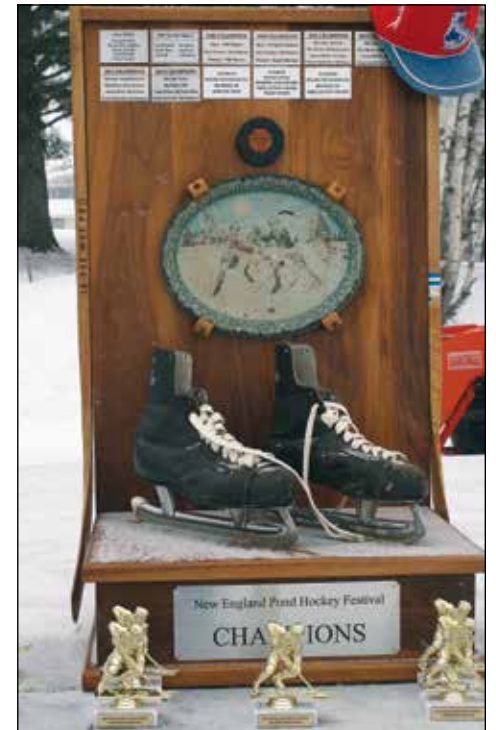
For updates and registration, visit the New England Pond Hockey Festival on Facebook or call (805) 722-9172.

From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., on Sunday, Feb. 17, Rangeley's 4th Annual Winterpaloozah! promises to be a day filled with outdoor activities for all ages, skill levels and interests

A team of organizers, headed by Rangeley Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Karen Ogulnick and Ecopelagicon owner Linda Dexter, have planned all activities within easy walking distance between Haley Pond Park and the town park on Rangeley Lake.

Two new events this year are the Firewood Toss and Saucer Bowling.

"Most Mainers know how to throw firewood," said Dexter. "How far they can throw it



Valerie Tucker photo

Out of dozens of competing hockey teams, one will earn bragging rights at the 2019 Pond Hockey Festival. From Feb. 1-3, teams will play elimination rounds on eight skating rinks until only two teams are left. Cheered on by family, friends and visitors, the two finalists will fight to the finish and get their team's name on the trophy.

is the challenge."

Saucer Bowling requires one person to sit in a flying saucer, and teammates push the saucer into empty 5-gallon water bottles set up as bowling pins.

One of last year's most popular events was the Dog Keg Pull, so the organizers are inviting competitive canines to this year's challenge. Last year nearly 50 dogs entered the competition. Whether your pup is small, medium or large, each dog has a chance to take home a prize. Not all competitors managed to run the 50-foot course, but spectators enjoyed the hilarious misadventures as dogs decided to greet each other mid-course or get their back scratched by friendly bystanders. Last year's three winners were a St. Bernard, an Australian Shepherd and a Chihuahua, but anything can happen this year, according to Dexter.

Other activities include the Paloozathon—a run, snowshoe and bike contest, a cardboard sled race, a fat tire bike race and bike demos, snowshoeing, ice skating, curling, a Paloozah (wife) Carry, snow golf, horse-drawn wagon rides, snow-kiting demos and kick sledding.

"Like all good winter events, we'll have a nice big fire on Haley Pond to roast marshmal-

Sugarloaf to host U.S. Alpine Speed Championships

BY DAN CASSIDY
Ski Tracks columnist

Sugarloaf Mountain is going to host the first ever U.S. Alpine Speed Championships March 16-21, 2019. The best alpine skiers in the nation will compete on Narrow Gauge in downhill, super-G and other alpine combined events.

Noelle Tuttle, Communications Manager at Sugarloaf, said that several domestic events are a vital part of U.S. Ski & Snowboard's athlete

development program and key to the success of "Project 26," the organization's long-term plan to produce the best in the world alpine ski racing.

The events are also open to skiers from countries other than the U.S.

"Sugarloaf is thrilled to bring elite-level ski racing action back to their mountain, the home to U.S. Ski Team member and Sugarloaf-sponsored athlete, Sam Morse of Sugarloaf Mountain," Tuttle said.

Sugarloaf has played host to several other championships in past years, but this will be the first official U.S. Alpine Speed Championship with downhill, super-G and alpine combined events.

Sugarloaf is really looking forward to once again hosting the event, said Ethan Austin, Director of Marketing,

"We couldn't be prouder to host the first-ever U.S. Alpine

"Sugarloaf is thrilled to bring elite-level ski racing action back to their mountain, the home to U.S. Ski Team member and Sugarloaf-sponsored athlete, Sam Morse of Sugarloaf Mountain."

NOELLE TUTTLE,
Communications Manager
at Sugarloaf



Photo courtesy of U.S. Ski & Snowboard / Reese Brown

Sam Morse, local Sugarloaf hero, shown here competing in the super G at U.S. Alpine Championships at Sugarloaf Mountain in 2017. He is expected to compete in the first ever U.S. Alpine Speed Championships March 16-21, 2019.

Speed Championships at Sugarloaf. As home to one of the few homologated (certified or approved) downhill courses in the East, Sugarloaf has a long history as a proving ground for the world's fastest skiers and we're excited to see the nation's best test themselves on the world famous Narrow Gauge once again."

Sugarloaf, along with Carrabassett Valley Academy, has long been a hotbed of ski racing and the development home of stars like Olympic champion Bode Miller and World Championship medalist Kirsten Clark. Sugarloaf's proud racing heritage stems from years of hosting world-class competitions, according to Tuttle.

Racing event schedules will be posted soon.

Festival

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

lows and warm cold hands," Dexter said.

Most activities are free. Some events will require a fee and registration, with prizes for the winners. Paloozah Passes are being sold and will get you entry into the fee competitions. The cost is \$10 for an individual and \$25 for a family.

The event is a joint effort by and for the Rangeley Skating Club and the Rangeley Lakes Chamber of Commerce. Local restaurants will be open, and a variety of lodging is available, although reservations are suggested. Donations and funds raised will support the Rangeley Lakes Chamber of Commerce and the Rangeley Skating Club.

As events and activities are finalized, they will be posted before the Winterpaloozah! weekend.

For more information, visit newenglandpondhockey.com on Facebook, call 864-2771, or register at www.teamsnap.com/RangeleyPondHockey.

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Winter weddings can sparkle with the right planning

BY DAN CASSIDY
Ski Tracks Columnist

Who would want a winter wedding? There are many things that can make it a wonderful idea. Brides-to-be may find that a winter wedding can sparkle in more ways than one around the holiday season.

Weddings in the hot summertime aren't the only choice these days. There are many places, especially in Maine, that offer great settings for a winter ceremony. Winter weddings are becoming more and more popular, especially for couples who enjoy the outdoors here in snow country. What better place in Maine than to have a white winter wedding than a ski resort? Resorts usually have conference rooms, lodging and restaurants that could be available for a gala wedding and reception.

Think of winter white bride's dress, colorful floral arrangements and taking a few ski runs with family and friends. How about ice sculptures or an ice bar outside?

A friend's wedding took place a year ago in February with a reception at a ski lodge. Tables were set up with floral arrangements of winter white using ski boots painted white as vases. The reception tables had snow scenes and guest's names with ski trails for seat assignments.

From the invitations to apparel, wedding cake and the attendants' attire, all created a spectacular winter event.

Of course you must be aware of weather conditions and may want to limit time in the outdoors.

Also, keep in mind that daylight may be an issue for an afternoon or evening ceremony.

If you're planning the ceremony inside a tent, you'll want to think about portable heaters.

Plan fun photos to include the wedding party in fur coats in a snowy scene around an open fire pit, a toast around a hot tub, or riding a chairlift. Make it more of a fun event. You may want to swap high heel shoes for snowmobile boots or sneakers.

You'll find many things to do at a ski resort, both prior to and after the ceremony. From outdoor hot tubs, to cross-country skiing, downhill skiing, tubing, winter

"We actually see a pretty big spike in the number of wedding-related inquiries that come in after the New Year because of how many couples get engaged over the holiday period."

DARCY LAMBERT,
Director of Communications,
Sunday River Ski Resort

biking, Cat skiing (skiers and boarders are transported up the mountain in a snowcat grooming machine with a cabin on the back), ice skating, snowshoeing, special events for youngsters, zip line tours, winter bike wide-track touring and other events may be available at your wedding site.

SUGARLOAF SKI RESORT WINTER OR SPRING WEDDINGS

Winter or summer, Sugarloaf is the ultimate destination wedding venue.

"It's surrounded by the Bigelow Mountain Range, alpine forests, and the sparkling Carrabassett River, so your wedding will have a spectacular natural backdrop, regardless of the season," according to Noelle Tuttle, marketing & communications manager at Sugarloaf Mountain.

"As a full-service, year-round resort with a wedding coordinator on-site, planning a wedding in Maine's Western Mountains is refreshingly simple," she said.

The Richard Bell Chapel is ideal for a religious ceremony of any tradition, or a non-denominational exchange of vows; the Chapel provides a relaxing, indoor environment for your walk down the aisle.

"Located in the Sugarloaf Mountain Hotel, the Carrabassett Ballroom provides an intimate and inviting atmosphere for smaller wedding receptions or rehearsal dinner parties. Its central location and ease of access make it convenient for every guest," Tuttle said.

There are many other things for guests to enjoy in any season such as the zip-line, Segway tours, mountain biking, trail



Photo courtesy of Sugarloaf Mountain
Saying your vows with a scenic view of the mountain as a backdrop, and later riding a chairlift to the summit and making a few ski runs down the slope, makes a winter wedding something very special.

A SEASONAL 'SHOE'

Snowshoeing adds another dimension to winter exercise

BY VALERIE TUCKER
Correspondent

Recreational hiking on snowshoes is a perennially popular winter activity in Maine. For those deciding to buy their first pair of snowshoes, the task can be overwhelming. They must decide between traditional and modern styles and choose among the many sizes, shapes, weights and construction materials.

For mom, dad and children to take

an easy hike on an old logging trail, snowshoes can be a simpler design, without the need for strong traction. Those planning to do backcountry hiking off the regular trails will face deeper snow, steeper climbs and icier terrain. They will require stronger traction and rugged bindings to hold their heavier and larger winter boots.

One more increasingly popular winter exercise is running in snowshoes designed for flat terrain and tightly-packed snow. That requires snowshoes that are shorter and

narrower than other styles to achieve and maintain a more natural running stride. All snowshoes have a harness, a frame and a platform. Some can handle fluffy snow, and others work well in heavier snow. Some are better in the woods, while others are better on trails. Traditional rawhide lacing must be maintained regularly and stored where mice can't nibble them. Neoprene lacing is durable, needs

More SNOWSHOEING, **PAGE 9**



Photo contributed by Reny's

Reny's Yukon Charlie's snowshoes are a budget-friendly option for all ages. Designs are simple and materials are durable. Snowshoes come in different sizes for men, women and children, and the stores offer a helpful sizing chart based on the individuals' weight, plus the gear that will be carried.

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Waterville's Quarry Road is ready

No matter your age or fitness, there is fun for everyone here

BY DAN CASSIDY
Ski Tracks Columnist

Winter has come to the Quarry Road Trails in Waterville. With the recent cold snap and a storm that dumped several inches on the facility, things are looking good.

New trails have been added and others have been extended and will be groomed this year.

Parts of the North and South Koons trails are being reshaped and graded to make them a little more skier friendly for recreational skiers and safer for competitors.

The Quarry Road facility is looking forward to another great winter season where anyone from the area can enjoy a great

variety of winter activities.

Snowshoeing, for example, is a great way for people of all ages and fitness levels to enjoy winter's beauty, get some fresh air and stay active. The wooded trails wrap along Messalonskee Stream, rolling hills and open meadows. It's hard to believe that this natural setting is just a few minutes from downtown Waterville.

Quarry Road is a perfect destination for families, schools, clubs and other groups who are looking for ways to enjoy winter activities suitable for anyone no matter the age or fitness.

Sledding has been popular forever and at Quarry Road it's another exciting activity that only requires a sled, warm clothing and a craving to have a great time.

Registration for after-school ski pro-

grams at Quarry Road Trails is now open for students from pre-K to eighth grade.

Snowmakers are gearing up with volunteers and staff getting the system ready to pump the guns.

The facility is looking to purchase a new groomer this winter and is depending on volunteers to help raise the necessary funds to complete the purchase. Donations to the Quarry Road Trails help to keep the area in great shape and getting better all the time. Quarry Road events wouldn't happen without support from dedicated volunteers and community supporters.

Discounted season passes will be available on Saturday, Dec. 1, the projected opening day.

For more information visit quarryroad.org.

Photo courtesy of Quarry Road facility

This young cross-country skier is enjoying a cross-country trek at the Quarry Road trails.



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Sunday, Dec. 9, trails are expected to be open.

Saturday, Dec. 15, free skiing and learn-to-ski clinics are scheduled.

Monday, Jan. 7, Central Maine Ski Club Youth program begins.

Saturday, Jan. 12, Community ski free day.

Thursday, Jan. 24, Soup and ski day.

Thursday, Feb. 7, CMSC Club time trial.

Thursday, Feb. 7, Soup and ski day.

Saturday, Feb. 16, winter fun day and free skiing.

Thursday, Feb. 21, Soup and ski day.

Saturday, March 16, Colby Nordic Marathon.

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Snowshoeing

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

less maintenance and is impervious to the elements.

For more than 50 years, Joseph's Sporting Goods at 146 Kennedy Memorial Drive in Waterville has offered customers advice on selection and accessories.

"There are a number of important factors which come into play when choosing a snowshoe," said owner David Winkin. "I help customers determine how much performance they might require and what features they will need."

Winkin said that, for example, back country snowshoeing means breaking trail to a destination. There won't be tracks to follow, and individuals have to plan and navigate the route.

"I think of trail walking as more on a level terrain," he said. "Local rail trails are a good way for beginners or less athletic folks to feel comfortable using their snowshoes."

He carries Tubbs models, forged from carbon steel, with the strength to grip in icy and slippery conditions. Tubbs gear offers a specific traction setup, with strategically-placed heel and toe crampons under the weighted regions of the snowshoe deck, ensuring the deepest penetration in the snow.

Jeanene Beane, a footwear buyer for Reny's stores, said their Yukon Charlie's snowshoes are a budget-friendly option for all ages. The design is simple, and the materials are durable. Snowshoes come in different sizes for men, women and children, and the stores offer a helpful sizing chart based on the individuals' weight, plus the gear that will be carried.

"We have carried the Yukon Charlie's line for many years," she said. "We have a standard blue line, but we

There are plenty of places to try those new snowshoes. Many municipalities have easy public trails that are open all year. In Waterville, the Quarry Road's wooded trails along Messalonskee Stream are just minutes from downtown Waterville.

also carry some pink and maroon color choices, too."

Reny's also carries gaiters to keep snow out of boots and sturdy poles that help with balance and maneuvering.

Those headed outside for a winter trek should plan ahead. Maine Master Guide Betsy Squibb suggests that snowshoers calculate the total weight they'll be carrying, which includes other gear, backpacks and food and water. They also should consider how far they want to walk, because that distance will be double. Dressing for snowshoeing is similar to that for other outdoor winter activities.

"Don't wear too many layers, and don't wear too few," she advised.

Follow standard safety rules when heading out in winter, according to Squibb.

"Tell someone where you're going and for how long," she said. "Take appropriate emergency gear, drink plenty of liquids and carry some high energy food."

A mile on snowshoes takes much more time and effort than hiking that same mile in warmer weather. Some people find that snowshoeing is a lot easier with poles, she said, which can help with balance and stride.

There are plenty of places to try those new snowshoes. Many municipalities have easy public trails that are open all year. In Waterville, the Quarry Road's wooded trails along Messalonskee Stream are just minutes from downtown Waterville. Matt Skehan, director of Parks and Recreation, said trails are used regularly by families, schools,

clubs and other groups of all ages and fitness levels. Check the online trail map (quarryroad.org/winter-trails) for the latest conditions and locations of trails designed specifically for snowshoeing.

"We have several loaner snowshoes available free of charge at the Welcome Center Yurt," he said.

Many inns and B&Bs offer rentals or have loaners. In Rangeley, the Ecopelagicon shop offers rentals, sales and excellent books, including "Snowshoe and XC Ski Outings In The Western Mountains of Maine," by Doug Dunlap; and "Appalachian Mountain Club Guide to Winter Hiking and Camping."

Wedding

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

hiking, a trip along the Huts and Trails, Bigelow Mountain climbing and more.

WEDDINGS AT SUNDAY RIVER SKI RESORT

"We actually see a pretty big spike in the number of wedding-related inquiries that come in after the New Year because of how many couples get engaged over the holiday period," said Darcy Lambert, Director of Communications at Sunday River Ski Resort in Newry.

"With that said, the vast majority of these couples plan for summer or fall weddings here because logistically it's just better and they have more options since most of our summer wedding venues turn back to restaurants come winter. We can still do weddings in the Grand Ballrooms of both hotels, but because of events, group, and conference business, weddings in these spaces tend

to be limited to the first few weeks of December.

"During the spring, summer, and fall after we close our ski season, we offer three outdoor ceremony spaces (Jordan Hotel, Grand Summit Hotel and Peak Lodge Terrace) and four reception areas to choose from including Sliders Restaurant in the Jordan Hotel, Camp and the Grand Ballroom in the Grand Summit Hotel and the Peak Lodge," Lambert said.

"Planning a wedding here is very much a one-stop-shop because in addition to being able to book your ceremony and reception space, your experience comes with a designated wedding coordinator who will work with you on everything from your menu to your reception and venue services," she said.

Some wedding packages available to future brides and grooms even include complementary Sunday River season passes to use the following winter.

Brides and grooms can ride a chairlift or Chondola to the summit North Peak Lodge at Sunday River to exchange their

vows or just enjoy the ambiance of a scenic venue in a vast winter scene. You might want to skip the champagne toast for a hot chocolate with marshmallow toast while enjoying the vista of a winter wonderland.

WATERVILLE'S QUARRY ROAD COULD HOST A WEDDING

The Quarry Road site welcomes skiers, snowshoers, sledding enthusiasts, hikers and those who just love to get out in the winter for some fun.

"The Quarry Road facility's Welcome Center Yurt could be a possible site to hold weddings," according to Matt Skehan, director of Parks and Recreation in Waterville.

"We do require users to complete a form and we will work with them on the rates, depending on their needs" he said.

Interested parties are welcome to contact Skehan at the Parks and Recreation office in Waterville at 680-4744 or e-mail at mskehan@waterville-me.gov for additional information.

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Biking can now be enjoyed year-round with a fat bike

Fat biking on snow can be a hoot

BY DAN CASSIDY
Ski Tracks Columnist

Over the past few years traditional biking and off-road biking was done on bare ground, and when the seasons changed, so did the biking trend.

The bike market has changed with the weather. No longer are bikes hung up for the winter. Fat bikes (a bicycle with oversized tires designed for riding off-road on soft terrain such as snow or sand) have also changed dramatically, making them popular in their appearance with frames made out of aluminum, carbon, titanium, bamboo and real steel with suspension forks being customized for on-the-snow transportation. Fat bikes now have studded tires to make off trail riding a very enjoyable sport.

In comparison to a regular summer bike, differences are very noticeable. Fat bike tires are wider, providing more traction on steep hills. Many have studded tires making backcountry riding easier, even riding double diamond trails on packed snow and ice. There are a few cross-country ski areas that allow fat bikes for touring on their trails.

No longer is the thought that cold weather puts an end to a trail ride. Riders have to think ahead and dress accordingly, but biking is still an option when the ground is covered with snow. Riders should dress in layers and be careful about overheating and be aware that hypothermia comes on quickly if the temperature sinks. Bring along a couple extra hand and foot warmers, keep your head warm, wear protective headgear, and don't forget to wear a helmet. Many riders wear their ski helmets with a liner that gives added protection.

Be sure to carry water and it can be good to warm it up to help stay hydrated. Make sure your feet stay warm by wearing thick insulated socks. Many stores now sell biking boots and shoes that are designed for riding in snow.

If temperatures drop and you find yourself getting cold, there are things to carry that may make all the difference between



Dan Cassidy photo

Fat biking is becoming more and more popular. There are now trails designed for riding in both summer and winter. Bikes with studded tires can easily be ridden on snow trails.

a great day riding in the outdoors and a chill that could be dangerous. Be smart and carry a space blanket, a trail light, a waterproof lighter, a pocketknife, snack foods such as trail mix and a first aid kit.

The best advice is don't travel alone, but if you do, leave a ride plan behind in case you don't show up at a designated time. On any backcountry ride, you'll want to be prepared.

If you happen to get lost overnight, your chances of survival are slim at best if you are not well-prepared because there may not be other riders on trails at night. Also, always carry identification information.

Ride safely. Use your head and don't forget to wear a helmet.

In comparison to a regular summer bike, differences are very noticeable. Fat bike tires are wider, providing more traction on steep hills. Many have studded tires, making backcountry riding easier, even riding double diamond trails on packed snow and ice.

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If you love to ski or snowboard, now is the time to get ready

BY DAN CASSIDY

Ski Tracks columnist

As we come closer to shorter days and cooler nights, our thoughts turn to the time fast-approaching when snowmakers get busy and cover the trails at our favorite ski hill. So now is the time to do a few things so you'll be ready when the bull wheels begin to turn and the chairlifts are loaded with anxious skiers and riders.



Photo by Dan Cassidy

It's best to leave ski tuning to professionals.

GET IN EXERCISE MODE AND GET SKIS TUNED

If you've been thinking about getting into shape for the winter months of skiing and riding, now is the time to get to the gym and work off those extra pounds you put on over the summer. Tighten up your abs, work on your thighs and upper body.

You also want to get those skis and snowboards in shape, tuned up for the season ahead. If you're a downhill skier, the skis will run whether they're tuned or not, but if you're looking for maximum performance from your boards, it's wise to keep them tuned and tuned correctly.

Ski tuning isn't just slapping a coat of wax to the bottoms and hitting the slopes. Professional ski tuners are your best bet for making sure your boards are properly tuned, not only with the right wax for the current temperature and snow conditions, you should also make sure the bottoms of the skis aren't scratched or heavily gouged. That will not only slow you down, it may put a quick end to the boards themselves.

Edges are equally important, because the more you slide into a turn, the harder it is to control the carving. You'll also tire more quickly and it may cause you to either over-compensate a turn or miss it all together.

BASE TUNING

The ski base is made of P-Tex and that is what makes your skis slide better on the snow. There are different qualities of P-Tex, so you want to make sure the right wax is used according to the snow conditions.

Waxes can be used hot or cold, however, hot waxing is better and is applied with an iron. Make sure the iron isn't too hot as it may damage the base. The bases should be properly tuned by scraping off the old wax with a nylon or brass brush, then using a plastic scraper to remove the wax. A cork block is then used to polish the base of the skis. There are waxes for different types of snow. Ski shops carry many brands.

EDGE TUNING

Keeping your edges sharp is a must to carve your turns. Tuning should be done to the side edges, using a fine diamond stone to remove burrs.

Skis are an expensive investment; it's important to keep them properly tuned. It's best to let techies at ski shops put the best waxes on and stone grind edges based on current conditions.

Ski and ride safely. Use your head and don't forget to wear a helmet!

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- * No matter what the temperature is, windchill can threaten a pet's life. Exposed skin on noses, ears and paw pads are at risk for frostbite and hypothermia during extreme cold snaps.
- * Rock salt can irritate the pads of your pet's feet. Wipe all paws with a damp towel before your pet licks them.



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RANGELEY SNODEO

Races, auction put winter on full display

BY VALERIE TUCKER
Correspondent

Rangeley Lakes Snowmobile Club will hold its annual Snodeo celebration from Jan. 24 to 26 this year.

"Proceeds will be used for the grooming operations by the club," said Mary ArcherBrey, the club's secretary and volunteer organizer. "It's our biggest fundraiser of the year."

The three-day event kicks off in Oquossoc at 5 p.m. with the annual Rangeley Lakes Chamber of Commerce's Chili & Chowder Cook-Off at the Gingerbread House. Categories include hot, medium and mild chilies and vegetable, seafood and best overall. After the Thursday cook-off competition, the fun continues with the club's Casino Night at Bald Mountain Camps, also in Oquossoc. On Friday, Moose Alley's doors open at 4 p.m., and at 6:30 p.m., Larry Koob will start the very lively live auction.

Saturday promises to be packed with events for all ages, with a schedule subject to changes, depending on the weather. The popular snowmobile race events will be at the Stephen A. Bean Municipal Airport.

The Rock Maple cross-country race is a five-mile event; gates open at 6:30 a.m. for racers and at 8 a.m. for the public. Spectator tickets are \$10 per person. There is no charge for children younger than 12, and parking is free. Food vendors will be available. Those wishing to race can pre-register online at rockmapleracing.com. Archer-Brey said the Wilhelm Reich Museum will be open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for children's activities.

At 2 p.m., the popular RaveX Jumpers will start their daredevil snowmobile stunt show at the Boss Power Equipment parking lot on Main Street. Saturday's grand finale will include a snowmobile parade and fireworks.

The parade line up starts at 5:30 p.m. at the Rangeley Inn and Tavern. Fireworks will follow at the town park in downtown. All events are subject to change because of the weather. For more information, call 320-1989 or email info@rangelsnowmobile.com. For Chili & Chowder Cook-Off information or advance tickets, call the Rangeley Lakes Chamber of Commerce at 864-5571 or email

The Rangeley World Record Snowmobile Ride is a one-of-a-kind charity snowmobile ride to raise money for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation Northern New England Chapter.

info@rangeleymaine.com.

The Rangeley World Record Snowmobile Ride is a one-of-a-kind charity snowmobile ride to raise money for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation Northern New England Chapter. Organizers are starting to raise money before Christmas with an auction.

"We will have a pre-Christmas auction (date to be determined) at Sarge's Pub and Grub in Rangeley," said organizer Jim Milligan. "We'll have lots of items, including autographed jerseys by Mookie Betts and Rob Gronkowski.

The Cystic Fibrosis Run on Feb. 16 is expected to raise \$30,000, according to Milligan.

"Every penny is going to fight Cystic Fibrosis," he said.

Riders will gather at 11 a.m. at Bald Mountain Camps in Oquossoc. The ride itself has a \$10 donation decal for participants' sleds. The day includes plenty of fun for those who don't plan to ride. Inside Bald Mountain Camps, silent and live auctions will feature great selections for all ages and interests.

"We will have vendors on the ice displaying everything from snowmobiles, to clothing, to fat tire bikes," Milligan said.

Entertainment includes a DJ playing a mix of favorites into the night. After the ride, everyone, including families, friends and supporters, are invited to a barbecue and a huge bonfire on the ice, along with the trophies and awards, an ice merry-go-round and a diving exhibition.

"We can guarantee the best darned fireworks show ever, too," Milligan said.



Photo by Valerie Tucker

Snodeo is Rangeley's annual celebration of snowmobiling, and this year's three-day celebration, starts on Jan. 24 with a Chili & Chowder Cook-Off and Casino night. There's an auction on Friday night and a day full of snowmobile racing, Rave X stunt riding and activities for all ages on Saturday.

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Ski Patrol services go beyond the call of duty

BY DAN CASSIDY
Ski Tracks Columnist

Ski Patrol organizations provide much-needed services at all ski resorts. They provide rescue, medical and assistance to injured or lost skiers and snowboarders.

They go beyond the call of duty, especially when an emergency arises. Many patrollers have technical-medical certifications that are offered by the National Ski Patrol.

Ski Patrollers provide rescue service to injured skiers and snowboarders. They may be limited in providing transportation in an emergency, having only ski toboggans and snowmobiles, or in some cases areas helicopters so rescuers can reach remote terrain of the mountain.

Some Ski Patrollers are certified as emergency medical technicians (EMT). They assist in possible life threatening emergencies and offer first aid treatment in remote areas to individuals who

are unable to be transported in rescue on or off mountain trails.

Problems do exist where skiers and snowboarders cross over boundary lines. This causes Ski Patrollers to provide special search and rescue missions that take up costly time and money.

Ski Patrollers also offer assistance in chairlift evacuations where power may have shut down, equipment has malfunctioned or for avalanche rescues.

They also provide service in setting up trails before lifts open for the day, and do sweeps of terrain at the end of the day to make sure all skiers and riders are safely off the mountain.

Ski Patrollers include alpine skiers, Nordic skiers and snowboarders, all of whom provide emergency care at all ski areas.

The next time you see a Ski Patroller on the slopes, give him or her a "Hi" and thank them for their service.



Photo courtesy of Farmington Ski Club, donated by Jay Staples Layden
Ski Patrollers at Titcomb Mountain lodge during the mid-1960s, just before the new addition was built in 1969. From left, standing is Bob Hutchinson, seated is Paddy Doak, Robert Mathieu and Avon Staples. Kneeling is Bob Friberg, Ski Patrol director. Notice the "stretcher" that was used back then to transport injured skiers off the trails. Note also the length of the skis in the background.

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BE SAFE, BUNDLE UP

Hypothermia is serious, potentially fatal

Precautions should be taken

BY WANDA CURTIS
Correspondent

Winter has finally arrived in Maine. That's good news for skiers, snowmobilers, and anyone who doesn't like hot weather. However, winter is not without hazards.

One danger of cold weather is that a person can develop hypothermia (an abnormally low body temperature). MaineGeneral Medical Center (MGMC) emergency room physician Dr. Timothy Pieh, MD, said recently that a drop in body temperature below 95 degrees Fahrenheit would be diagnosed as hypothermia, in comparison with a normal body temperature of 98.6 degrees F. If not treated, hypothermia can be fatal.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention statistics released several years ago, more than 800 people die from hypothermia in the U.S. each year. Maine CDC reported in its online publication, Stay Warm-Prevent Hypothermia in 2008, that an average of 20 Mainers die from hypothermia each year.

The Centers are currently in the process of updating the statistics. They noted that persons over 60 years of age account for many hypothermia deaths because they don't shiver or constrict peripheral blood vessels well, and they have lower metabolic rates. Some of those deaths reportedly occur right in people's homes.

Maine CDC noted that other individuals at increased risk include infants under the age of one, individuals with hypothyroidism, individuals with mental illness, homeless or poor people or individuals who live alone.

Also at increased risk are people who drink or abuse alcohol because alcohol dilates the blood vessels, which causes heat loss; people who take certain medications such as benzodiazepines, chloral hydrate or Benadryl; and people who take certain antipsychotic medications, which cause vasodilation and which decreases shivering responses.



Contributed photo
Dr. Timothy Pieh, MD, an emergency room physician at MaineGeneral Medical Center, warns of the dangers of hypothermia.

Pieh advised that any activity that exposes a person to adverse weather conditions, such as cold, snow or rain, increases the risk of hypothermia. He said that MGMC's emergency room physicians advise individuals to think ahead and to be prepared with warm, dry clothing when faced with adverse weather conditions.

"Even a short car ride to the store can become a dangerous trip if we break down or slide off the road," Pieh said. "Be prepared and have warm clothes, blankets and extra food in the car all winter."

According to Pieh, one early sign of mild hypothermia is shivering. He said that later in the process people become confused, which can lead to poor decision making.

"This confusion can be subtle, so be aware

"Even a short car ride to the store can become a dangerous trip if we break down or slide off the road. Be prepared and have warm clothes, blankets and extra food in the car all winter."

DR. TIMOTHY PIEH, MaineGeneral
Medical Center

and keep your family and friends safe," Pieh said. "Hypothermia causes clumsiness, trouble speaking clearly and feeling tired. Shivering stops later in the course of hypothermia and can be a sign that we are dangerously cold. Finally, people die from hypothermia."

MGMC emergency room providers Dr. Isabella Askari DO and Dr. Samantha Deming-Berr DO advise that the best plan is to protect ourselves and others from getting too

More HYPOTHERMIA, PAGE 15

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Hypothermia

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

cold because it's difficult to get a person warmed back up once they get too cold.

When it is severe, they treat patients with warmed, intravenous fluids, they said. Sometimes they have to use dialysis to warm the blood, or place catheters in the bladder and stomach to wash the patient's insides with warmed fluids.

HELP AVAILABLE TO KEEP WARM

Anyone who needs assistance with their fuel bill should contact their local town office to find out how to apply for fuel assistance programs.

COLD WEATHER PRECAUTIONS

Maine CDC recommends taking the following precautions to prevent hypothermia.

- Dress in layers.
- Wear a warm hat— 30 percent of heat loss is through the head.
- Wear a scarf and gloves.
- Keep infants in a room in which the temperature is 61-68 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Drink plenty of fluids and warm/hot drinks.
- Eat regular, balanced meals to give you energy— good nutrition is important.
- Keep active when it's cold, but not to the point where you're sweating.
- Keep dry and change out of wet clothes as soon as possible.
- Cut down on alcohol, caffeine and nicotine, since all three cause heat loss.
- Try to keep one room in the house warm.
- Ask your doctor if you are on any medications that affect your ability to maintain a steady body temperature (such as neuroleptic medications and sedative hypnotics).

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