

SPRING 2016 NEWSLETTER

NOTES FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

John Munger

By far the biggest project that we have ever undertaken is the Adventure Center. This Spring that project is taking up the majority of my time - so I will start there. We are still working with the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (MPRB) on a financing plan and a partnership agreement (lease and operating agreements). Given where we are now, the best we can say is that we remain hopeful that we can start construction this year.



FROM NORTHSIDE TO NORWAY

Saysetha Philaphandeth, Mary McKelvey
and Teagan Brogdon

Editor's note: Three Loppet legends - Saysetha Philaphandeth, 11th grader at Patrick Henry High School, videographer and photographer; Teagan Brogdon, 12th grader at Patrick Henry, Bryn Mawr and Anwatin ski team alum; and Mary McKelvey, FAST KIDS coach and chaperone -- represented our organization in the first Loppet-Porsgrunn School Exchange. In January, the Loppet Foundation hosted six Norwegian students and chaperones from the Porsgrunn School of Telemark County, Norway, who experienced the Loppet Ski Festival and led a clinic in Telemark skiing. In March, thanks to a partnership with the Minneapolis Public Schools and a sponsorship from the Sons of Norway, the Loppet Foundation was able to send Saysetha, Teagan, and Mary to join the Porsgrunn School on their annual trip to Rauland Ski Center. The following is a recap of the adventure of a lifetime, in their own words.

Hei! Vi er kommet tilbake til Minnesota!
Hi! We have come back to Minnesota!

For eight days in March, we got to experience Norway as Norwegians -- or at least as adopted Norwegians -- instead of as tourists. We experienced Norwegian home

Support for the project has been inspiring. We have held events in North and South Minneapolis. We have held events downtown, in the Minneapolis Club and at the Loppet Festival. We have had house parties, open houses, and meetings. And the response has been overwhelmingly positive. People love the plan -- the design, the cafe, the bike and ski shop, the locker room space, and the community gathering area. People are excited about the possibility to make history with a home base for lifetime activities right in the heart of the city.

We will continue to share updates with you -- our members and friends who make this project possible.

As for the rest of the organization... in a word, we are having an **excellent** 2015-2016. Our Adventures programs are going strong. During this past year we taught more than 1,700 youth - more than 1,200 from North Minneapolis - to love biking, skiing, paddling and running through the woods. Over the past ten years we have shared the love of nature with more

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Mission Statement

We create a shared passion for year-round outdoor adventure in the Minneapolis area, focusing on underserved youth and families.

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(f/go photography)

Campaign Co-Chairs
David Dayton
Dick Howard

1301 Theodore Wirth Parkway, Minneapolis, MN 55422

Phone: 612-604-5330 Fax: 612-604-5338 Email: info@loppet.org Web: www.loppet.org

Notes from the Director Continued from page 1

than 10,000 youth - more than 8,400 of them from North Minneapolis. Thanks to the help of the George Family Foundation and the Sons of Norway, we recently completed an exchange program with Telemark County, Norway, where Norwegian youth came here for the Loppet, and North Minneapolis youth traveled to Norway to experience Norwegian culture and learn telemark skiing. Junior Loppet teams traveled to Bearskin Lodge, Camp Warren and Camp du Nord in Northern Minnesota.

Thanks in part to a little snow before this year's Loppet Festival, it has been a great year for our events. Between El Niño and global warming it was a tough winter in Minneapolis. But we were able to run all our events as planned, making for what was arguably our best year ever.

Loppet Nordic Racing won a third consecutive title as the best junior club in the country. And several athletes competed nationally and internationally, further cementing our place as one of the best clubs in the country.

One of the side benefits of our capital campaign has been the growth of our development department. We are a much healthier organization because of it. We have widened our array of funders and have been able to improve our programming. And when the capital

campaign is over we will have many more funders that we can rely upon - meaning that we will have much less risk of funding problems in the future.

The one big area of concern is our reserve account. We would like to have a reserve equivalent to three months of general operating expenses, but our current reserve is more like one month. This is the result of years of investment in the capital campaign for the Adventure Center, and in our internal infrastructure (things like our accounting methods and software, our database management, and our development department). We have put a special focus on building the reserve this year. But we will need the help of our members to really get there so that we can start off with the Adventure Center on the right foot. In other words, this is a good time to make a gift to our annual fund. It is those unrestricted dollars that will really help us grow our reserve account - so that we can remain the healthy, energetic and entrepreneurial organization that you have helped grow.

As always, look forward to seeing you on the trails -- and, hopefully soon, in the Adventure Center.

John
John

From Northside to Norway Continued from page 1

life for two days before we went up to the mountains to ski and for one night after -- complete with fresh bread, lots of fish, and skiing on TV! Special thanks to the Wallestads, Melbys, and Lovigs for being generous hosts.

The biggest part of our trip was our visit with 70 other Norwegian and American students to Rauland Mountain - the focus was learning to Telemark ski. Norway credits Sondre Norheim for pioneering ski stunts and competitions that has made Norway famous for its ski talent. Our bus stopped at a museum dedicated to Norheim and to the development of Telemark skiing in his hometown of Morgedal, Telemark. We learned that Telemark skiing is not just a technique, it's a connection to place.

Rauland also has kilometers of cross country ski trails. As Loppet skiers, we obviously had to take advantage of it! We explored the smooth trails of Silkedalen, the "Silk Valley." It was bright and sunny when we went, but if a snowstorm had come, we would have been in trouble. Our hosts told us that Norwegians are taught how to dig caves in the snow and wait out bad weather.

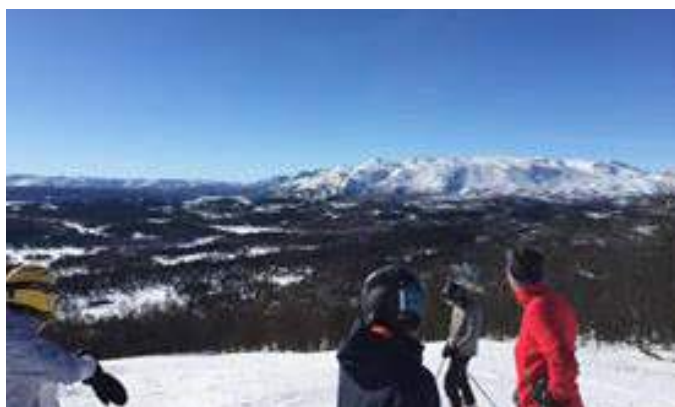
We got to live -- and cook! -- in cabins. We learned a lot about Norwegian culture during that time. For instance, Norwegians are always fast to make friends in person, but are very controlling about their social media. You always need to remember to ask before you post a picture of them on Facebook. Norway also places a premium on physical culture, Porsgrunn School even offers specialized classes in sports and exercise science. It was also interesting to experience a very homogenous culture, coming from the most diverse part of Minneapolis it was definitely an adjustment to make.

Overall, we had a great adventure. We learned a lot about Norway and Telemark skiing and made lots of friends. But we are also happy to be back in Minneapolis -- Norway may have Rauland and the mountains, but Minneapolis has Theodore Wirth and the tubing hill. We hope that this opportunity will grow, and continue to be offered for years to come!

A special thank you to the Sons of Norway and the George Family Foundation for this opportunity.



Norway's landscapes were beautiful. Here is the coast near Porsgrunn.



Rauland Ski Center.



Saysetha channeling his inner Sondre Norheim.



Teagan next to a snow cave.

LOPPET ADVENTURES



Minne-Loppet student athletes and coaches from Park Brook Elementary getting ready for the big event!

Minne-Loppet School	Coaches	Teacher(s)	Number of Students	Highlight of the Season
Loring Elementary	Jon Miller	Nancy Duwenhoegger	52	Skiing on Victory Memorial Parkway!
Elizabeth Hall International	Sandra Peterson Anthony Taylor Anders Lindquist	Bill Bryand	69	The debut of "Loppet Man," a stick-figure that reinforced proper ski attire in a fun way.
Lucy Craft Laney Community School	Dick Howard Nancy Nelson Andy Harris	Scott Tieglund Ray Johnson Sarah Hannine	70	Being featured on WCCO, learning about hills, sliding and gliding, and getting up when you fall down.
Nellie Stone Johnson	Jon Miller	Julie Ellingson	63	Ameera Shaheid and Lebron Wreh completing their 3rd Minne-Loppet season!
Park Brook Elementary	Andy Harris Anders Lindquist	Scott Taylor Wendy Wentzel Julie Johnson	113	Having Norwegian exchange students as guest instructors!
Cityview Elementary	Andrew Magill	Daniel Chapman	77	Ski-ball and having more girls in the program!
Mary McLeod Bethune School	Allie Rykken Andy Harris	Kyle Hansen	63	Weekly hill "workouts," which usually turned into "slideouts!"
Pillsbury Elementary	Dave Mott Leroy Leftwich Anne Riesch	Mark Trumper	172	Having 68 skiers at the Minne-Loppet event!



Minne-Loppet programs are supported by the Pohlada Family Foundation, General Mills Foundation, UCare, Allina Health, McVay Foundation, and Riverway Foundation.

A Coach's Reflection

Jon Miller

Editor's Note: Jon Miller has been Head Coach at Nellie Stone Johnson (now Franklin Middle School) for the past five years. He is a Ph.D. candidate in epidemiology at the University of Minnesota. This was his last season coaching the Franklin team.

In "Between the World and Me," a letter to his young son, TaNehisi Coates describes those of us born with full access to the levers of power in this country as, "The Dreamers." The Dreamers are those of us living the American Dream – a comfortable house, two cars, stable jobs and neighborhoods filled with people who look just like us. Tired of telling his African-American son to "be twice as good," he instead tells him, "don't wait for the Dreamers to wake up." As a Dreamer who has had the great fortune for the last five years to work in a neighborhood that has largely been excluded from the Dream, I am still not sure we can fully wake up. But I want to describe my effort to try.

In September of 2011, I parked my car on Bryant Avenue just north of 27th Street in the Hawthorne neighborhood of North Minneapolis, and walked into Nellie Stone Johnson School for the first time as coach of the ski and bike team. I had put locks on the ski rack on my car for the first time because I was still afraid of the Northside. Coming in with missionary zeal, I was convinced I could save people. In our first practice, I tried to show the kids pole bounding. They were bored senseless. I had to adapt. We began taking adventures, going most days to Theodore Wirth. On special days we went further away. Some days I would come home shaken, upset or frustrated. Middle school is the most awkward time of life, and I was working in a middle school where none of the kids looked like me and I was always worried that they might not trust me. It was even more terrifying when one of them acted up enough that I thought I should talk to their parents. As the coach, I was in charge at practice, but ultimately their parents were in charge, so if they didn't trust me then it was a big problem.

Why was trust so hard? It was because of fear. I won't try to talk about the fear that those on the Northside might have of the Dreamers, because it is not my fear. But having witnessed the protester line up on Plymouth after Jamar Clark was killed, I understand better how real this fear can be. My fear is the fear that Dreamers have of losing the Dream, whether it is to violence or poverty or grief. I locked my ski rack on that first day because I was afraid that something that is mine might be taken from me.

Fear fades with experience, but it never seems to go away. After I had worked at Nellie Stone Johnson for a while, when we began to bring our kids to Loppet races, where few of the other kids looked like them, I became very sensitive to that fear in others around me. I could see it in the other coaches, who were uncomfortable around my team because they were loud and rowdy and didn't look like us. And I got defensive. I would

be irritated with the other coaches for being afraid of my team, and I failed to remember that I was afraid myself. But, I had been given the opportunity to manage that fear.

There were two important pieces to managing the fear. The first was to set up a routine, a plan or a habit, anything that helped me feel less out of control. Fortunately, this was helpful for middle school aged kids too. It almost became a game for all of us seeing how quickly we could get out of the school and into the van while still being prepared for the day. The coaches would get to Nellie Stone Johnson early and set out all the jackets, boots, gloves and hats and the kids would get used to the routine of putting them on, listening to the plan for the day and getting into the van to go to Wirth. This routine allowed the second, and more important, piece to fall into place. I had daily opportunities to see the full humanity of people. I saw Sherman learn to ski so precisely like me that someone watching us ski together from a distance would only be able to distinguish us by height. I saw Rosario start to fulfill her talent when she joined the Patrick Henry Ski Team after having learned the sport at Nellie Stone Johnson and Northeast. I laughed when Kemari made unexpected jokes without using a single swear-word, and at Li'Tavius when he would change the lyrics to popular songs and use way too many swear-words.

Loppet is immensely and vitally important because it gives these opportunities. Busing kids to de-segregated schools will probably always be resisted because no one wants to be forced into anything. **The Loppet provides another approach: it brings different groups together around something that is fun, something we all want to do.** This is done with the boldness to work through the fear until we find ways to manage it. When I set out to save the Northside, I was wrong. I had in my mind that I would show the students a path to the Dream so they could live like I do. I was wrong because I assumed that only they needed to change. I did not expect to realize that I need to change, that the Dream needs to change.

The Dream can change violently, as it has done many times in the past, when a people are so tired of living under powers that they see as arbitrary and oppressive that they strike out at that power, destroy it and replace it with their own dream. This is why the overthrow of dictators is followed by the advent of new dictatorships. There is another way, a better way. It is when thousands of groups like the Loppet grasp at some sliver of common purpose and common joy and from that work patiently, diligently and unceasingly to negotiate a Dream that includes all people.





Minne-Loppet Coach Leroy Leftwich receives the Local Public Health Hero Awards through the Minneapolis Health Department, awarded to those whose "service to public health activities transforms and strengthens the lives of our residents and visitors." Behind him are representatives from the Pillsbury Pedal Power Club that Mark Trumper leads at Pillsbury Elementary School. **Read the full story at www.loppet.org/leroy.**

Loppet Run Club LOPPET RUN CLUB SPRING UPDATE

Head Coach Kevin Johnson

The spring session of Loppet Run Club started two weeks ago with the largest group of Loppet runners yet. Run Club is designed to help runners of all abilities and experience levels become better trail runners.

The Loppet Run Club meets on Monday evenings and Saturday mornings to run on the trails in and around Wirth Park. The spring session has a focus on preparing for the Salomon City Trails Loppet and the UCare Tri-Loppet, while also providing a solid training foundation for events later in the summer. The summer session targets the Surly Brewing Co. Trail Loppet and provides a program that could lead to a longer race later in the fall. Mondays are typically an intensity workout, often including intervals and hills, while Saturdays focus on building endurance with longer runs while exploring the trails.



In my fourth year at the helm of Loppet Run Club, I am excited for what the spring and summer hold. I think what sets our group apart from many of the other running groups out there is our focus on trail running, and specifically acquiring the skills to be more confident, comfortable, and proficient when you head off-road.

We have a lot of runners that are joining for the 4th or 5th year in a row, and it's awesome to see how they have progressed from year-to-year. The great thing about trail running is that it's really easy to see progress in a very short amount of time. At the beginning of April, most of the runners in the group hadn't run more than 3 miles since October, and over the past few weeks most of the group is running well over 8 miles.

One of my favorite things about Run Club is the inclusivity of the group. Whether highly experienced runners targeting ultra-marathons or runners just taking their first steps off of the pavement or somewhere in between, Run Club will help make your trail running better and more enjoyable.

Visit www.loppet.org/runclub to register for the summer session of Loppet Run Club.

NORTHEAST JUNIOR LOPPET SAYS FAREWELL TO 8TH GRADERS

Head Coach Dave Mott

As Northeast Middle School is approaching the end of their 2015-2016 season, many are looking back on a very fun season, but also looking forward to high school and new challenges. Head Coach Dave Mott, Coach Anders Lindquist, and veteran volunteer coaches Mark Raderstorf and Chris Morley wish the following eighth graders the very best in their high school careers: Alex Worchester, Alondra Mena Landa, Brian Gabino Vazque, Calen Rowan, Delanie Moore, Dorand Bell, Jorgen Olson, Logan Igherighe, Parker Munn, and Zecelia Martinez. Great job to all this season - we will miss you!



Returning members are Aislyn Brogdon, Mikey Papsadora, Miguel Martinez and Joshua White. We look forward to them being joined by an enthusiastic crop of new skiers and incoming Minne-Loppet veterans.

Highlights of our ski season included our pre-Christmas weekend adventure to Camp Warren and Giants Ridge, a frigid Pre-Loppet, the Farview Sprints in North Minneapolis (Parker Munn finishing 5th overall for boys, and Aislyn Brogdon 1st for 6th grade girls), the amazing City of Lakes Loppet Ski Festival, and a very fun Midwest Junior Championships on the last weekend that Wirth was open for the season.

With the early exodus of snow we have returned to trail running, outdoor games, and riding mountain bikes. The team loves to find new trails to explore and exercise at, and we recently had a great outing at the Mississippi Gorge Regional Park. Everyone is looking forward to summer adventures and another great ski season!



ANWATIN JUNIOR LOPPET TEAM HAS GUSTO!

Head Coach Allie Rykken

One of my favorite things about the Anwatin Ski Team is that I'm constantly forgetting that they're a bunch of middle schoolers. Don't get me wrong, there are plenty of bad jokes and wild growth spurts happening, but when your team member tells you he wants to run the 10 mile race instead of the 10K, my first thought is, "Terrific! Why not?" instead of "Hey, you're 12!" Now of course we get our fair share of playground obstacle courses in and no one is too old for a Candy Cane treasure hunt, but I learned long ago to know better than to doubt their limitations. Whether it's skiing 22K at Giant's Ridge in the morning, eating lunch and then going out for more, going with the "Advanced" group at the Apple Run, or placing in the top 10 at the Midwest Junior Championships, **I'm continually impressed with our kids' gusto and desire to push their limits.** I don't mean how long you can stay in the hole in the ice after a stretch in the sauna, which has happened. It's when the new kids on the team come back from the hilliest courses and tell you how much they liked going down the hills, and when that V2 timing finally "clicks." It's that proud coach moment when your team captain asks to lead the team in some technique drills and proceeds to describe how to double pole more accurately than you could, or when an 8th grader runs 8 miles on the Saturday after the last winter ski practice. We'll be graduating twelve 8th graders this year. I can't wait to see what these middle schoolers pull out in high school!

Team members: 6th grade to 8th grade!



Tome



Emily



Doua



Charlie



Pheng



Katy



LOPPET EVENTS



Age Gap Relay partners at the 2016 Midwest Junior Championships on March 5.

EVENTS OVERVIEW

Race Director Mike Erickson

What a winter 2016 turned out to be! Snow, then no snow, then snow again. Over 12,000 people participated in this year's Loppet Festival. As usual, our volunteers worked their tails off to put on a great event. Mother Nature taunted us, but showed up in the end.

We had warm weather and even rain for Loppet weekend, and our volunteers handled everything that got tossed their way, even managing to add a bridge to what is already a full inventory of Loppet "stuff". Yep, we own a bridge, go figure.

Along the way, we put on successful Pre-Loppet, Mayor's Challenge and Midwest Junior Championship events, making for a full if not hectic winter season worth celebrating.

We are looking forward to a great set of spring, summer and fall events with what is already close to record registrations in the Salomon City Trails event scheduled for May 22nd. Registrations are coming in nicely for both the UCare Tri-Loppet in June and the Surly Brewing Co. Trail Loppet in September.

Spring has sprung, the leaves are out. Runners are running, bikers are biking and paddlers are paddling. The trails are open and ready for some adventures.

Have you been out? If not, it's time. Rain or shine, wheels, shoes, boards or boats. Let's go play.



Surly Gives A Damn volunteers atop the Loppet bridge.



Jim Agre skis up and over the newly constructed Loppet bridge in toward the finish line at the Loppet Festival.

3 GENERATIONS, 16 EVENTS

Originally published by "Lake of the Isles Living" magazine

Meet the Sumner Eldred family: Eric Sumner, Sheila Eldred, Wes, age 11, and Zoe, age 8. They have lived in the Lake of the Isles area since 2004 and are highly involved in the annual Loppet Festival. "On Loppet weekend, we each do about four events, and our parents (the four grandparents) usually join us for the Luminary Loppet, making it a big family event," said Eric.

Wes and Zoe participate in FAST KIDS year-round, and Eric and Sheila join in for the Age Gap Relays (parent/child). Sheila did the Hoigaard's Challenge a couple of years the longest distances in the four Loppet races: Loppet Festival, City Trails, Tri-Loppet, and Trail Loppet. "We also like to support the Loppet because of their mission (and success) to bring outdoor activities to ALL kids."

Sheila and Eric both ran in college and have been enjoying the summer side of Wirth and the Loppet for years. In 2009 - 2010, along with their oldest son, started Minnesota Youth Ski League. "We bought Eric some skis and tried the long winter events." Sheila got 18th of 18 in her division of the skate race and Eric finished near the back of the classic race. Eric said, "I fell eight times and got so hot by the end I finished in shorts and a t-shirt."

"My favorite memory is a Tri-Loppet Sheila and I did as a relay," said Eric. We were both canoeing, then Sheila would do the run while Eric grabbed the bike. "I locked up by Brownie to zip over to Wirth Lake for the final bike leg. Shortly after we started the paddling, I realized I

didn't have the key to my locked bike." We multitasked on Calhoun and someone ran home to grab the keys and threw them to us as we went under the Lake Street bridge. Thank goodness we are slow paddlers and live so close to the lake!

The family loves the beaches and parks, neighborhood community, and that they can access everything by walking and biking. "We love the fact that the old homes and new construction blend into a mixed residential/commercial neighborhood which provides so many things." Only blocks away from the Chain of Lakes park system, which easily links up to Theodore Wirth Park. "We spend a lot of time doing activities with kids, especially FAST KIDS with the Loppet and school activities at Barton," said Eric.

Their son, Wes, interviewed LNR skiers and Olympians Caitlin and Brian Gregg for a school project recently. Wes' favorite thing about FAST KIDS is everything, skiing in the winter and the Loppet Ski Festival weekend: the long races.



Meet the Sumner Eldred family (left to right): Wes, age 11, Eric Sumner, Zoe, age 8, and Sheila Eldred.

Zoe's favorite thing about FAST KIDS is making friends, and her favorite thing about the Loppet Ski Festival is all the different events. She did her first 10k ski race there this year.

Do you have a great Loppet story to share? Tell us!
Email stories@loppet.org

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Volunteer Coordinator Nancy Nelson

Mike Erickson said it best at the Volunteer Appreciation Party in February: "People want to say the snowfall on Tuesday was the miracle of Loppet weekend, but we know the real miracle was the hundreds of volunteers who made the weekend happen."

The Luminary Loppet team and more than 100 volunteers waited patiently through most of January to see if Lake of the Isles would ice over and if the weather would allow them to freeze more than 1,300 luminaries. Man-made snow was blown near the Calhoun Executive Center and the Surly Gives A Damn crew assembled and packed forms for snow sculptures and built the new finish area bridge alongside, not knowing if it either would see any use. The course crew spent weekends shoveling snow under bridges and over bare spots, hoping more snow would come and help fill in. Finally, the cold and snow came, and over 1,400 volunteers hit the ground running!

We truly cannot put on the City of Lakes Loppet Ski Festival without all the volunteers and countless hours spent. Loppet volunteers are fantastic and I'd like to highlight four individuals who stood out this year as going "above and beyond".

Bonnie Carlson-Green is a very active member of Loppet Ski Club. Whenever there is a need for volunteers, Bonnie assembles the Ski Club crew without pause. She recruited volunteers to cover food stops and other jobs during the Loppet Festival.

Carla Pardue helped organize the Post Luminary Loppet Party volunteers, who helped organize the tents, tables, signage, fire pits, and vendors in the Lagoon area. The new snow delayed some of the preparations and Carla swiftly moved volunteers and re-assigned tasks. Her ability to do so and the willingness of volunteers helped get everything in place for a magical Luminary Loppet.



From left to right: Jack Cheesebro, Bonnie Carlson-Green, Carla Purdue and Rick Dubay

Jack Cheesebro usually volunteers with the registration team in addition to skiing on Saturday and Sunday. This year a fractured ankle kept him from participating in the races, so in addition to being part of the registration team Jack also headed up the Snow Sculpture and Crew Ski competitions. Jack returned the next weekend as Chief of Competition for the Mayor's XC Challenge races. He's probably hoping for no injuries next year so he can take it easy!

Rick Dubay is another volunteer who also races during the weekend. This year, after finishing the classic marathon, he stopped by to make certain there were no volunteer needs for the remainder of the day. Rick was back Sunday morning filling the shifts he'd volunteered for and even stayed late into the afternoon for clean up and loaded Minne-Loppet skis for delivery back to the elementary schools. Rick also returned the following weekend to volunteer at the Mayor's XC Challenge.

Volunteers made the weekend great. We need each and every one of you - you truly are the miracles that make the Loppet happen! Thank you!

Interested in volunteering at our spring and summer events? Contact Nancy at volunteer@loppet.org.



LOPPET NORDIC RACING



Trail Kids

FAST KIDS BECOMES TRAILS KIDS

John Munger & Kim Rudd

Over the past several years FAST KIDS has been one of the Loppet Foundation's most successful programs. FAST KIDS Director Kim Rudd has put together a great coaching staff, successful events, and a curriculum around encouraging year-round outdoor activity for kids 8-13 years old. Hundreds of kids have participated, including many of the kids in the Foundation's Junior Loppet programs.

But success has never stopped the Loppet from looking for ways to improve. In trying to grow this program beyond skier-parents we kept hearing that the name "FAST KIDS" was a problem. Parents and kids wondered whether they were right for a program that sounded like it was designed specifically for very competitive athletes. We also wanted to partner with other like-minded organizations in the Midwest in order to build a more regional brand around lifetime activities. Put these two ideas together and it seemed like a great opportunity to re-brand in a way that is more welcoming and would allow us to work together to build a common brand with other partner organizations.

The solution? We are partnering with Endurance United and the Birkie Foundation to create a brand that is bigger than any of us: Trail Kids. Like FAST KIDS, Trail Kids is about endurance-based year-round outdoor activities that kids can do for a lifetime, activities like cross country skiing, mountain biking, paddling, orienteering and trail running. **Like FAST KIDS, competition will remain an element of the programming, especially for the older kids, but the emphasis will be on skill development and adventure.** Kids from all the clubs will get together periodically for things like orienteering

adventures, point-to-point mountain bike rides, cross country ski outings and paddling trips.

In addition to Hayward, the St. Paul area and the Minneapolis area, we already have clubs sprouting in Rice Lake and Madison, Wisconsin. The hope is that within a few years there will be clubs across the Midwest, and Trail Kids will be like soccer - all parents will, of course, sign their kids up to learn about and become enthusiastic about lifetime activities.

LOPPET TRAIL KIDS DRAWS GIRLS INTO THE SPORT OF MOUNTAIN BIKING!

The Trail Kids spring Mountain Bike Program is off to a great start with kids of all ages and abilities out for our spring session! In the past few years we have had more boys than girls come out for our mountain bike program so we created a spring girls only mountain bike clinic which quickly had about 50 girls registered.

Over the last two decades that I have been involved in mountain bike racing in the Midwest there has always been a smaller field of women at the competitions. **Trail Kids would like to change these statistics and get more young girls active and outdoors on the single track trails.**

In the last few years there has been a huge growth in mountain biking among high school students due to the recent formation of the Minnesota State High School League. Trail Kids Mountain Bike Program can become a feeder program for these high school cycle clubs.

Trail Kids is offering two test drive mountain bike clinics that provide instruction on basic mountain bike skills. The Trail Kids Spring and Summer sessions also include the Adventure Mountain Bike Race Series.

The series includes a variety of race formats such relay, interval and mass start races. The series ends with a fun Age Gap Relay where youth pair up with an adult for a four lap relay race.

Learn more at www.loppet.org/trailkids.



Loppet Nordic Racing Juniors and coaches accept the USSA National Club Champions award for the third straight year at Junior Nationals in March.

LOPPET NORDIC RACING: A HISTORY

We celebrate the accomplishments of all of the athletes in the Loppet Community -- from 3rd grade Minne-Loppet participants to adults who have crossed the Loppet finish line for the fourteenth time.

And we applaud and take pride in the many athletes who have celebrated national and international accomplishments -- from the Minnesota High School State Championships to the Olympics. The list of athletes below have been a major part of the Loppet Nordic Racing program as athletes or coaches and continue to set the bar extremely high for our entire organization.

Loppet Nordic Racing came from the merger of Go! Training and Minnesota Valley Ski Clubs in 2012. These two clubs became much stronger under the umbrella of the Loppet Foundation and list of top results has gotten much longer in the last 4 years. We are very proud that many of our alumnae come back to LNR as coaches for FAST KIDS, Juniors or Adult programming.

Olympics and World Champs in XC Skiing and Biathlon:

Andy Erickson

1998 Olympian

Dan Campbell

2002 Olympian

Andrea Nahrgang

2002 Olympian

Jacob Beste

2004 World Cup Team

Brian Olsen

2006 Olympian

Carolyn Bramante

2006 Olympian
2008, 2009 Biathlon World Championship Team
2002 World Junior Silver Medalist

Jakob and Siena Ellingson

2013, 2014, 2015 World Junior Biathlon Team

Kyle Bratrud

2015 World Championship Team
2015 National Champion
2013 World Junior XC Team

Ben Saxton

2015 U23 World Championship Team
2014 World Junior XC Team

Brian Gregg

2015 World Cup Team
2014 Olympic Team

Caitlin Gregg

2015 World Championship Bronze Medalist
2014 World Cup Team
2010 Olympic team
2007, 2009 XC World Champs Team
2008 Biathlon World Championship Team
6 Time National Champion



Junior National Champions

Karl Nygren – U23 World Championship Team
Ben Saxton – Junior National Champion 2012
Sharmila Ahmed – Junior National Champion 2013
Amanda Kautzer – Junior National Champion 2014

U18 Scandinavian Cup Team

Sharmila Ahmed – 2011
Vivan Hett – 2013
Zak Ketterson, Abby Drach, Nicole Schneider – 2015

Minnesota High School State Champions:

Bill Snellman – 1999
Joe Sem – 2004
Katie Bono – 2005, 2006
Claire Luby – 2006

Erik Fagerstrom – 2009
Sharmila Ahmed – 2011
Ben Saxton – 2011, 2012
Jakob Ellingson – 2013

Sarah Bezdicek – 2015
Zak Ketterson – 2014, 2016
Margie Freed – 2016



THE LONG LESSON LEARNED

Matthew Egger

Editor's note: Matthew is a sophomore at Edina High School. This is his first year participating in LNR.

As leaves crunched beneath my feet, I jogged my way through a forest on the North Country Trail in Wisconsin. I was beginning the final eight miles of a five hour workout that concluded my MEA break spent training with my nordic club team, Loppet Nordic Racing (LNR). I cannot say that my week spent in Cable, Wisconsin, with my teammates changed my life, I feel that would be naive, but I believe that it changed my thinking, and increased my tolerance of frustration, fatigue, and pain.

Prior to the time I joined LNR, I was a habitual quitter. Stubbornness, frustration, and my weak mindset is what I think was the primary cause of my inability to simply finish a task at hand. Hockey, football, band, all of which are things that I have quit. However, it was not only extracurriculars that I quit, it was simple, everyday tasks, making the issue something that I despised in myself everyday.

The way I broke my bad habit started with an inspiration. It was the beginning of 2014, and I was at Giant's Ridge, in the Iron Range of Minnesota. My brother, Andrew, was participating in the largest high school ski meet in the country. As he came into the stadium in his final sprint of the five kilometer race, my life around me began to slow. My mind was focused on the natural grace of watching my brother skiing; fresh, dry snow being flung from the end of his poles with the intense labor of each stroke; the final battle for the finish line. It was as if almost someone reached out to me and told me that there is a way for me to become a stronger mentally, through dedicating myself as a skier.

Flash forward twenty months, to August 2015. I was at my first practice with LNR. I awkwardly stood outside of a circle of skiers who were conversing prior to the commencement of practice. "Well I thought that at least I'd know someone here", I thought to myself. The practice was hard; I was out of shape in comparison to my new

teammates who had been members of the highest ranking club team in the nation for 3+ years. I was too slow to keep up with the pack of skiers on our rollerski workout, known to the endurance sports community as "getting dropped". Most workouts ended this way for me, and I would commonly get discouraged, and complain to my mom or dad, depending on which picked me up from practice.

Now, as it became time to sign up for MEA Camp, I had a decision to make: Plan A: Not go to camp, and hang out with my friends over break, and probably not practice once, or, Plan B: Go to camp with kids I hardly knew, and work on skiing faster. I chose Plan B. The first day of camp was brutal; I was hungry all day, and I struggled to keep warm in the below freezing weather. However, I was relieved to hear that there is an idea of these camps having a "hump day", in which the first day or two are the most painful, and after that, the overall difficulty decreases. By the night before the last day of camp, I was extremely exhausted, and was humoring myself at the immensely relatable quote of my teammate "I don't miss my family; I just miss the food." My calorie intake was probably around 1/2 of what it is typically at home, and I was working out twice as much as usual.

However, I had a looming concern in my mind: **Tomorrow is Eco Challenge day.** The Eco Challenge is a 46-hour workout that concludes every LNR training camp. It began with a 2 hour classic technique rollerski, in which I broke a pole, resulting in me getting dropped from the pack after waiting 15 minutes for a new pole. I skied by myself for the remaining 3.5 hours. After a ten minute break to get a drink and some food, I began the 1.5 hour skate technique roller ski. The course was brutal; each climb ripped my legs apart, and shot my heart rate through the roof. However, at last, I finished the skate ski. Now, it was time to begin the eight mile run through uneven, rocky terrain. About fifteen minutes in, I got caught by two guys that decided to ski an extra hour on the classic leg. I decided to try to keep up with them, and I did for about seven of the eight miles. I then entered a state in which pain wasn't my primary concern anymore; it was trying to stay upright, and catch myself every time my foot struck a rock. In the last mile, my mind began recalling all of the things that I had quit, all of the half measures I had taken. At last, I finished the thirty-two mile challenge. I enjoyed my last Clif bar, a caffeinated one which I deliberately saved for a little buzz for myself after I completed the workout. I had finished every workout in the four day camp, fifteen hours of training. I told myself "never again", but my judgment was clouded by my own state of exhaustion, fatigue, dehydration, and lack of food.

Thirty-four days later, I was beginning my first workout of a new camp with LNR. This time, it was a week in West Yellowstone, Montana. I realized that my cowardice was mostly gone. I was no longer afraid of hard work, and I began attacking my tasks with full deliberation, instead of halfheartedly, as I did in the past.

LOPPET STEWARDSHIP

TRAILS UPDATE

Lindsay Henning

In partnership with the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, we have plans to build an Adventure Center in Theodore Wirth Park. These plans call for not only a year-round building, but also trail development and snowmaking.

Trail Development

The Park Board's long-term Master Plan for Theodore Wirth Park includes plans for mountain biking event and multi-use trails. Wirth Park already has eight miles of single track, with a three-mile extension pending to bring the total to 11 miles. Additionally, we plan to add a trail that is 3.5 to 4 miles long, and will include a flow ride section, a dual slalom course, pump track, and a skills learning area. When not in use during mountain biking events, the new trail will be open for other **cyclists, fat tire bikers, runners, hikers, and snowshoers.**

Snowmaking

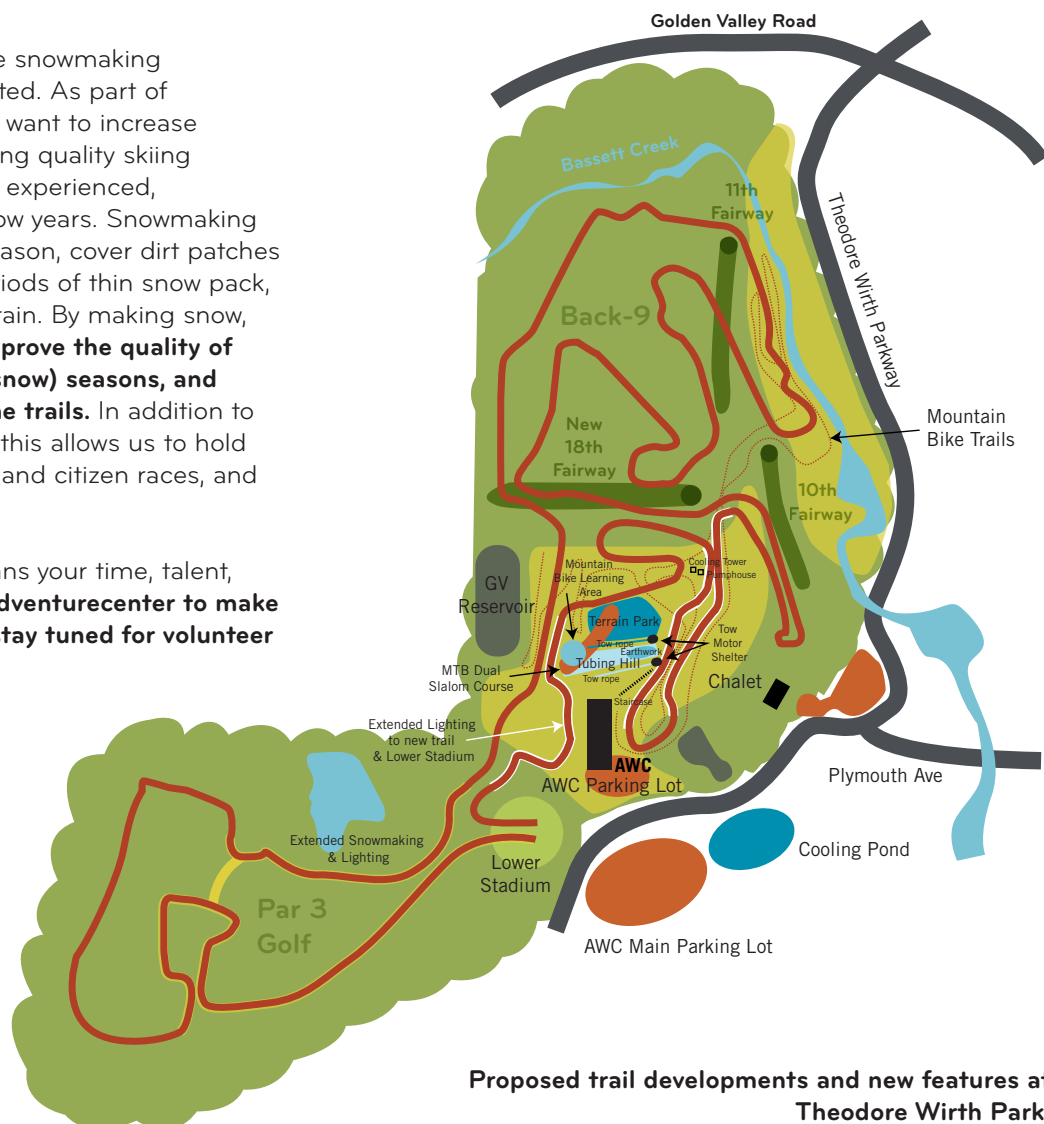
As you all may know very well, the snowmaking capabilities at Wirth Park are limited. As part of the Adventure Center project, we want to increase the snowmaking capacity, providing quality skiing experiences. As we have recently experienced, Minnesota frequently has low-snow years. Snowmaking can fill in the gaps in the early season, cover dirt patches created by high traffic during periods of thin snow pack, or help recover from mid-winter rain. By making snow, we can **extend the ski season, improve the quality of trails in low-snow (and average-snow) seasons, and accommodate more people on the trails.** In addition to benefiting the entire metro area, this allows us to hold high-quality public events, youth and citizen races, and international competitions.

But we need your help! That means your time, talent, and resources. **Visit loppet.org/adventurecenter to make a donation to these efforts and stay tuned for volunteer trail opportunities.**

This summer, we will be leading a crew of six summer interns from Minneapolis' Step-Up program in trail work.

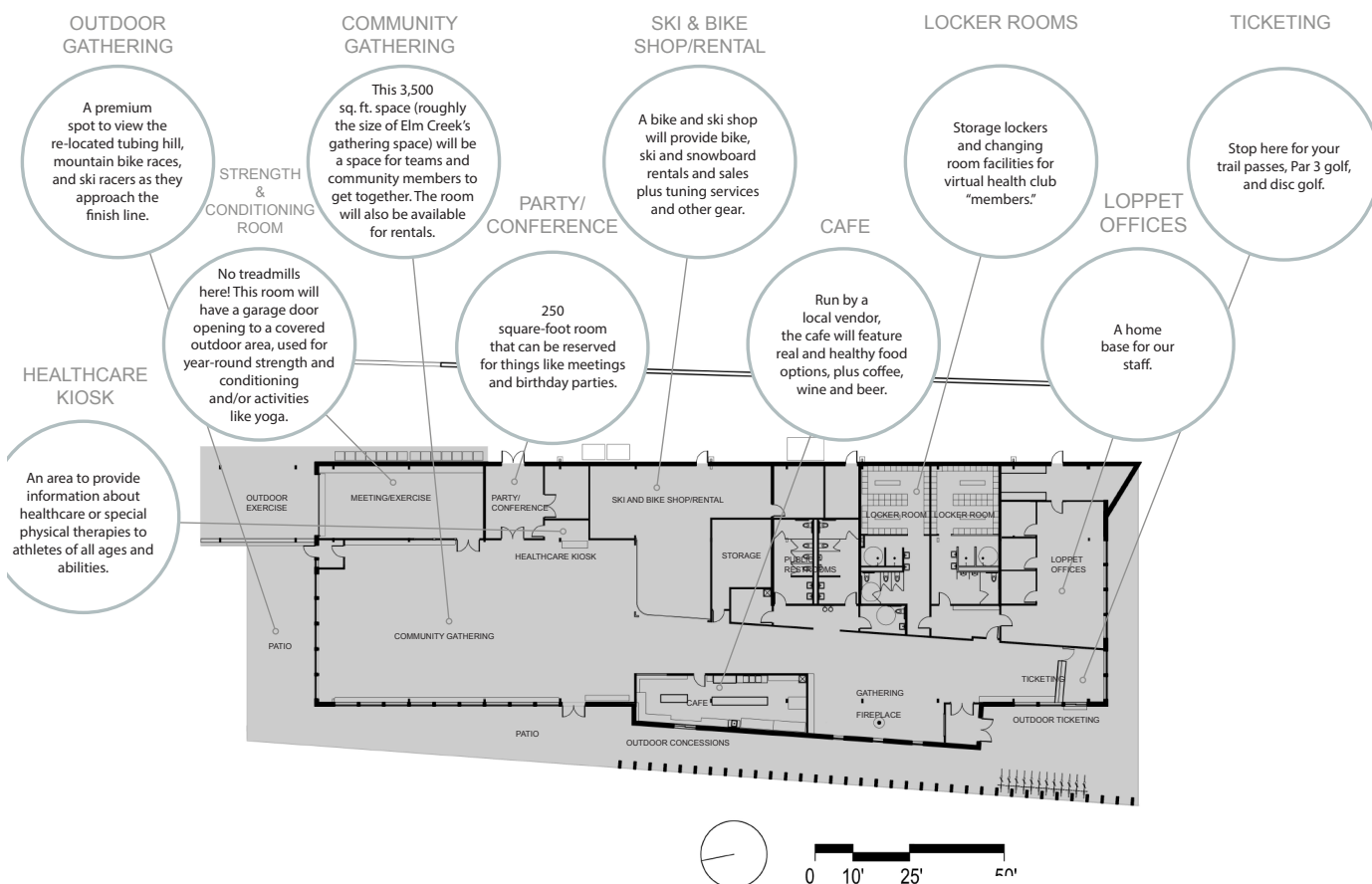


Adventure Center building schematics



Proposed trail developments and new features at Theodore Wirth Park.

PROPOSED ADVENTURE CENTER FLOOR PLAN SCHEMATIC



We hope you are as excited as we are about the Adventure Center! Learn more more at www.loppet.org/adventurecenter.



A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Lindsay Henning

As you'll see in the floor plan above, the Adventure Center will feature a large community gathering space. This is at the heart of what we're doing – building community around the outdoors and adventure. That work has already started and you are a crucial part of this. We've held open houses, house parties, fundraisers, and meetings – and will continue to do so until we open the Adventure Center doors. These gatherings are meant to raise support while building community and excitement. We are counting on you – our members, participants, volunteers, and supporters – to help us spread the word and get the rest of the community excited to visit the Adventure Center. So tell your friends, co-workers, and your Saturday morning bike and running clubs! If you have any questions about the project, I'm only a phone call or email away (612-246-6646 or henning@loppet.org).

Thank you to the North Star Ski Touring Club for supporting the Adventure Center Campaign! Read the full story at www.loppet.org/northstar.



The Loppet Foundation
1301 Theodore Wirth Parkway
Minneapolis MN 55422

612 604-5330
612 604-5338 (fax)
www.loppet.org
info@loppet.org

2016-2017 Loppet Event Dates



Salomon City Trails Loppet
Sunday, May 22
10K & 10 Mile Trail Runs



UCare Tri-Loppet
Saturday, June 25
7K Paddle, 5K Trail Run, 13K
Mountain Bike



Surly Brewing Co. Trail Loppet
Saturday, September 24
5K, 13.1K & 13.1 Mile Trail Runs



**City of Lakes Loppet
Ski Festival**
February 3-5, 2017
More events than you can dream of!



**SUMMER
2016**

**Ages
9-13**

Week-long day camps at Theodore Wirth Park

Mountain Biking, canoeing, rollerskiing,
orienteering, swimming, games & more!

WWW.LOPPET.ORG/CAMP