

## **MOUNTAIN LAUREL SKIERS, Inc.**

President's Annual Report 2016-2017

Presented at the Annual Meeting - April 19, 2017

Back Nine Tavern at Stanley Golf Course, New Britain, Connecticut

Dear Mountain Laurel Friends,

Congratulations! I am happy to report Mountain Laurel Skiers' vital signs remain strong and steady as we close out our 2016-17 year. Throughout the past year I have had the privilege of working with a great group of people from the Board of Directors, committee chairs, to the sports and social leaders, who led meetings or hosted activities and special events. As you read this please understand I find it most difficult if not possible to detail in this brief presidential report all the achievements or offerings that make this club so successful.

I recently asked myself the question, "What does a successful ski club look like"? The answer-It looks like Mountain Laurel Ski Club. Why is our club successful? Well, MTL engages, it involves, it supports, it communicates, and it makes memories. How many times I hear from members "Do you remember when we....." MTL members value their memories and so as we move into our seventh decade, while preserving the past, we will need to create new memories. How do we do that? I believe it will be important to be vigilant in assuring that our members are valuing club benefits and that activities remain relevant. It will be important that we are always listening, observing and responsive to changing demographics; that we remain financially aware and are good stewards of our valued assets. It's a big order but with the help of all of you I know it will happen....in fact, it already has.

This year, the club attracted 90 new members bringing our member rate to 570. The member renewal rate was an impressive 88% -a rate higher than many clubs today. The breakdown of types of membership; Individual (220); Household (118) of which 45 are families with children and Lifetime(18). We now have 91 children in our member database. In May we will say goodbye and thank you to Kathy Augustyn who will be stepping down from her position as Vice President—a position held since 2013. Kathy spent many hours managing the member database, welcoming new members, and planning and running the Open House each year.

We enjoyed a better winter than last drawing many to Vermont to catch some powder days. Weekend reservations for beds at the lodge January through March filled up early contributing to the noteworthy weekend occupancy rates ranging from 72%-95%. Midweek occupancy ran lower for the same period at 25-30%. Lodge improvements included the purchase of 4 new mattresses as a step in initiating a mattress replacement program that will over the next few years provide higher quality, durable mattresses to all lodge beds. Final planning for renovation of the third floor to add 6 additional beds—all single-is pending Board and membership approval to start work this summer. These improvements have been made possible from the generous lodge donations totaling \$2208 collected during membership renewal this year. It became obvious that lodge event weekends for activities in the spring, summer and fall remain a very important contributor for lodge fundraising.

This year we garnered \$2041 in profits from events a nice addition to the coffers. Overall, I think we can say it was a very good lodge year.

When I took over the Presidency in 2015 I laid out a set of goals that included establishing an annual budget. Thanks to our former Treasurer, Rick Sullivan, and current Treasurer, Brian Kirkpatrick, along with the Finance Committee a budget was developed, approved and published. Lo and behold, I am excited to report we met most of our budget goals. As many of you know lodge ownership brought with it financial obligations of a monthly mortgage and loan obligation of \$60,000 in short term notes due in full by 2018. The Finance Committee recommended last year that we start early payouts retiring some of these notes. This action has brought the balance of the notes down to \$32,000 as we end the year. A full financial report will be provided under separate publication in late June or early July.

When you look at what contributes to success I would be remiss if I missed Monday Night Racing. It takes the prize this year for being a big contributor to Club success drawing more members to Mt Southington on Mondays to race than to club meetings on Wednesdays to socialize. Team sports are a great socializer. Under the very driven, passionate direction of team captain Scott Farrar, assistants Neal Fisher, Karen Grossman and the race support of the CSC Monday Night Race leader, Rob Dexter and NASTAR King, Pat Moore, members flocked to the Mt Southington race course in numbers that exceeded on many nights our closest competitor leading to MTL's 1<sup>st</sup> place finish for the third year in a row. Overall, 92 racers contributed to our very close win.

We congratulate Joy Dutra, 2016 MTL Ambassador on her very special win as the 2016-17 CSC Ambassador. We are very proud of her. I hope you will all support Joy and your club through your attendance at this year's Snowball.

My sincerest thanks for your support and your contributions this past year. I look forward to future successes as we enter our 72<sup>nd</sup> year. Please take a moment and join me in recognizing the following club members below for stepping forward in 2016-17 as event planners and management supporters contributing their time and energy to make the fun we all enjoyed possible.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Marjorie F. Wasel*