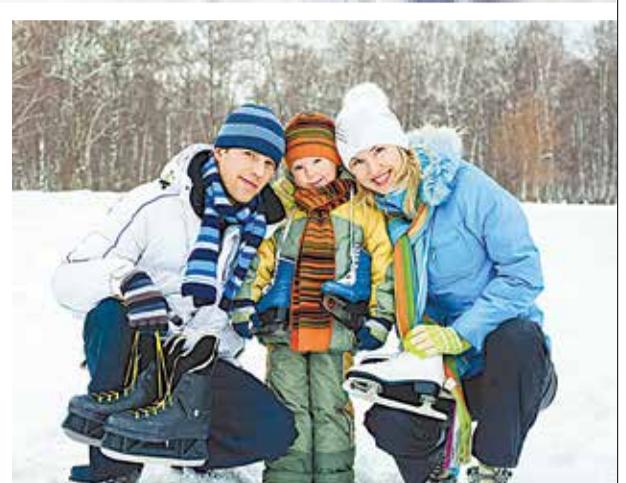




WINTER

IN MAINE



The WinterKids Ski ME Passport helps Maine kids develop healthy outdoor skills



Contributed photo

Selina Warren's Kingfield Elementary School class at Downhill 24.

BY DAN CASSIDY
Ski Tracks columnist

WinterKids has helped more than 100,000 Maine children be active outdoors in the winter through special educational programs throughout the state.

"WinterKids Passport is the ultimate ticket to winter fun," said Rob Wilbur, marketing and communications manager. Everyone knows the Passport has free and discounted tickets to go skiing and snowboarding, but it's much more than that.

"The WinterKids Passport can be used for a variety of winter activities including snow tubing, cross-country skiing, ice skating, snowshoeing, dog sledding and of course, downhill skiing and snowboarding," he said.

The WinterKids Passport allows Maine fifth, sixth and seventh graders to get discounted tickets, lessons and rentals at more than 50 winter sports areas all over Maine, all winter long. It's a value of more than \$1,800. Seth Wescott, Olympic Gold Medalist is a great ambassador for WinterKids.

Children who are not old enough for a Passport can get a **WinterKids FunPass**. The FunPass allows younger children from preschool through fourth grade the opportunity to try cross-country skiing, downhill ski and snowshoeing on groomed trails for free. The FunPass is good at many ski and snowshoe areas throughout Maine.

WinterKids Family Day is scheduled for January 8, 2017 at the Camden Snow Bowl, at 20 Barnestown Road, Camden. The event will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Passport holders can bring their families for special deals on this special day.

Other Family Days in early 2017 are scheduled for Lost Valley, January 22, Mt. Abram in Greenwood, January 29 and March 19; Camden Snow Bowl, Camden, February 5 and March 5; Sugarloaf Mountain, March 3. These events promise that kids and families will have a great time outdoors.

Families who want to get involved in winter activities must be sure to dress the kids properly for cold so they will enjoy the outdoors. Being damp can lead to danger, as the body can lose heat rapidly.

Dressing children in layers allows children to be more flexible to changing weather conditions and their activities. Advice from WinterKids suggest an inner layer, middle layer and outer layer of clothing so that an air space is created between layers and the skin; this space insulates best. Layers that are looser also allow for better blood circulation, according to WinterKids. The outer layer should be the protection layer. Gore-Tex and nylon are the best. Jackets should have a good collar and hood. Snow pants are best if they are the bib-style. Don't forget to protect hands and feet. Two pair of socks, a thin polyester sock against the skin and a thicker outer sock will do. Also a thin pair of gloves with a pair of mittens work well.

"In addition to receiving deeply discounted tickets, lessons and rentals, WinterKids Passport families can also enjoy WinterKids Family Days through the season," Wilbur said.

For additional information, log onto: winterkids.org or call 871-5700, ext. 104.

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

WinterKids to hold 5th annual Downhill 24



Sugarloaf photo

Night-lights shine bright for skiers and snowboarders participating in the WinterKids Downhill 24 at Sugarloaf Mountain.

WinterKids is planning their 5th annual event in which skiers and snowboarders can ski and ride under the lights at Sugarloaf Mountain on March 3 and 4, 2017 from 9 a.m. March 3 to 9 a.m. March 4. The event is called WinterKids Downhill 24, and it's the only event planned that raises money to support WinterKids efforts to battle childhood obesity.

WinterKids will set up lights along a trail that will create an exciting 24-hour fundraising adventure for skiers and snowboarders of all ages. Sign-ups for the event are still open.

Darling's Auto Group sponsors the Downhill 24 event. The lighted trail at Sugarloaf will allow skiers and snowboarders of any ability who signed up to fundraise for WinterKids to ski and ride for one night only.

"The event is open to all ages and ability levels," said Julie Mulkern, Executive Director. "Some participant teams seriously compete for the most runs, while others hit the slopes at their leisure. The important thing is that they're all raising money to fight childhood obesity and Downhill 24 participants will be helping to raise money to get more than 23,000 kids in Maine and New Hampshire get outside this winter and be active with their families and at school. One in three Maine kids enter kindergarten overweight," she said.

Participants form teams to compete to see who can clock the most runs in 24 hours. There will be 'round the clock en-

tertainment, live bands, a beer garden, mechanical bull, cool prizes and much more. Teams are awarded for most funds raised, most laps made and more.

Registration fees

Individual registration is \$50 and a \$200 fundraising minimum. Twelve years and younger, \$50 registration fee and \$100 fundraising minimum. Corporate sponsored team, \$2,500 flat fee covers registration and fundraising for up to 12 teammates. For additional information e-mail nnadeau@winterkids.org

Registration is open to the first 500 participants according to Rob Wilbur, WinterKids Marketing and Communications Manager. Each individual will have their own unique fundraising web page and there will be prizes awarded for those who raise the most money for WinterKids. To sign up your team, e-mail jgreen@winterkids.org. To register, log onto: www.d24.org

Registering for the WinterKids Downhill 24 gives access only to the trail that is lighted for night skiing and riding as the race venue. To use other lifts, you will need to purchase a separate pass from Sugarloaf.

"Sugarloaf is pleased to host this event," said Ethan Austin, Sugarloaf's Director of Marketing. "We are excited to be helping WinterKids get more Maine kids outside and active in the winter and night skiing for one night only is a huge thrill for the Sugarloaf community."

Quarry Road recreation area will be ready for winter activities

BY DAN CASSIDY
Ski Tracks Columnist

The Waterville area has a great spot for all kinds of winter activities so we can spend more time outdoors.

“The Quarry Road is mostly volunteer-driven,” Dave MacLeay, Marketing Chair of Friends of Quarry Road said. “We’re always looking for volunteers to fill all sorts of roles such as ski instructors, welcome center staff, snowmakers, etc., also, marketing and fundraising.

“We have snowmaking training and ski instructor training coming up on December 17.”

According to MacLeay, the Quarry Road is planning to open an additional 1.6 km of Nordic terrain this winter.

“Construction on that should be underway very soon. We’ll also have close to two miles of new snowshoeing opportunities on the new single track being developed primarily for mountain biking. Volunteers have been cutting and maintaining glades and other backcountry alpine terrain on the old Colby ski hill,” he said.

The Quarry Road Trails provide many opportunities including cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, walking, running, biking and even walking the dog.

There are 3 km of trails on the 200-plus acre facility that offer a variety of recreational opportunities just off North Street in Waterville. Sledding provides a lot of fun and excitement on the old Colby ski hill.

Snowshoeing on trails is an excellent form of exercise while enjoying the fresh air and it’s fun for all ability levels. There are wooded trails that follow along Messalonskee Stream, go down gentle hills or along meadows. You’ll find the Quarry Road a great destination for schools, clubs and other group activities.

Trail passes

Day tickets or season passes are required for use of groomed ski trails. No ticket is necessary for snowshoeing trails or on other areas that are not groomed. For additional information on day ticket prices or season passes, log onto: www.quarryroad.org.

Equipment Rental

The facility also offers rental equipment for classic and skate skiing. There are Nordic packages for children six and under, student, adult senior, and families. There are also a limited number of snowshoes available, free of charge and are located at the Welcome Center Yurt.

Learn to ski

The Central Maine Ski Club offers an after-school ski program for students, Kindergarten through grade eight. Group lessons for all abilities take place three days a week from 3:30 until dark. For additional information, log onto centralmaineskiclub.org

Private lessons for all ages

Private and small group lessons are being offered by appointment only. Whether you’re a first timer or a seasoned veteran, the lessons are \$10 per person. For additional information, call: 446-7356.

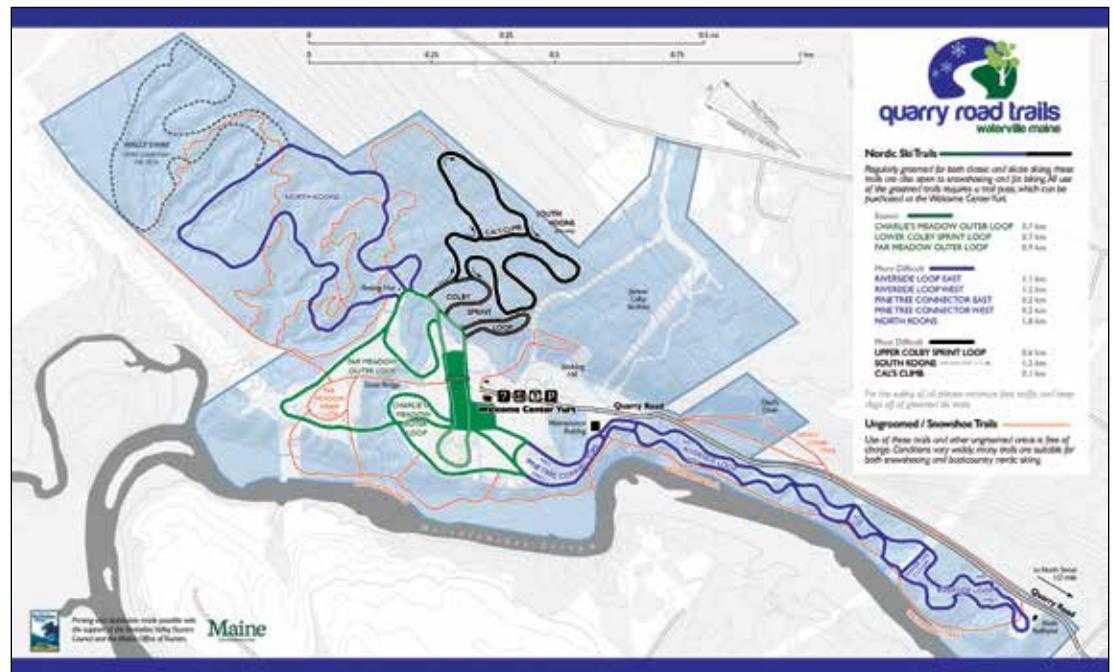
Race program

The Central Maine Ski Club offers Nordic ski teams for middle school, (grades 5-8), high school and adult athletes. The focus is on fitness and improving skills. For additional information, log onto centralmaineskiclub.org

Fat bikes are welcome in the area as well. There are groomed bike trails when snow conditions are right to ride.

Now is the time to gather up your gear, wax the Nordic skis, and get ready for a fun-filled season of being out in the snow.

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



Contributed photo

This is a view of the Quarry Road Trails map. The facility is located just off North Street in Waterville at 300 Quarry Road.

QUARRY ROAD SCHEDULED EVENTS

Among the special events at Quarry Road are the following:

December 10 – Quarry Road Opener / NENSA Zak Cup. A fun early-season Nordic race for all ages.

December 18 – Free skiing & Learn-to-Ski Clinic. A day of free skiing for the whole family, including equipment and instructions for anyone new to the sport.

January 14 & 15 – NENSA Eastern Cup. A chance to watch the top Nordic skiers in the East battle it out on the Quarry Road Trails.

January 28 – Community Ski Free/Winter Fun Day. Join us for a day of free skiing for the whole family.

February 19 – Maine Great Outdoor Weekend / Community Ski Free Day. Come and celebrate the Great Maine Outdoor Weekend for a free day of skiing on the Quarry Road Trails.

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Maine ski areas ready for snow

BY DAN CASSIDY
Ski Tracks Columnist

Ski areas in Maine are working hard to get ready for another old-fashioned winter. We can all agree that our summer and fall have been pretty much absent of rain. Let's hope that will end as we change seasons. Word from the National Weather Service is that the northeast is due for a lot of snow and cold.

Maine skiing is big business. There are currently 17 alpine ski areas gearing up for another season. Upgrades and new equipment have been worked on in several of the areas.

MOUNTAIN STATISTICS

Baker Mountain – Located in Moscow, just north of Bingham on Route 201. The mountain has a vertical drop of 460 feet. Volunteers run the ski area and the cost of skiing is just \$10.00 per day. Ski and snowboard rentals are also available. Hours are Saturdays 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sundays. They also offer sliding (or you may call it sledding) at no charge. Lift service is by one T-bar. There are two green (easy) trails, three blue, (intermediate) trails, no expert trails. The mountain depends on natural snow for skiing.

Bigrock Mountain – Located in Mars Hill, the mountain has a vertical drop of 980 ft.



Photo by Dan Cassidy

Make plans to celebrate the arrival of winter with Sunday River's 17th Annual Santa Sunday, December 4th. It's a fun event and helps raise money for a good cause. Check out www.sundayriver.com/events.

There is one Triple, one Double, one Handle, one Poma and one Carpet lift. There are five green (easy) trails, 14 blue (intermediate) trails and 10 black diamond (difficult) trails. The mountain also has one Terrain Park; night skiing and snowmaking covers 80 percent of their trails. For additional information, log onto bigrockmaine.com.

Big Squaw Mountain – Lo-

cated in Big Moose Township, the mountain has a 660 ft. vertical drop and is serviced by one triple lift. There are two green (easy) trails, 11 blue (intermediate) trails and one black diamond (difficult) trail. They also have some glades. For additional information, log onto bighsquaw.com

Black Mountain – Located in Rumford, the mountain has an 1150 ft. vertical drop

and is serviced by one triple, one double, and one T-bar and two handle tow lifts. There are five green (easy) trails, 15 blue (intermediate) trails and 15 black diamond (difficult) trails. There is one

Terrain Park, glades, night skiing, tubing and snowmaking covers 90 percent of the mountain. For additional in-

More SKI AREAS, **PAGE 5**

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Ski Areas

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

formation, log onto skiblackmountain.com

Camden Snow Bowl – Located in Camden, this picturesque mountain has an 850 ft. vertical drop and is serviced by one triple chair, one double chair and one conveyor carpet. There are two green (easy) trails, eight blue (intermediate) trails and 13 black diamond (difficult) trails. There are two terrain parks, glades, night skiing and snow tubing. Snowmaking covers 80 percent of the mountain. For additional information, log onto camdensnowbowl.com

Hermon Mountain – Located in Hermon, the mountain has a 350 ft. vertical drop and is serviced by one double chair, one T-bar and one handle tow. There are six green (easy) trails, seven blue (intermediate) trails and seven black diamond (difficult) trails. There is one Terrain Park, night skiing, snow tubing and there is 100 percent coverage snowmaking. For additional information, log onto skihermonmountain.com

Lonesome Pine Trails – Located in Fort Kent, this mountain has a 500 ft. vertical drop and is serviced by one T-bar and one J-bar lift. There is one green (easy) trail, seven blue (intermediate) trails and five black diamond (difficult) trails. There is night skiing and snowmaking covers 60 percent of their terrain. For additional information, log onto lonesomepines.org

Lost Valley – Located in Auburn, the mountain has a 500 ft. vertical drop and is serviced by one T-bar and one J-Bar lift. The mountain offers night skiing and snowmaking covers 60 percent of the terrain. For additional information, call 784-1561.

Mt. Abram – Located in Greenwood, the mountain has an 1150 ft. vertical drop and is serviced by two double lifts, one T-bar, one surface lift and one carpet. There are 10 green (easy) trails, 21 blue (intermediate) trails and 13 black diamond (difficult) trails. The mountain offers three terrain parks, glades night skiing, snow tubing and snowmaking covers 85 percent of their trails. For additional information log onto mtabram.com

Ski Mt. Jefferson – Located in Lee, the mountain has a 432 ft. vertical drop and is serviced by two T-bars and one rope tow. There are three green (easy) trails, six blue (intermediate) trails and three black diamond (difficult) trails. For additional information, log onto skimtjefferson.com

Powder House Hill – Located in South Berwick, the mountain has a 150 ft. vertical drop and is serviced by one rope tow. There are two green (easy) trails and one blue (intermediate) trail. They also have night skiing. For additional information, log onto powderhousehill.com

Quoggy Jo Ski Center – Located in Presque Isle, the mountain has a 215 ft. vertical drop and is serviced by one T-bar. There are two green (easy) trails, and three blue (intermediate trails). There is also a terrain park. For additional information, log onto skiquoggyjo.org

Saddleback Mountain – Located just outside of Rangeley, the mountain has a vertical drop of 2,000 feet and is serviced by two quads, two double chairlifts and one T-bar. There are 23 easy (green), 20 intermediate and 23 black diamond trails. There are also three terrain parks, great glades and snowmaking covers 85 percent of the mountain trails.

The mountain stands at 4,120 feet in elevation, and is one of only seven ski moun-

tains with lift service over 4,000 feet. There are magnificent views of the Rangeley Lakes area. Saddleback boasts extensive glades and chutes in Casablanca. The Kennebago Steeps is the largest steep skiing and riding in the East.

At press time, the Saddleback Mountain Foundation, the Trust for Public Land and the New England Forestry Foundation is reporting that they have reached verbal agreements to purchase both the main ski area and the surrounding land of Saddleback Mountain ski area. The verbal agreed price is \$6 million plus future land sale royalties, according to Maine Public.

Whether the mountain will open this season depends on how much money the foundation can raise and how soon. According to a press release, Peter Stein, the foundation's chairman told the Portland Press Herald recently that it received \$5 million in pledges over the summer when it was gauging interest in purchasing the resort. The buyers need to raise \$4 million which would cover the down payment and operating capital to run the resort. Time will tell as many local businesses and skiers are anxious to see if the lifts will turn and snowmaking on the trails begin. For additional information, call 864-5671 or log onto: saddlebackmaine.com

Shawnee Peak – Located in Bridgton, the mountain has a 1,300 ft. vertical drop and is serviced by one quad,

two triples, one double chair lift and one carpet. There are seven green (easy) trails, 23 blue (intermediate) trails and 14 black diamond (difficult) trails. There are two terrain parks, glades, night skiing and snowmaking covers 98 percent of the terrain. For additional information, log onto shawneepeak.com

Spruce Mountain – Located in Jay, the mountain has a 300 ft. vertical drop and is serviced by three rope tows. There are three green (easy) trails, five blue (intermediate) trails and three black diamond (difficult) trails. There is a terrain park and night skiing. Snowmaking covers 50 percent of their terrain. For additional information, log onto sprucemountain.org

Sugarloaf Mountain – Located in Carrabassett Valley, the mountain has a 2,820 ft. vertical drop and is serviced by two high-speed quads, three quads, one triple, six doubles, one T-bar and two surface lifts. There are 34 green (easy) trails, 49 blue (intermediate) trails and 63 black diamond (difficult) trails. There are three terrain parks, glades, snow tubing and snowmaking covers 85 percent of their terrain. For additional information, log onto sugarloaf.com

Sunday River – Located in Newry, the mountain has a 2,340 ft. vertical drop and is serviced by one Chondola, 4 high-speed quads, five quads, three triples, one double and one surface lifts. There are

six terrain parks, glades, night skiing and snow tubing. Snowmaking covers 96 percent of their terrain. The mountain has over 2,000 snow guns, 80 miles of snowmaking pipe and has invested over \$7 million in snowmaking equipment.

New this year is that the Snow Cap Inn will host dogs to six dedicated dog-friendly rooms of the 70 guest rooms. All dog guests will be given a treat at check-in and are welcome to stay in their owner's room while the owner is out playing. For additional information, log onto sundayriver.com

Titcomb Mountain – Located in West Farmington, the mountain has a 340 ft. vertical drop and is serviced by two T-bars and one handle tow. There are four green (easy) trails, five blue (intermediate) trails and six black diamond (difficult) trails. There is a terrain park, night skiing and snow tubing. Snowmaking covers 75 percent of their terrain. The mountain plans to host the U16 Nordic races, March 10-12, 2017. They also plan to have four Fridays in February as free skiing and riding. For additional information, log onto titcombmountain.com

So, now is the time to get your gear out, have your skis tuned up by a professional and make sure your apparel and boots are still in good condition.

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How to Beat the Winter Blues

BY WANDA CURTIS
Correspondent

Seasonal affective disorder or SAD is a type of depression also referred to as winter depression or winter blues. The symptoms of this disorder can begin in fall and continue in winter when the days get shorter and there are more hours of darkness. It's thought to be related, at least in part, to decreased light exposure.

A higher incidence rate of SAD has been reported among persons living farther from the equator. It's more common among women than men. Studies of twins have suggested that there may be a genetic factor involved.

Symptoms of SAD may include fatigue, irritability, inability to concentrate, body aches, decreased activity, overeating of carbohydrates which may lead to weight gain, and crying spells. Some sufferers have even reported thoughts of suicide. The symptoms of SAD are generally at their worst during the darkest months.

Dr. Michaela Clark-Kelley who practices primary medicine at Inland Family Care said that about 10 percent of the patients she treats suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder. She said that's compared to only about 1 percent in Florida. She said that most of the patients she treats for that disorder are women and that it seems to be more severe when men are affected.

"My first recommendation for treatment would be lifestyle changes like exercise," she said.

"Getting restful sleep is also important and exercise can help with that too."

Clark-Kelley said that she also finds many of her patients are deficient in Vitamin D. She said that she often prescribes 2000 units of Vitamin D and 2000 mg Fish Oil per day. However, she said that before taking those supplements it's important to check with one's primary care provider because Fish Oil can interact with blood thinning medications and aspirin. It's also important to have Vitamin D levels checked because too much Vitamin D can be toxic.

She also recommends the use of light therapy which should also be used under the supervision of a primary care provider. She said that counseling can be helpful for some



people and that occasionally she prescribes antidepressant medications.

According to the article "Seasonal Affective Disorder" in the January 2005 journal *Psychiatry*, an estimated 10 to 20 percent of recurrent depression cases follow a seasonal pattern. The authors of that article Kathryn Roecklein and Kelly J. Rohan PhD noted that the predominant pattern involves fall/winter depression with spring/summer remission. They reported that SAD has been identified in children and adolescents as well as adults. They wrote that seasonal patterns are not just limited to mood disorders but have also been identified

"My first recommendation for treatment would be lifestyle changes like exercise. Getting restful sleep is also important and exercise can help with that too."

DR. MICHAELA CLARK-KELLEY, INLAND FAMILY CARE



in bulimia nervosa, anxiety disorders and with other psychiatric diagnoses.

One popular treatment for SAD is light therapy: timed daily exposure to special fluorescent lights during the fall and winter months when symptoms are present. Roecklein and Rohan reported that some research has shown morning exposure to light is most effective in relieving

symptoms but other research suggests that morning plus evening exposure to light may get better results. Those same authors stressed however, that light therapy is not for everyone.

"Light therapy may be contraindicated in individuals with certain retinal diseases, medications that increase retinal sensitivity to light, and a history of mania or hypoma-

nia."

They recommend that light therapy be used under the supervision of a qualified professional.

Mayo Clinic staff report in the online article "Depression (Major Depressive Disorder)" that depression symptoms often improve with regular exercise. They wrote that regular exercise can help depression and anxiety in the following ways.

Regular exercise can cause the brain to release chemicals (endorphins, and endocannabinoids, for example) which may ease depression.

Exercise can reduce immune system chemicals that can make depression worse.

Exercise raises body temperature which can have calming effects.

Meeting exercise goals can boost confidence and make people feel better about themselves when they get in better shape.

Exercise can take a person's mind off negative thoughts which contribute to anxiety and depression.

Getting involved in exercise and physical activity may increase a person's opportunities for social interactions which often help depression.

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Family-friendly winter activities

Many people may run indoors when the temperatures outside approach or dip below freezing. But the truly adventurous see no reason why a little cold weather should keep them cooped up indoors for months at a time.

Sports and other physical activities can provide the perfect respite from the cabin fever that can settle in during long winters. Families looking to get some quality time outdoors together this winter can enjoy a host of activities in the great outdoors, even if the temperatures are a tad on the chilly side.

•**Sledding:** Sledding may remind adults of their childhoods and turn kids' snow days into fun afternoons they will never forget. Kids can seemingly ride their sleds and toboggans down snowy hills all day long, but even parents get a kick out of racing kids downhill or sharing a sled with their youngsters. While older kids can typically handle sleds on their own, parents should ride along with toddlers to prevent falls and handle steering duties. When sledding, keep a close eye for any signs that suggest kids might be getting too cold, such as shivering or clothes that are soaked through.

•**Snowshoeing:** Parents may not know that many retailers sell snowshoes for children. While snowshoeing can be physically demanding, it's also a fun way for families that like family walks to continue those traditions even if there are a few inches of snow on the ground. Make sure kids are bundled up, paying extra attention to their footwear. Kids will enjoy snowshoeing more if their boots are both comfortable and capable of keeping their feet warm.

•**Snowman building:** Perhaps no outdoor winter activity is more conducive to family fun than building a snowman. The season's first substantial snowfall provides the perfect opportunity for parents and their children to start building some snowmen. While "snowman building" is unlikely to find its way onto any gym schedules, building a snowman provides a great workout. Lifting snow is great strength training, while pushing snow to form Frosty's

body is a great way to get in some cardiovascular exercise.

•**Skiing and snowboarding:** The earlier youngsters start skiing and/or snowboarding, the more likely such activities will prove second nature. Many resorts offer skiing and snowboarding lessons to kids and adults, so parents can book weekend getaways for the

family to nearby resorts and foster a love of winter sports in youngsters.

While it's tempting to huddle up indoors when winter hits full swing, families who embrace the great outdoors when the temperatures dip can avoid cabin fever and enjoy one another's company along the way.



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Dance

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

single; \$15.00 per couple or \$80.00 per single, \$120.00 per couple, for a 10-class card.

And there are wedding party packages:

For the wedding party \$250 includes 3 private lessons for the wedding couple; 2 private lessons for father-daughter and mother-son; and 1 group class for the wedding party, family and friends

Heather Rowden, of Fairfield, owner of Blue Wave Studio, started out working with Bruce Olsen, former owner of Blue Wave Studio and they still work together regularly. Olsen, owner of Tree Spirits Winery in Oakland, feels he has to devote his time to that business. He and Rowden work together with the Dance Club at Colby College where they teach together.

Heather Rowden is a graduate of Dean College in Franklin MA, recognized as a top college for dance with extensive training in ballet, jazz, modern, hip hop and tap for performing, teaching, choreography, therapy and more. She admits to loving ballet but not being built for it, "too short and heavy," she said with a laugh.

Rowden teaches tap, hip hop, ballet and ballroom and the students at Colby decide what it will be on any particular night. This week the Monday night class at Colby chose ballroom and was working on the Night Club Two Step. The group watched as teachers demonstrated steps calling out a one-and-two-and-three-and-four and continued adding on side-ways moves and turns as they dance around the floor with grace and poise. Adding music, the whole group is moving about smiling and changing partners every few minutes.

The dance club includes some students from around the world and some who participate in regional dance competitions, "mostly in the Boston area," Miranda Shao who was dressed in a Winnie-the-Pooh outfit said.

The Colby group meets twice a week, Mondays and Wednesdays with anywhere from a dozen to two dozen students participating.

There are lots of choices for dancing to the moon this winter – it's just a matter of getting out there!



Heather Rowden and Bruce Olsen, line up with students for the Night Club Two-Step at a recent class at Colby College. L to R: Kate Fotos, Landon Summers, Bruce Olsen with student, Rowden with student, Miranda Shao and Jerry Diaz, Mexico, student with M.J. Mokobu, South Africa.

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Winter Adaptive programs offer opportunities

BY DAN CASSIDY
Ski Tracks Columnist

Maine offers many great winter sports opportunities for people with physical disabilities. Activities include alpine skiing, alpine team racing, snowboarding, Nordic skiing, snowshoeing and specialty programs.

Sugarloaf is proud to be a sponsor of Maine Adaptive Sports and Recreation. The free adaptive sports program provides people with physical disabilities the opportunity to alpine, Nordic ski, snowboard and snowshoe in the winter and golf, paddle and cycle in the summer.

Maine Adaptive Sports and Recreation has grown from one winter sport to five winter sports in seven winter locations. There are now more than 350 participants and has expanded from two volunteers to more than 450 volunteers annually.

The year-round adaptive recreation program in Maine is for

adults and children with physical disabilities. Children have to be at least age four. The program provides more than 3,500 lessons during winter months free of charge, thanks to the generous support of individuals, businesses, corporations and foundations that help keep the opportunities going.

Alpine skiing and snowboarding locations include:

Sunday River Ski Resort in Newry, Sugarloaf in Carrabassett Valley, Camden Snow Bowl in Camden and Black Mountain in Rumford.

Nordic skiing and snowshoeing locations include:

Bethel Nordic Ski Center at the Bethel Inn in Bethel and Pineland Farms in New Gloucester.

Lessons begin in early January and run through the beginning of April, according to the Maine Adaptive Sports and Recreation website. Maine adaptive sports and recreation also offers summer lessons in southern and central Maine.



Partners of the Adaptive Sports and Recreation include, Sunday River, Sugarloaf, Disabled Sports USA, U.S. Paralympics and GuideStar.

For additional information, call 800-639-7770 or log onto maineadaptive.org/about.

Photo courtesy of Maine Adaptive Sports and Recreation
Nordic ski programs like these help individuals with physical disabilities enjoy winter on the slopes with the help of volunteers at many Maine ski resorts.

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Up for something new?

Try these off-the-radar winter sports

Winter sports like skiing and snowboarding are wildly popular across the globe. Athletes from both sports compete every four years at the Winter Olympics, while millions of their fellow athletes take to the slopes each winter for recreational purposes.

While skiing and snowboarding may dominate the outdoor winter sports landscape, there are plenty of off-the-radar outdoor sports that are growing in popularity among people looking for something a little different.

Snowkiting

Much like snowboarding appeals to surfers and skateboarders, snowkiting has found a fan base among people who enjoy

kiteboarding when the weather is warm. Snowkiters use kite power to glide across the snow or ice. Foil kites once dominated the snowkiting landscape, but many snowkiters now prefer inflatable kites. Snowkiting can be very dangerous, so it's important that men and women interested in snowkiting learn the proper techniques, which can be difficult to master.

Fat biking

Though its name might leave much to be desired, fat biking is growing in popularity among athletes who love riding bikes but have traditionally had to put their bikes in the garage once the temperatures dip. Fat

bikes are similar to traditional bicycles, but they come with oversized tires and wider rims that make it possible for the bikes to handle unstable terrain, including terrain covered in snow. Mountain biking enthusiasts may favor fat biking, as the sport allows them to traverse snow-covered trails their mountain bikes are typically unable to traverse.

Ice boating

For those who simply love to be out on the water, ice boating is a great way to fulfill your winter fix for sailing. Ice boats are similar to sailboats, but they are typically fitted with runners, also called skates, or

skis and designed to run over frozen waters instead of through water. Ice boats tend to sail across ice-covered surfaces at high speeds, and that can make already cold conditions even colder for ice boat sailors. But many ice boat sailors find the sport is even more fun than traditional sailing.

Skijoring

Skijoring may be a less accessible winter sport, as it involves people on skis being pulled by a dog, horse or vehicle. The sport originated centuries ago in Scandinavia as a way for military members to speed up the process of sharing messages. Skijoring with dogs typically

involves men or women being pulled by one to three dogs, each of which is wearing a sled dog harness (men and women wear skijoring harnesses). Dogs are not controlled by reins, but rather must be motivated to keep moving by their own desire to run. A single horse is typically enough for equestrian skijoring, and horses are typically guided by a rider. Small motorized vehicles, such as snowmobiles, are typically used in motorized skijoring.

Athletes need not sequester themselves indoors when temperatures dip below freezing. In fact, there are several lesser known outdoor sports athletes can enjoy this winter.



Check out these local businesses to prepare you to enjoy the winter weather...



Scheduled Events

Our Staff thanks all Veterans for their service!! Please extend our thanks to your friends and family members.

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