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Local News

Hoboken Ski Club*High altitude adventure!*

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Current Editor

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There are lots of groups in Hudson County. Whatever your interest, there is a club to match it. There are clubs for singles, for couples, newcomers, fitness groups, and even cigar smokers.

And while the name Hoboken Ski Club might suggest that it is only for ski buffs, membership offers so much more.

THE CLUB

The group boasts about 500 members, with an almost even split between the sexes. About 85 percent of the group are single and between the age of 28 to 35. The club, which was started by Bob McDonald, is in its 16th year.

According to John Risdon, former HSC president, the fact that there is a constant influx of new members is what gives the club longevity. "We had a Christmas party this year, and I was pleased that I didn't know a lot of people," said Risdon. "That is the problem with ski clubs. They tend to atrophy if there isn't turnover."

Organization helps keep the club active and social. There are weekly meetings held every Tuesday night at Willie McBride's in Hoboken. Just last week, several people joined. At most meetings, there are at least 50 to 100 people present.

Rob Redanz, current HSC president, has been a member since 1998. Redanz had moved to New Jersey from Maryland and didn't know many people. "A girl I was dating at the time told me about the club," said Redanz. "My first trip was to Killington." Initially he stayed in the group because of his interest in skiing, but soon realized that the club offered so much more. "Some people are really passionate about going out and doing the outdoor activities," said Redanz. "We run the gamut of activities through all the seasons."

The other thing that makes the club appealing: the really great trips!

THE TRIPS

Every year there are a dozen trips planned between January and March. This year the trips include weekend trips to Vermont and a week in Colorado. There are two trips to Europe including: Meribel, France and Zermatt, Switzerland.

According to Redanz, there used to be members that would only take certain trips. "There used to be a European faction and some that would only go out west," said Redanz. "I think it's more of a blend now."

Because of the size of the group on the trips, which is usually 44 people per trip, they are able to get great deals. For the European tours, breakfast and dinner is usually included. Out west, the lift ticket is free.

"It's a great way to get to know people when you are on a weeklong trip to Europe," said Redanz. "Plus it's the initiative to do things that you said you always wanted to do." Every aspect of the trip is taken into account including, airfare, transportation, and lodging. And there is always an experienced trip leader to coordinate the plans.

NOT JUST SKIING

Watch that first step! It's a loooooong way down!

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For those looking for a bigger thrill, there is always snowboarding. Every year, snowboarding has been gaining more interest from members. Now the group has about a 40/60 split. "This will be my fifth season snowboarding, and I do like it better than skiing," said Redanz. "It's a little bit more challenging and diverse. It's the best on dry powder."

On the club's website there is a detailed program to get people started in snowboarding, including whom not to get lessons from! They advise to at least take one beginner lesson from a professional rather than letting your buddy teach you.

Last Tuesday, several club members talked about the ups and downs of powder snow. While it is the best for skiing or boarding, you can get into trouble if you fall. That's when you are in "powder jail" because the snow is so fluffy that every time you try to climb up, you sink back down.

YEAR ROUND EVENTS

But the fun doesn't stop with the snow. Every year the group goes rafting in the spring and fall; they go to baseball games in the summer. And this summer the group has a trip planned for South America.

"We went sailing on the Hudson in November and we plan on doing it again," said Redanz. According to Redanz, the group aims to do all the things that people talk about doing but never do. And although the focus is on physical sports, the group has strictly social events too.

They have day trips planned to see Broadway shows, art museums in Soho, movies in Brooklyn, and they are looking to see a Knicks game. "Every time I go into the city it's something new. Even the bar crawls are a good way to experience the city," said Redanz. In addition, the group also goes to the seasonal events in Hoboken like the St. Patrick's Day parade and the Art & Music Festival.

HOW TO JOIN

Although the biggest membership rush is during the fall, the club accepts new members year round. Interested parties can check out the club's website or show up to the weekly meeting on Tuesdays at 8:30 p.m. in the back room at Willie McBride's.

For more information, please visit: www.HobokenSkiClub.com. Willie McBride's is located at 616 Grand St. in Hoboken.

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