



# Nordic Ski Club of Milwaukee

January 2021

Year-Round Recreation Since 1971

Vol. 50 Issue 1

## In this Issue:

*Saturday, January 9th*  
**Ski & Sip Soup Outdoors at Winter Picnic**

*Thursday, December 31st*  
**Zoomin' New Year's Eve**

*Sunday, January 24*  
**Nordics to Ski the Nordic Trail**

**To Have Bus Trips in 2022, We Need Your Dues Now**

**New Board Member - Need More help**

**Local Ski, Snowshoe or Hike Outings**

**Thank You Dennis Drake**

**Past President Profile: Ralph Ehlinger**

**Nordic Ski Club Scavenger Hunt Q & A**

## Monthly Meeting and Events

### **Ski & Sip Soup Outdoors at January 9 Winter Picnic**

*Saturday, January 9, 2021, 10:00am*

Hark back to the decades when the Nordic Ski Club of Milwaukee often served food and beverages outdoors in the snow. On Saturday, January 9, 2021, we'll be cross-country skiing at Lapham Peak State Park (park sticker needed). Since the coronavirus prevents us from using the indoor shelter for our annual picnic, we'll be stopping for soup, hot beverages and dessert at an outdoor picnic at the Mike Fort Shelter. It's just a short ski or walk from the Homestead Hollow parking lot. The club will provide some of the food, but we ask every participant to bring a can of soup for our old-fashioned "soup dump." We're devising ways to keep socially distanced. Just being outside will help keep us safe. Here's how it works:

1. Bring 1 can per person of soup to the shelter at 10 a.m., before you start to ski. The soup should either be a white base, a red base or a vegetarian soup. We'll have 3 pots for each type.
2. Bring your own mug or bowl and spoon in a bag with your name on it (so you can leave it at the shelter while you ski).
3. We'll provide hot chocolate, coffee or tea and cups, oyster crackers and a sweet treat!
4. Go skiing or hiking, whatever the weather dictates. There will be 2.4 km of human-made snow near the Evergreen Lodge and parking lot (down the hill from Homestead Hollow)
5. Return to Mike Fort Shelter between noon and 1 p.m. to eat and visit (with masks on after eating).
6. Then go ski again if you wish! Restrooms are open off the parking lots.
7. If you wish to help or need more details, contact Renee C. at [coutr@gmail.com](mailto:coutr@gmail.com).
8. Register for the picnic [via this link](#) so we know how much food we'll need.

Next Month,  
Look For:

***Lynden Sculpture  
Garden Snowshoe  
February 5***

***Greenbush Ski or  
Snowshoe  
February 12***

## Contact Us:

Email [nordicskiclub.mke@gmail.com](mailto:nordicskiclub.mke@gmail.com)

For membership  
information, call  
Pat Doornek  
414-906-0629

## Nordic Officers

**President**  
Carol Doebler

**Vice Presidents**  
Renee Couture



**Park stickers and lessons:** The NSCM board has decided not to give ski lessons this year due to the coronavirus. If you see an experienced NSCM skier on the trails, however, don't hesitate to ask for some tips! You will need an annual 2021 state park sticker, which you should purchase online ahead of time. If you want to wait in line at the entrance booth, you can buy a daily pass for \$8.00. A Wisconsin State Trail Pass is also required if you plan to ski. An annual pass is \$25, a daily pass is \$5 that cannot be purchased online. The park sticker and trail pass can also be purchased in advance by calling 1-888-305-0398 if you call a couple weeks in advance. The entrance can be quite busy. Some special events have attracted crowds and the park has closed until enough people leave. So come early. Restrooms (but not lodges) are planned to be open. Plan for snow!

*The Nordic Ski Club of Milwaukee (NSCM) continues to practice social distancing and the use of face masks, as recommended by the CDC and Wisconsin authorities. Know that your participation in any event is at your own risk. Before attending any NSCM outing or event, please check with the event leader. Use good judgment and continue to keep us all safe.*

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### **Zoomin' New Year's Eve**

Thursday, December 31, 2020, 7:00pm

Join me for a ZOOMIN' New Year's Eve gathering. Bring your noisemakers and ugly Christmas sweaters. My plan is to have a liquid libation handy. We'll go just an hour, from 7 to 8 pm, unless some of you want to party longer. We can connect safely and still "see" each other thanks to the Nordic Ski Club of Milwaukee's Zoom videoconference account.

Instead of a game as an ice breaker, let's all share one JOY that we have had during this challenging year. Think of it as the Silver Lining in our Covid Cloud.

If you're interested in celebrating with me, Mary Wozniak, and others, please register on our website through [this link](#) by Wednesday, December 30. A Zoom link will be forwarded to you on Thursday, New Year's Eve day. If you have questions, email me at [mkwoz@yahoo.com](mailto:mkwoz@yahoo.com). Until then, Happy Holidays and please stay safe.

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### **Nordics to Ski the Nordic Trail**

Sunday, January 24, 2021, 1:00pm

With good snow, the Nordic Trail is a gem for cross-country skiers. The trail is less than an hour's drive from Milwaukee, in the Southern Unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest. On Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021, the Nordic Ski Club of Milwaukee will cross-country ski on our namesake trail. It was originally designed in the 1970s by David Harrison, an early president of the Nordic Ski Club. This scenic trail system has options for beginners to expert skiers. Meet us

and Steven Fabina

#### **Secretary**

Paula Brookmire

#### **Treasurer**

Dave Herrewig

#### **Board Members**

Paula Brookmire

Renee Couture

Carol Doebler

Steven Fabina

Dorothy Riesing

Ellen Riley

David Rosenberg

Alan Siegl

Mary Wozniak

#### **Program Committee**

##### **Members:**

Paul Keber, Chair

(262) 547-4827

Chris Pantazon

Barb Tremel

Cathy Ward

Becky Yakes

Joanne Ziarek

#### **Public Relations Chair:**

Paula Brookmire

(414) 527-0040

#### **Clinics Chair:**

Carol Doebler

#### **Website Chair:**

Katie Bivens

[katiebivens@ymail.com](mailto:katiebivens@ymail.com)

#### **Historian:**

Paula Brookmire

(414) 527-0040

#### **Newsletter:**

Send Articles to:

[newsletter](#)

[@nordicskiclub.org](mailto:@nordicskiclub.org)

#### **Facebook Chair:**

Ellen Riley

[ellenriley612@gmail.com](mailto:ellenriley612@gmail.com)

#### **Facebook Link:**

<https://www.facebook.com/>

[Nordic-Ski-Club-of-](#)

[Milwaukee-NSCM-](#)

[111282934088979/">111282934088979/](#)

#### **Membership Chair:**

at 1 p.m. (ski at 1:15 p.m.) next to the shelter at the Nordic Trail. The shelter may not be open, but restrooms will be. If it's really cold, stay in your cars till we have a group.

Take I-43 south from Milwaukee to HWY 20 (East Troy) west till it ends Then take a jog left (west) onto Hwy 12. Go to County Rd. H and turn right (north). The Nordic Trail is a few miles up the road on the right (east). You can print a trail map by [clicking on this link](#).

If there's too little snow there, we may ski at Lapham Peak State Park, which makes snow. Look for an update email a day or two before. But definitely call Paula Brookmire at (414) 527-0040 Saturday evening or between 9 and 10:30 a.m. Sunday to confirm the ski location and let her know you're coming. By meeting up before everyone starts skiing, you may be able to find a ski partner. If there's no snow, we may hike along Menomonee River Pkwy.

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### **To Have Bus Trips in 2022, We Need Your Dues Now**

If you love our motorcoach ski trips up north, consider this: If you don't renew your Nordic Ski Club of Milwaukee membership now, we may not be able to do trips in the future. It's not just about the money. We count on your renewals to update us on your contact information. If we can't contact you, we can't tell you about trips, hikes, campouts, etc. We also need you to agree to our liability waiver every year, and that is part of your renewal. Finally, we need a certain number of members just to hold our ski trips and to keep going. Dues were due in October. As we approach January, a lot of members have not renewed.

The Program Committee, the board and other volunteers have worked hard behind the scenes to plan creative events. If you're disappointed that the pandemic cancelled our 2021 bus ski trips up north, think about cross-country ski outings closer to home. We hope to have several day trips. Remember, too, that our cross-country ski club has year-round events, including bike rides, snowshoe outings, and socially distanced get-togethers like our Jan. 9 picnic (see top of January newsletter). These are all organized by volunteers. Please renew or join now. Memberships are a small cost (\$25 individuals, \$35 households). You'll get \$10 of that cost back in 2021 when you register for our 50th anniversary party.

If you have not received reminders about your dues via email or you're not a member and want to join, please click on this [Member Application link](#). From this website page you can either signup online, or click on the "Printable Membership Application and Waiver" link to download our member signup form. If you renew online via AffiniPay (the payment plan our website uses instead of PayPal), you will not be charged any fee for using your credit card. If you prefer to pay by check, make it out to NSCM and mail it with our filled-out membership form--including waiver on the back that you have signed-- to Pat Doornek, 3463 N. Newhall St., Milwaukee, WI 53211. Note: Even lifetime members need to fill out a membership form and waiver each year to stay active.

### **New Board Member -- More Needed to Help the Board With Crises**

The coronavirus pandemic has been challenging for the Nordic Ski Club of Milwaukee. Our board of directors has been critical to dealing with crises. For example, the restaurant where we booked our summer 50th anniversary banquet recently closed. We need a new venue. We need

Pat Doornek  
414-906-0629

*New memberships or renewal forms may be mailed to:*

Pat Doornek  
3463 N. Newhall St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53211

### **Contact Us:**

#### **Volunteers**

The Nordic Ski Club runs on volunteers. Please contact Renee Couture at [acoutrr@att.net](mailto:acoutrr@att.net) if you are interested in learning more.

#### **Club Membership**

Membership Renewals due Oct. 1. Renew online. Then pay through PayPal or mail check to Pat Doornek.

Dues -

Individual \$25

Household \$35

Must be a current member to book ski trips at member rate.

#### **Web Tips**

Adjust your profile settings so that fellow Nordic Members can see your name, address and phone numbers. Select "Members Only" to protect the information from the general public. That is the default for new members. Go to [www.nordicskiclub.org](http://www.nordicskiclub.org) and login to your profile. The login is in the upper right-hand corner. From there, the Member Tab will appear on the menu. Full instructions are located on that page in a PDF file.

#### **Add Photos To The Nordic Website**

to plan for bus ski trips in 2022.

At the December NSCM board meeting, Ellen Riley volunteered and was appointed to fill an open position on the nine-member board. At our annual elections in March (to be conducted online) we have at least one opening for a board member. If you love the numerous outdoor activities we plan year-round, please help us now. It's not a big time commitment. Most board meetings are Zoom video conference calls, usually less than 90 minutes. We hold only 10 to 11 board meetings a year, usually the second Monday of the month. Willing to volunteer? Please contact President Carol Doebler via email at [tortoiseski@wi.rr.com](mailto:tortoiseski@wi.rr.com).

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### Local Ski, Snowshoe, or Hike Outings

Since it is often difficult to know what type of conditions will exist at a specific SE Wisconsin location during the winter, lets plan on doing more "If There's Snow We'll Go" events. That would be true for local ski and snowshoe outings, but no snow is needed for local hike outings. Not only is it good for your health to get outside and exercise in winter, but it is also much safer outdoors during the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you see that the conditions look good to ski, snowshoe, or hike at Lapham Peak, a county park, or the Northern or Southern Kettle Moraine trails, then contact Paul Keber at 262-547-4827 or [pkeber@milwpc.com](mailto:pkeber@milwpc.com). Paul will set up an NSCM online event and send out an email blast to club members. All you'll have to do is show up and enjoy exercising with other Nordic members while keeping socially distant.

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### Thank-you to Dennis Drake

For six years Dennis Drake has been one of three revolving newsletter editor/designers for the Nordic Ski Club of Milwaukee. He stepped down from this volunteer position at the end of 2020. The board of directors has issued a special thank-you to Dennis.

Since joining the club in 1982, Dennis has led hikes, Tuesday-night bike rides in the 1980s and several cross-country ski day trips. He also ran the club's phone hotline from 1988 to 2003. The hotline was discontinued after the Internet and email became popular and there were few calls to the hotline.

*Thanks, Dennis!*

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### Past President Profile: Ralph Ehlinger

*By Paula Brookmire*

When Ralph Ehlinger agreed to help ski instructor Knut Hubert structure a new cross-country ski group, Ralph didn't know how to ski. Knut introduced Ralph's family to the sport in the winter of 1971. Even when Ralph did get better at cross-country skiing, well...a T-shirt says it all. A friend of Ralph's sported a shirt announcing: "I may be slow, but I'm ahead of Ralph Ehlinger".



As a member of the Nordics, you may upload photos to your personal photo album or to the public albums. Simply log-in so all member privileges are available. Then the upload and edit buttons are visible for you to add to the fun. Need help? [katiebivens@ymail.com](mailto:katiebivens@ymail.com)

If you are interested in leading a Nordic Event, or have a great idea for a member event, please contact a member of the Program Committee or Paul Keber, [pkeber@milwpc.com](mailto:pkeber@milwpc.com)

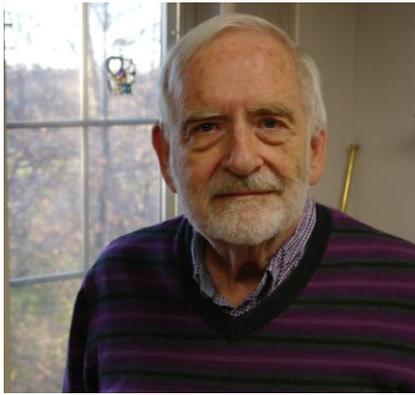
Ralph Ehlinger views the Nordic Ski Club of Milwaukee's 10th anniversary scrapbook

Ralph said he wasn't "the ski-club type" but he became one of the most active members of the Nordic Ski Club of Milwaukee (NSCM) in its first 15 years. He volunteered his skills as an attorney and drew up articles of incorporation and bylaws for NSCM. When the club formed, it had adopted a constitution and bylaws in December 1971. That constitution was "a guarantee of instability" said Ralph in a recent interview. There were no good procedures for resolving conflict. Ralph proposed a more stable, corporate structure, which was adopted in October and November 1972. Then Ralph stepped away for a few years and watched how the new structure helped the club grow.

"I didn't do much with the club until our kids got old enough [ages 5 and 7] to participate" he said. Even then, he needed an enticement. "President Dave Harrison called me one evening and asked why I wasn't at the meeting." What meeting?" I asked. Dave was insistent that I come to a club meeting at the Schwabenhof restaurant on Silver Spring Dr. Turns out the officers presented Ralph with a family lifetime membership in the Nordic Ski Club. "Never one to turn down a freebee, I slowly got involved." That's probably an understatement. Ralph is known for his humor. Ask him how he learned to ski, and he says: "Falling a lot." How did he learn to stop on a downhill? "Pulling our kids behind me on a Norwegian pulk [a flat-bottomed sled with poles attached to a harness] taught me a lot about snowplowing cautiously downhill."

In fact, Ralph went gangbusters. "I worked on trail clearing and maintenance and ran ski clinics for youngsters and older beginners" he said. "I led day ski tours at Kettle Moraine State Forest trails (many of which the Nordic Ski Club developed) and got helpers to set up hot chili and cocoa stops midway on the trails. We organized the club's Milwaukee Nordic children's races and clinics and helped design the track for those races at Dretzka Park. Plus we got the races sanctioned by the U.S. Ski Association, and got the Milwaukee County Park Commission and the Milwaukee Public Schools to co-sponsor the races." Ralph proudly keeps many of the race pins from nine or ten years of those races in the 1970s and 80s.

Ralph became NSCM president in 1977 and served for two years. In addition to the children's races, he was involved in adult ski races. The Kettle Moraine Nordic Race ran for at least nine years, and the Esker Odyssey ran for a few years. On the administrative side, said Ralph, "I attended all committee meetings often enough to see how they worked. Then, with the board, we completely revised the committee structure." He represented NSCM at Milwaukee Ski Council meetings "when we were an oddity as the only cross-country ski club among five or six downhill ski clubs." During Ralph's presidency, NSCM's financial stability strengthened. Thanks to media coverage, membership grew to about 1,000 by its 10th anniversary. He also helped plan "with the reciprocal idiocy of past president Gary Hansen" a complicated, three-day, three-city, 90-km ski tour anniversary event called Norstalgia 90. Ralph and Gary even went up in a small plane, piloted by NSCM president Kathy Wacker (1981-'82 and 1983-'84), to scout out the route. There were a few problems: Plunging temperatures froze car batteries and delayed their banquet by a week. Still, they produced a professional slide show of the event. Forty years later Ralph still has the event brochure. And he's proud that the structure he created has kept NSMC stable and alive to celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2021.



Ralph in his Germantown law office

For Ralph, cross-country skiing was mainly a family activity. Nick and Martha, the children from his first marriage, skied in NSCM races and in Wisconsin's famous Birkebeiner race and they still ski more than 40 years later. "When my second family came along--four girls (Autumn, Andrea, Jessa and Jenna)-- they were not too excited about cross-country skiing." In those early days, though, Ralph said that skiing "was exercise in the outdoors that I could do with my wife and kids and other couples with kids. I came to love the beauty of winter in these hills and woods, the feel of gentle snow beneath the skis and the quiet security of being part of where I was." Ralph liked making his own ski tracks in the woods or, at best, using tracks made with an old snowmobile the club purchased. They attached some skis to a sled, and someone had to stand on it to add enough weight to form tracks. "Skiing began to lose much of the magic for me when technology replaced Finnish and Norwegian wood skis, and I had to adjust to higher-tech plastic skis...that could only be enjoyed on mechanically groomed trails."

Ralph Ehlinger turns 80 in March 2021. "The last time that I got on my skis was two winters ago, and I was surprised at how unsteady I felt. Since I'm still working full time, I can't risk...a broken leg or hip." He still goes on an occasional club hike, and he has kept key documents and helped track club history over the years. Ralph has fond memories of this ski club where auto mechanics, attorneys, dentists and factory workers co-mingled on an equal footing, whether planning a ski race or a canoe trip. "The club was set up to be perpetually young," said the Germantown attorney who has dabbled in songwriting, acting and is writing a book on the civil war. "Do things that take you out of the ordinary and into the new. That's really what the club's mission should be as it starts its second 50 years."

Next newsletter: Ralph Ehlinger talks about what has made NSCM stable for a half-century.

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## **Nordic Ski Club Scavenger Hunt Q & A**

If you didn't get a chance to do our in-person holiday history scavenger hunt in December, now's your chance. The questions are printed below. You get a point for every right answer. Wrong answers earn no points. Many but not all answers can be found on the Nordic Ski Club of Milwaukee (NSCM) website and in 2020 NSCM newsletters in member profiles. If you don't want to explore, the answers are at the bottom of this newsletter. Of the 18 people who participated in the event, 10 submitted answers by deadline. The \$20 prize goes to winner Paul Keber, with 44 points out of a possible 46. His wife, Rita, competed against him. She also got 44 points but emailed her answers almost 4 hours after Paul. The next top point scorer was Chuck Utermohlen, with 43 points. Our thanks go to scavenger hunt hosts Paula Brookmire (who also created the questions), Renee Couture, Dianne Dagen, Carol Doebler, the Kebers, Bob and Kris Riedel, Mary Wozniak and Joanne Ziarek.

1. Identify the seven people in the top photo of the December 2020 Nordic Ski Club newsletter with first and last names. They were on the club's Hidden Lake fall hike. One point for each correct name.

2. What year did the Nordic Ski Club of Milwaukee softball team win the Milwaukee Ski League softball championship?

- a. 2002
- b. 1992
- c. 1982
- d. 1972

3. How much were individual dues when the Nordic Ski Club of Milwaukee was founded and what was the club's first name (before someone realized that name already was taken)?

- a. \$1 Tracks in the Snow Club
- b. \$3 The Kettle Moraine Ski Club
- c. \$7 Ski Touring Club of Milwaukee
- d. \$10 Nordic Ski Club of Wisconsin

4. Which of the following couples first met in the Nordic Ski Club of Milwaukee and then married? List all that apply. You get 1 point for each right answer.

- a. Katie and Bob Bivens, both past presidents
- b. Kathy and Dave Herrewig, longtime active NSCM members
- c. Paula Brookmire and Gary Braun, past president and past vp
- d. Kathy Wacker and Bob Randall, both past presidents

5. In what month of 1971 was NSCM founded and its first bylaws approved?

- a. January
- b. June
- c. August
- d. December

6. Which person served as club president in three different decades?

7. Which past Nordic Ski Club president was also a pilot?

8. Which of these have been Nordic Ski Club group activities over 50 years? List all that apply. One point for each right answer.

- a. Snowshoeing
- b. Camping
- c. Ice skating
- d. Kayaking
- e. Volleyball
- f. Softball
- g. Hiking
- h. Curling
- i. Biking
- j. Roller skating
- k. Holding fashion shows
- l. Picnicking
- m. Sky diving
- n. Marching in parades
- o. Dining out at restaurants
- p. Going to plays (theater)

9. Club member Mary Wozniak has served as which of the following Nordic Ski Club positions. List

all that apply. One point for each right answer:

- a. Membership committee chairperson
- b. Ice skating outings supervisor

- c. Restaurant outings coordinator
- d. Program committee member
- e. Sledding committee coordinator
- f. Board of directors member

10. NSCM past president Connie Nagel did which of the following. List all that apply. One point for each right answer.

- a. Helped organize a group of veteran women Nordic Ski Club of Milwaukee members who meet periodically for lunch.
- b. Wrote the NSCM guide "Things to Know When Going on Your First Ski Trip"
- c. Helped found the Nordic Ski Club of Milwaukee
- d. Chaired the NSCM program committee for nearly a decade
- e. Created the board of directors' liaison system in which board members serve as liaisons to committees

11. Which of these Nordic Ski Club members was a longtime member of the National Ski Patrol and a founding member of Wisconsin's Badger Orienteering Club?

- a. Hank Kulesza
- b. Jim Dieball
- c. Jim Kennedy
- d. Jim Jablonowski

12. Which of these active Nordic Ski Club members brought a toilet seat with her on an NSCM camping trip?

- a. Connie Nagel
- b. Cathy Yekenevich
- c. Kathy Wacker
- d. Paula Brookmire

13. Which of these candidates for NSCM treasurer, in the interview process, was asked by President Ralph Ehlinger to write a concerto using a tiny piano under a chair he/she was sitting in:

- a. John Idzikowski
- b. Dave Herrewig
- c. Jan Franke
- d. Cathy Yekenevich

14. Which Nordic Ski Club president served the most number of years as president?

- a. Gary Hansen
- b. Ralph Ehlinger
- c. Katie Bivens
- d. Paula Brookmire

15. Which Nordic Ski Club member nearly drowned when he took a woman he was dating on an NSCM canoe trip?

- a. Jim McCredy, the club's first president
- b. Dave Harrison, the club's second president
- c. David Rosenberg, a 2020 member of the NSCM board of directors
- d. Dave Herrewig, the 2020 NSCM treasurer

16. Which of these NSCM club members is also active in the Cream City Cycle Club, the NewsPedalers Bicycle Club, the Waukesha Creative Arts League, and the Milwaukee Metropolitan Community Concert Band?

- a. Bob Bivens
- b. Renee Couture

c. Mike Craig



d. Nancy Zoltowsk

-----Answers -----

1 Left to right: Gary Braun, Mike Craig, Kris and Bob Riedel, Joanne Ziarek, Barb Tremel, Mary Mueller

2 b. 1992

3 b. \$3 The Kettle Moraine Ski Club

4 A, B, D [This might be considered a trick question because the answers are not all on the website. But nothing said participants could not ask each couple how they met. Brookmire and Braun met in the Wisconsin Go-Hiking Club when they were the slowest walkers on a hike, but they got to know each other in NSCM.]

5 d. December [Note: The NSCM website says Jim McCredy started the club in October. Well, he started talking with people about a club then, but the club was actually formed, with bylaws and a constitution and Jim as president, in December 1971. It was in The Milwaukee Journal.]



6 Past President Gary Hansen

7 Kathy Wacker

8 All except m. No sky diving, but in 50 years the club has done all the rest, including ski-fashion shows and marches in various parades playing kazoos.

9 All except b and e

10 All except c

11 a. Hank Kulesza

12 b. Cathy Yekenevicz

13 d. Cathy Yekenevicz

14 c. Katie Bivens

15 d. Dave Herrewig

16 b. Renee Couture

**Nordic Ski Club of Milwaukee Inc. (NSCM)  
is a membership-based outing association  
active year-round since 1971.**