



# THE ECHO

The Voice of the Mad River Glen Community

September, 2004

In the "Snow Corner of New England"



## Join Us for our Annual Celebration of Fall Foliage

### Fall Foliage Weekend



Saturday & Sunday  
September 24 & 25  
10 AM to 2:30 PM



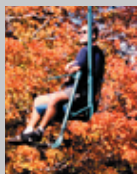
### Green & Gold Weekend

#### Saturday October 2

Allen Clark Memorial Biking Hill Climb	9 AM
Mountain Work Day	9 AM
Fall Foliage Rides	10 AM to 2:30 PM
Guided Foliage Hikes	10 AM & 1 PM
MRG Homeowner's Meeting	1 to 3 PM
Co-op Shareholder's Town Meeting	4 to 6 PM

#### Sunday October 3

Fall Foliage Rides	10 AM to 2:30 PM
Guided Foliage Hikes	10 AM & 1 PM
Stark Mountain Hill Climb Running Race	11 AM
Chicken BBQ - Live Music - Kids Activities	11:30 AM



## The Future of the Single Chair is at Hand

We (your Board and management) have begun to grapple with our upcoming decision about the Single Chair. As a Coop, we have been setting funds aside to help us when a major repair, replacement, or renovation is required. With roughly \$300,000 reserved so far, we have a good start, but further to go.

Decisions will soon be upon us and we need to be prepared to make them. What to do with the Single is not a one-dimensional question with an easy answer. It involves weighing a

number of variables including history and tradition, reliability, efficiency, safety, character, and financial feasibility. There are many strong and often conflicting (though certainly sincerely-held) views among our shareholders.

Our intent, as your Board and management, is to begin a process of discussion and education that will culminate in the Spring with your vote. We need you to be actively informed of our thought process, not simply our conclusions. We want to

*-continued on page 4*

## Free Kids Passes - Help Spread The Word

The introduction of the Free Kids Pass Program 5 years ago is arguably the single most important decision the co-op has made to date. It has helped Mad River Glen attract new skiers, grown the ski school program, enhanced revenues and, most importantly, grown the Mad River Glen community.

Shareholders are encouraged to help spread the word about the program to anyone they know with kids. A key aspect of the Co-op's success is the fact that we have nearly 2,000 dedicated "salespeople" talking up Mad River Glen. Shareholders can help the co-op by helping their friends and family hear about this nationally acclaimed program. Who knows how many of these

families will become future shareholders?

The program is simple: it gives all children ages 12 and under a free season pass if a parent purchases any adult season pass or a Mad Card. There is no purchase requirement for shareholders. The children must be registered and the required purchase must be made by the October 15 deadline.

The Free Kids Pass Program has worked by introducing Mad River's unique ski experience to a whole new generation of families

thereby creating their own family tradition. These shared traditions are helping to ensure a bright future for Mad River Glen. Thanks for helping to spread the word.

**FREE  
SEASON PASS  
FOR ALL KIDS  
12 and UNDER\***

# Letters to the Editor

## Views on the Single

Dear Editor,

The May 2004 issue of the ECHO was one of the best I have ever read. I want to compliment you for the quantity and quality of very useful information not only to this shareholder and others but to the general MRG non-shareholding skiing public. I hope the latter will have a chance to see and read it.

Of particular interest were Alan Moats' superbly written "Goals Set for 2005" and Jamey Wimble's "Future of the Single" all of which attest to the many short-and long-term concerns requiring the COOP Board's attention. It gives me a very positive feeling about the people who are elected and employed to care for the ski area. Obviously, the future of the Single has been on everybody's mind so that Jamey's research and presentation of three options is most timely.

After skiing at Mad River for more than 45 years and experienced many of the breakdowns I feel it's time to "bite the bullet" and opt for a new chair as presented in Option # 3 of Jamey's report. As I reflect on the sentimental value of the Single, the continuing maintenance problems, concern for unexpected stoppages at key moments, the hazards of serious



*Everyone will have time to ponder the future as they ride the single this year.*

accidents I am persuaded by the pros listed.

It has been suggested that if the Single is replaced with a double chair the old chairs could be a valuable source of income if offered and sold as mementos to those who have a particular sentimental attachment.

While my days of skiing Stark Mountain are probably numbered I think of the younger generations who, I hope, will look forward to coming to MRG throughout the 21st century; so let's be practical as well as economical.

Hans Hopf

Dear Editor,

My reaction to the last edition (May 2004) of The Echo is despair – Mad River is losing its way that can only presage the end of the hope that I, an early cooperator, invested in. It has now reached a point where MRG leadership acknowledges that the end of the single chair is an option and management presents 3 options, including a double chair, which solve none of the problems of excess off-peak capacity, intolerable on-peak lift lines and capital and income independence.

There is an Option #4 – the reason why it has not been included for consideration, for the sake of

brevery, are left for examination at a later time. Option #4 is to change the marketing focus and large budget commitment from competition with commercial ski areas for the general ski market to increasing share holders to the authorized maximum of 3,000. This can be achieved through imaginative incentives that recognize the rewards if investment/ownership, management of peak-period usage and creative incentives for off-peak users.

There is tremendous potential to generate capital and operating funds by way of option #4 which would provide MRG with the ability to make the capital and operating decisions that preserve the traditional character and integrity of

the area, INCLUDING THE SINGLE CHAIR, afford meaningful amenities for cooperators and provide benefits, if need be, to the general or select public that some believe is an obligation of the area. The economics are clear: for starters, at a minimum of \$1,500 per share, a successful share sales campaign would gross in excess of \$1.8 million and \$240,000 in annual pre-season dues plus increase in derivative lift and other revenues. Need anything more be said for achieving financial independence, avoidance of commercialism and saving the single chair lift?

So, I move that management's Option #3 be tabled forthwith and forever forgotten and Option #4 be adopted with a charge to a committee to develop strategies and recommendations for implementation. And, please, for the sake of the environment and the MRG image, do NOT put "ski it if you can" bumper stickers on Galapagos turtles!

Schuyler Jackson  
Hinesburg, VT

## Clearing Up Confusion

The board of trustees is planning to reexamine the possibility of including Mad River Glen on the National Register of Historic Places. It seems that there is some confusion about what a national register nomination means. I'd like to try and clear up some of the confusion.

**First:** National Register Nomination is purely a vehicle for recognition and prestige, as are  
*-continued next page*



*Will fornication be a problem if the shareholders decide on a double chair?*

## The Echo

The Echo is the shareholder's newsletter for the Mad River Glen Cooperative.

All shareholders are encouraged to make submissions to The Echo or to share your thoughts with fellow share-holders. We will print as many letters to the editor as we can. Material can be submitted to:

Mad River Glen  
PO Box 1089  
Waitsfield, VT 05673  
Attn: Echo Newsletter  
Email:  
snow@madriverglen.com

Submissions for the fall edition of the Echo must be received before December 1.

all National Register Nominations. Once a site is on the Register of Historic Places, again it is a matter of recognition and prestige. There is no grant money and there no restrictions associated with the Register.

Second: The cost for doing a study, and the ground work to be nominated for the National Register costs approximately \$4,000 - \$5,000. The local Mad River Valley Rural Resources Commission has been offering since 1999 to provide the funding for the nomination through its CLG. (Certified Local Government Program, which has access to Federal grant money for planning. We have had very good luck getting funding to do

nominations to the National register. Local projects include Warren Village, Waistfield Village, Waistfield Agricultural District, and several individual sites like

the Knoll Farm. Again there are no strings or restrictions for any of the land owners and structures which are part of these sites.) The CLG money to do the nomination is a grant / gift and it is used only to provide the information specifically required for a National Register Nomination.

**Third:** There are no restrictions whatsoever that come from being on the Register of Historic Places. Being on the register provides recognition only. Recognition could be valuable in terms of Public Relations and Marketing. Beyond that, a register nomination could help with State and Federal Grants when and if they are available. These grants could be for planning, engineering. Usually capital improvement grants come from foundations etc. Being on the National register would help qualify for any of these grants if

and when they are available. (As to Act 250, the Department of Historic Preservation would have the same role in any Act 250 hearing whether the Mad River Glen is on the Register, not on the register or in the process of applying to be on the Register. The historic significance of the ski area stands on its own.)

**Fourth:** All grants which may be available to the coop for planning, capital improvements, studies etc all have their own rules and requirements. These grants are all programs which are up to the discretion of the Board as to whether they are appropriate or useful to the coop. All grants have restrictions about how the money is used, reporting, etc. All grant money will have some requirements, but the specific grants have nothing to do with the Register of Historic Places. Right now, there is

very little grant money available. The coop will and can obviously pick and choose among possible grants for a program that matches the ski mountains' needs, whether it is planning, forestry, engineering, land conservation, energy conservation etc.

I am very much in support of the single chair in it's own right, or of the entire ski area being nominated for the Register of Historic places. Mad River Glen is unique and its nomination would make it the first ski area in the US to be on the Register. This is a great opportunity to receive help with the leg work for the Nomination. Please consider this offer.

Ellen Strauss  
*Mad River Glen Share Holder and Skier Member of the Mad River Rural Resources Commission and Mad River Valley CLG*

## Bike It or Run It If You Can

Mad River Glen skiers are used to expending their energy skiing down Stark Mountain. Over the Green & Gold Weekend they will have two opportunities to race up it. One on foot, the other by bike.

For the runners we will host the 8th Annual Stark Mountain Hill Climb Running Race on Saturday, October 2. Competitors run up the 2,000 vertical feet from the base of Mad River's Single to the top of General Stark Mountain. They can take any route they wish, so that strategy is every bit as important as strength.

The Allen Clark Memorial Hill Climb, the annual gruntfest that has fast become a rite of cycling passage in the Mad River Valley, will be held this year on Saturday, October 2nd at 9:00AM. This will be the 7th edition of the grueling time trial that rises 1,600 vertical feet in 6.2 miles, from the intersection of Routes 100 and 17 to the top of Appalachian Gap.

If the sweat, suffering, and nominal \$25 entry fee seem like a heavy price to pay, consider it all for a good cause – the race is a fundraiser for Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports. This year's race is



sponsored by Stark Mountain Bike Works and Mad River Glen, and will be a part of Mad River's Green and Gold Weekend. Riders will compete in seven age categories, from 15 and under to 61 and over.

In keeping with the spirit of its namesake, the late Allen Clark, the Hill Climb is a celebration of cycling as a sport for people of all ages and physical abilities, with any type of bicycle. Allen, an original Mad River Glen skier,

was a cyclist who didn't take up the sport until his sixties. He went on to log between 2,000 and 3,500 miles a year, well into his 70s, riding in all weather and in every month of the year.

The road, originally named the McCullough Turnpike when built in the 1950s, is currently the highest paved road in Vermont kept open year-round, topping out at 2,356 feet. The road wasn't constructed using the high-tech survey methods

available today; instead, the bed was laid out following the natural contours of the terrain. With an average pitch of roughly 10 percent over the last 2½ miles, the climb is steeper (if shorter) than most climbs in the Tour de France. But steepness alone isn't everything. The numerous changes in pitch and direction are really what make the "Ap Gap" climb a challenging and exhilarating ride, both physically and mentally.



*The Allen Clark Memorial Hill Climb was named in honor of long-time friend of Mad River Glen, Allen Clark. He and his wife Nancy were original members of the Mad River Glen community and good neighbors in the valley. Allen's name also lives beyond the annual bike hill climb. Allen's son Tom is on the patrol, and his grand-daughter, Hilary, works in the co-op office.*

## The Future of the Single Chair- continued

provide an opportunity for each of you to weigh in. To that end, this article represents the beginning of a series to include you in the iterative decision-process we will be working through with your help.

### Process:

The questions we have today will be answered along the way while others will come up. Over the next 10 months, we intend to work through as many of these questions as we can, to allow us to develop a recommendation. Then, consistent with the Coop By Laws, which require that capital expenditures well over \$300,000 be approved by a vote of the shareholders, the Board will submit its recommendation to you with the election mailing in the spring for a vote.

For the time being, today our null hypothesis is that a financially responsible restoration is the preferred option that is most consistent with our By Laws and Strategic Plan. However, we are prepared to modify that plan as necessary as this process evolves.

Our challenge today is to scope our options as fully as we can. To help in that process, the management team has hired a lift engineer to help evaluate restoration options and modernization requirements.

### What We Know:

During the summer of 2005, working with the Vermont Tramway Authority (the regulating entity), we hope to test the concrete foot-

*"Ride them long enough and you come to view chairlifts not just as things, not just as access, but as entities with lives, vibes and personalities all their own. I think especially of Mad River Glen's single chair, which is like you daft great-uncle who fought in the war, the wrinkled codger who wheezes and snorts and farts at Thanksgiving dinner but had nerves of steel back in the day."*

Steve Casimiro  
Skiing Magazine  
September, 2004

ings for each of the towers of the Single (the steel lattice towers themselves are believed to be in good shape). There are numerous ways to conduct the footing tests, which we are exploring (e.g. pull-tests and core tests). If in the worst case scenario every footing fails, we will have sufficient funds from the reserves we have been setting aside for several years to rebuild each one just above or below its current position and move the lattice tower onto it.

Clearly, this investment would only be appropriate if we are refurbishing our Single chair. If we choose to move to a double or a single, with tube towers, the tower placement would be dramatically different. Hence the push to resolve our plans and vision prior to initiating the testing next summer.

### Financing:

For many, the question of financial feasibility has loomed large in considering what to do with our main lift. There was some thought, at first, that retaining a Single chair may cost as much as 60% more than installing a modern double. It is this financial question that is responsible for our reluctance to, at this time, fully reject the option of installing a modern double.

**However, as we are learning, this 60%-premium is not at all a foregone conclusion.**

Our latest discussions suggest that refurbishing may, in fact, be our most economical option. Furthermore, refurbishing may allow us to stage the work over a period of years, thereby allowing us to pace our capital plan with our fundraising.

Therefore, in our data-gathering mode, more definitive cost analysis is a top priority right now.

### Other Open Questions:

The largely subjective questions that we all banter about remain on the table at this point while we are still gathering cost information and scoping the project.

If we decide to go with a refurbished single, the question

## The View from The Chair

### A Message from The Co-op Board President

Fellow Shareholders:

The summer has been good on the Mountain. Summer maintenance has proceeded as expected and Mad River is in good shape to begin the new season. There are minor improvements such as a rebuilt lift shack at the top of the Single and a bit of forest management, but for the most part, the Mountain remains unchanged but well maintained. The 4th of July activities were blessed by great weather. A strong volunteer effort resulted in an award winning float and a successful BBQ. Thanks to Sarah, Abby, Rick and the army of volunteers!

Our big project, the Single, is progressing very well. Jamey and Jan Leonard evaluated the Single in August and the preliminary assessment should be available by Green & Gold Weeeknd. We are very fortunate that Jan Leonard has taken a personal interest in our project. Jan was formerly an engineer with American Steel and Wire, the company that installed the Single in 1948 and he relishes the opportunity to help with the restoration. As president of Dopplemeyr/CTEC, the major player in modern ski lifts, he is also keenly aware of advances in lift technology and safety over

the years, so his recommendations and design guidance will be of the highest quality.

Our plan is to refurbish the Single, adjusting the basic design where safety, reliability and maintenance improvements can be made. With Jan's help, we should be able to perform these engineering revisions in the style of the original construction, so we will not compromise our desire to preserve the spirit of the Single.

We are also pragmatic. We will be keeping other options open. You, the shareholders, will have the final say. As soon as we have received detailed bids for the restoration, we will present the plan to the Ownership for a decision on whether or not to proceed with the restoration plan.

As always, shareholders are encouraged to share ideas and concerns with the Board. To facilitate communications regarding Coop matters and strategic planning, we have created a special email address, 'CoopBoard@madriverglen.com' as a direct line to the Board.

So... time to get the legs in shape and dig the equipment out. We'll be skiing soon.

Kind Regards  
Alan Moats

### Summary

There are many questions that we are working to develop views on. We welcome your participation. We welcome your feedback. To facilitate a dialog, we wanted to begin sharing the evolution of our thinking, rather than simply our conclusions.

Please feel free to post your views on the Coop listserv, which all the Board members monitor, or you can email the Board directly at our new collective email address (coopboard@madriverglen.com) if you prefer, with any thoughts or suggestions you may have.

# Hey Kids, Get Ready for Snow Search 2005

Mad River Glen sent seven representatives to the Sports Illustrated for Kids NextSnow Search in Colorado this spring. They were part of an elite field of 140 competitors from around the country who earned the right to represent their areas. The 2004 Mad River Glen NextSnow Team included Silas Ayers, Susan Campbell, Ben DeFlavio, Nate DeFlavio, Adrian Dingle, Rosa Hayes and Stephen Lawlor.

Three of them, Nate DeFlavio (age 10), Susan Campbell (age 9) and Stephen Lawlor (age 12) qualified for the finals. After the finals, which included half pipe, racing, big air, slope style and mogul competitions, a 25 member select NextSnow Team was named. Nate DeFlavio earned a spot on the team and was featured on NBC's airing of the event and in Sport Illustrated for Kids. Interestingly, 7 of the 25 finalists hailed from Vermont.

Mad River Glen will be selecting its 2005 team using the results of



*Freestyle Coach, Anna Eberle, and the Girls Freestyle Team take a rare breather between runs. Will one of them earn the right to represent Mad River Glen at the Next Snow Search in Colorado?*

the Junior Mogul Challenge along with their written response to an essay question. The Junior Mogul Challenge will be held on Sunday, January 2 and the essay must be handed in by January 9. The 4 member team will be announced over the Martin Luther King Weekend. The first place finisher will receive

a paid trip (along with a parent) to Sports Illustrated for Kids Next Snow Search at Keystone, Colorado, February 11-13. The other three selected for the team will pay their own way to the finals. The finals will be aired on NBC on March 5 and will also appear on Sports Illustrated for Kids.

Sports Illustrated for Kids Next Snow Search is the first all-mountain, all equipment, all kids' snow sports championship. It's not just a competition; style, attitude, and personality are also factors. There is only one class. Everyone competes together. Boys and girls, skiers and snowboarders and adaptive athletes are all represented. "The opportunity to showcase the future of skiing and snowboarding on network television has been a long-time goal," said Jack Turner, the event's promoter. "To think that our nation's best kids were seen on NBC, the home of the Summer and Winter Olympic Games, is a breakthrough for our industry. I personally believe that the athletes you'll see in the Next Snow SEARCH will do as much to inspire kids as the Olympic athletes."

For more information about the Junior Mogul Challenge and the Next Snow Search visit [madriverglen.com](http://madriverglen.com) or contact the Mad River Glen office at (802) 496-3551.

## EMS Supports MRG

When you hit the slopes this season you will notice the Mad River Glen crew in new uniforms supplied by Eastern Mountain Sports. EMS has agreed to supply the mountain staff with jackets and hats. Eastern Mountain Sports is excited about working with Mad River Glen because the area espouses the values we both hold dearly- integrity, authenticity, and a love of outdoor adventure. Furthermore, a good number of staffers here at EMS have forged connections with Mad River over the years so there has been no shortage of people pleading for a Mad River/EMS relationship. "We all look forward to a productive partnership that helps further the values and goals of both Mad River Glen and Eastern Mountain Sports", said EMS's Marketing Director, Mark Van Saun. EMS also used the mountain for its photo shoot for their upcoming winter catalog. Keep on the lookout to see if you recognize any of your favorite

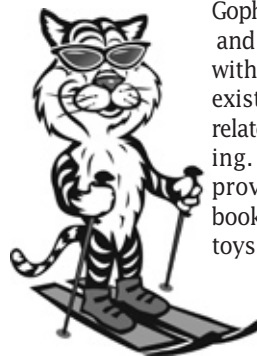


trails in the background.

Mad River Glen is grateful to be working with EMS. Being the region's leading outdoor retailer and well respected Telemark shop they are a perfect fit. "I really appreciate the way EMS understands what Mad River Glen is all about. They are working closely with us to make sure that the relationship isn't over-commercialized," says Mad River's Marketing Director, Eric Friedman. In addition to the uniforms EMS will be giving Mad River Glen Co-op Shareholders a 15% discount on regularly priced merchandise at every EMS store. The Mad River Glen Cooperative joins the prestigious ranks of other outdoor clubs and organizations that receive this special discount. Thanks to our friends at EMS for helping the Co-op in its mission of protection and preservation.

## Snow Monsters Sighted at Mad River Glen

Mad River Glen is a proud sponsor of Snow Monsters, a grassroots, broad-based program to develop and promote children's skiing. The National Ski Areas Association, The Vermont Ski Areas Association, The U.S. Ski & Snowboard Team and many other ski areas are partners in the program. Snow Monsters are the symbol of everyone's on-slope fun and a voice for the mountain lifestyle, physical fitness, good health, environmental respect, and other issues important to all skiers. The characters, (Snowball the Snow Tiger, Powder Pig, Mogul



Gophers, X Wolf, Snow Snake and Blizzard Babies - each with unique talents- only exist for skiing and only relate to skiing/snowboarding. Snowmonsters also provide videos, coloring books, posters, CD's, plush toys, and internet content to help supporters promote the program. They are also organizers of

the NextSnow Search. We believe that this initiative is important so that as an industry we help to develop children's interest in skiing, inspire trial, and convert them to lifelong members of our sport. Check out Snowmonsters on the Mad River Glen home page at [madriverglen.com](http://madriverglen.com)



**SnowMonsters**

# Mountain Work Days 2004

by Jay Appleton

Another growing season is near its end on Stark Mountain, and once

Again it's time for us to visit overgrown woods lines, and tend to young trees on the trails. The schedule of Mountain Work Days for 2004 is:

**Saturday, September 25 - Tree Planting and Line Maintenance (lift ride)**

**Saturday, October 2 - Line Maintenance (lift ride)**

**Saturday, October 16 - TBD**

Line Maintenance Crews meet at 9 am in the Base Area on the Basebox porch and are generally back down by 3:30 - 4 pm. Be sure to bring sturdy boots, work gloves, water, lunch, appropriate tools, and a fun attitude.

In addition to the satisfaction of seeing powder lines take shape and helping the forest grow for future skiers, volunteers also receive a complimentary day pass voucher for each day they work.

It has been five years since the January 1998 Ice Storm wrought



destruction on our forest. Foresters predicted large numbers of trees whose tops were heavily damaged would die in two years. I am happy to report that this turned out to be incorrect and our stately mature trees remain alive. And in the last five years, work crews have returned woods skiing to something like what it was before the Ice Storm. The forest is in a different state now but there are plenty of options for skiing, much like it used to be. This means that Mountain Work Days no longer have to focus entirely on woods skiing maintenance and attention can be turned toward regeneration, or helping new trees grow to replace the old ones.



*Helping out on mountain work days are rewarding in so many ways. You help the overall forest health, you help keep our legendary woods terrain in tiptop shape, it's a great work out for you and its far and away the best way to really learn where the "goods" are.*

Crews on the first three work days will maintain existing regeneration zones on Creamery, Glade, and Lower Glade, establish new "regen" zones on Panther and elsewhere, and possibly plant some trees. ("Regen" work days also include some line cutting, so bring your loppers.) Mad River Glen is over fifty years old, and many of its trail trees that provide so

much character are near the end of their life span. Tree planting is an effective way to establish new trail trees to take the place of the ones that were left by the architects of Mad River's trail system.

Lots more information about Mountain Work Days and care of the Forest can be found on my web site, <http://www.treeskier.com/>. See you up on the hill.

## Mow It If You Can at Mad River Glen

Over the past 50 years or so the annual hand mowing of the trails and slopes of Mad River Glen has become a traditional sign of the passing of summer. Each year in late August a crew of a dozen to a dozen and a half hearty souls take on the results of Stark Mountain's short but energetic growing season. While most ski area mow their trails Mad River Glen, as usual, mows to the beat of a different drummer. Mad River's crew mows the legendary trail system by hand, using hand scythes; you know, the same implement immortalized by the "grim reaper".

The hand scythes are used for several reasons. First and foremost many of the trails at Mad River Glen are simply too steep and have too many natural obstacles to use a powered mower. Secondly, hand mowing allows the crew to



*This "Sultan of Scythe" prepares Mad River's trails for the season ahead.*

be more selective in their cutting. Fringes of the trail are left high to act as windbreaks which help collect the eventual snowfall. Islands of "regeneration" zones are left unmowed in an effort to foster growth and to re-forest trails that once were glades but have lost their trees over the years. This meticulous mowing effort helps reduce soil erosion problems, maintains the unique character of the trail system and enables the mountain to resist altering

the trails so they can be mowed by machines. While some of the mountain's wider and less steep trails are mowed with a small fleet of gas powered sickle bar mowers, the vast majority of the trails Mad River Glen is famous for can only be done by hand.

So who are these sultans of the scythe and why do they do it? Some are avid skiers who want to use the time to get in shape and learn the mountain. "There is no better way to get a feel for the terrain than to see it in the summer. The hand mowers come to know the mountain better than anyone," says crew leader Glenn Gutterson, who has supervised the crew for the last few years. Others simply do it for the "free" season pass, some do it as a physical challenge while others do it for the "fat" pay check. Each year some unlikely

folks join the crew. This year's example is Spencer Leonard.

Spencer learned to ski at Mad River when he was barely able to walk; now he is a shareholder and he and his wife Darcey travel up from Boston virtually every week-end year-round to spend time in the valley. Having just completed formal art studies at The New England School of Photography in Boston, Spencer is a general news and sports freelance photographer. He documented the mountain in photographs last season with his photo essay, "The Mad River Glen - Ski It If You Can Crowd". He decided to join the mowing crew so he could continue documenting all aspects of the Mad River Glen experience. To see a sampling of Spencer's work visit his website at [www.slpoj.net](http://www.slpoj.net).

## Important Shareholder Information

### Advanced Purchase for 2004-2005 Season

Your Advance Purchase Requirement (APR) for the 2004/2005 season is due on September 30, 2004. **A \$25 late charge will be assessed to your account if your APR is not paid by November 30th.**

### What's the Story With Mad Money?

If you have leftover Mad Money from the 2003-04 season that is **not part** of your Advanced Purchase Requirement (purchased above and beyond your initial \$200), you can return it to the office for credit for the 2004-05 season. The Mad Money must be returned by September 30, 2004. This credit cannot be used to satisfy your 2004-5 Advanced Purchase Requirement but we will issue new Mad Money, which can be spent on the mountain next season.

Any Mad Money that is part of your 2003-04 Advanced Purchase Requirement must be spent by September 30, 2004. After that date it expires and can no longer be used. Now that the mountain is closed, you can spend your Mad Money at the Alpine Options Retail Shop, or at the first Fall foliage weekend on September 25-26. If you have any questions about Mad Money or vouchers please be sure to give the office a call.

Our Co-op structure requires us to track the spending of our shareholders. Which is why we have Mad Money. Mad Money should be purchased for any transaction shareholders make on the mountain. If you do not purchase Mad Money for your on-mountain purchases, we cannot track your spending accurately. This will affect any potential patronage rebates authorized by the board in good seasons. It is also a valuable tool for management so we can determine the actual spending of our shareholders as opposed to the general public. Shareholders should be aware that it is important that they identify themselves when making purchases in the ticket office and at the Ski School Desk.

### Want to Spend More Time Skiing & Less Time in the Ticket Office?

We encourage shareholders to pre-purchase ticket vouchers, Mad

Cards and Mad Money in advance and have us mail them to you. This will allow you to breeze through any lines that may occur during busy periods. By pre-purchasing ticket vouchers, Mad Cards or Mad Money, you can minimize your time in the ticket office. To place an order, simply call the office at (802) 496-3551 or go to the "Shareholder Only" page of the website at [madriverglen.com](http://madriverglen.com).

### Do I Need a Shareholder ID?

If you are a shareholder who does not opt for a season pass you should come into the office and have your photo taken for a Shareholder ID. This will enable you to receive your discount at the Alpine Options retail shop and identify you as a shareholder in good standing when making purchases.

### Have a Question or Concern?

You are encouraged to become involved with the Co-op. Your input is important to us. However, we ask that you do not confront Mad River Glen employees directly with your comments or complaints. Please use the following liaisons to field your questions, comments, and concerns:

Eric Friedman  
Marketing Director  
[eric@madriverglen.com](mailto:eric@madriverglen.com)  
(802) 496-3551, ext. 21

Jamey Wimble  
General Manager  
[jamey@madriverglen.com](mailto:jamey@madriverglen.com)  
802-496-3551, ext.14

### Office Hours Pre-season

Monday to Friday - 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM

### In-season

Every Day - 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM

### Shareholder-Only Website

Be sure to visit the shareholder-only website at [madriverglen.com](http://madriverglen.com) for meeting minutes, strategic planning updates and more!

Username: single  
Password: gogogo

## My View

### A Report from The President



<b>Shares Sold in FY '04 to Date:</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Share Sales Budgeted for FY '04:</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Shares Tendered in FY '04:</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Net Gain in FY '03 to Date:</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Total Shares Sold to Date:</b>	<b>1990</b>

The Co-op has become stable and overcome many of its initial obstacles, but new share sales are still vital to the Co-op's future. This year we budgeted for 40 new shares, a goal that has already been reached. Unfortunately this has been offset by the fact that 31 shareholders tendered their shares. This leaves us with a net gain of only 8 shares for the year to date.

We work hard and utilize a number of tools to minimize the number of shares tendered. Realistically we must expect to have shares tendered each year due to deaths, finances, relocation, or a number of other reasons.

In the Co-op's first nine years we have reinvested over \$2 million in capital and paid off the mortgage. These are tremendous accomplishments but the work is far from over. By 2010, the 20 year capital plan calls for another \$1.5 million to be spent on capital projects including the likely refurbishing of the Single and a new Patrol/Ski School building. It will take more than operating income to achieve this goal.

To help meet the Co-op's goals we have:

- Revised of our Co-op Share Sales marketing material.
- Overhauled the share sales portion of the website, historically our best sources for leads.
- Improved signage at the mountain.
- Developed a way to sell shares in the lift lines with line-cutting privileges when conditions and crowds permit.

The shareholders are our best resource and we need your help to improve share sales. If even half of you can sell ONE share, we would easily surpass our goals. It's that simple folks! If you know someone that may be interested in purchasing a share or would like more information about the program, follow the "Share Marketing" link on the shareholders-only website or give us a call at (802) 496-3551.

## Kay's Grove Planted

Skiers will notice some new flora on Gazelle, under the Sunnyside Double chair this winter. 20 balsam firs, each about 8' high, were recently planted near the old mid station on the double chair. The trees, that will act as a windbreak and snow fence are being planted as part of the Stark Mountain Foundation's on-going efforts to foster the Mad River Glen Co-op's mission of protection and preservation. The area will be referred to as Kay's Grove in memory of Kay Fiorenza, a long-time supporter of Mad River Glen, the Co-op and the Stark Mountain



Foundation. Kay passed away last fall at the age of 90. This grove of trees is a fitting memory to a truly unique and special woman.

# Bananas, Barbed Wire, and the Brooklyn Bridge or A brief but entertaining history of the evolution of the single chair ski lift

By Bill Heinzerling

Picture this, dear Echo reader. It's about 1600 A.D. and the first cable to be made of metal is being developed in the Hartz Mountains in Germany for mine-hoisting purposes. It's very primitive, being made, primarily, of three strands of iron wire twisted into the world's first "wire rope." While crude, it nevertheless is better than hemp rope, which quickly deteriorates in the dank mines, or iron chains, which can break very suddenly and unexpectedly, with dire consequences. The iron cable, though stiff and heavy, lasts longer and warns of imminent failure when any one of the strands becomes frayed or broken.

Now let's fast forward to 1833. Ichabod Washburn, a self-made, benevolent chap, and a pillar of society who later would become a Massachusetts state senator, starts a wire-drawing factory in Worcester, Massachusetts—the Washburn and Moen Company. It's the largest factory of its kind in the country, producing wire for, among other things, piano strings, ladies' corsets, and what was later to be called barbed wire. (The first transatlantic cable was also produced in this plant.)

Now enters, from upper New York State, in about 1840, Isaac Ellwood, an enterprising and inventive young man who first makes his mark (and a relatively handsome profit) selling sauerkraut to barge hands on the newly-completed Erie Canal. Then, after garnering a \$3,000 bonanza during the 1849 California gold rush, he moves back east and buys a hardware store in De Kalb, Illinois. There, in a back room, and using Washburn and Moen wire, he invents a new product which he believes might be of great importance, especially to western ranchers. He calls it "barbed wire," and it's made by twisting two strands of wire, interspersed with pointed metal barbs, together. Well, his invention turns out to



*Long before there were moguls on The Chute there were stumps.*

be an almost immediate success and, in 1873, he forms the I.L. Ellwood Manufacturing Company and turns his full attention to the production of barbed wire. In 1881 his company expands and is reorganized as the Superior Barbed Wire Company.

Now along comes John "Bet-A-Million" Gates. Born in 1855 on a farm in rural Du Page County, Illinois, Gates is at once a gambler, investor, rogue industrialist, and a ruthless businessman. He starts his career selling barbed wire for the nearby Superior Barbed Wire Company over in De Kalb. His first assignment is in San Antonio, Texas, in 1876. There, more important, even, than the shootout at the O.K. Corral, and more brilliantly planned, Gates sets up a barbed wire corral in the middle of town and invites dubious ranchers to bring in their meanest fence-busting cattle, hopefully to prove that these slim wires would, indeed, contain them. And they do—the demonstration is wildly successful. So much so, in fact, that Gates returns to Ellwood, his boss, with more orders than the company has ever had or can possibly fill.

When refused a partnership in

the company (in recognition of his coup), Gates quits and sets up his own barbed wire manufacturing company in St. Louis, totally and flagrantly ignoring competitors' licenses and patents. Ultimately his organization becomes, in 1898, the American Steel and Wire Company, one of the greatest corporations of that day, and a predecessor to the giant United States Steel Corporation in Pittsburgh, which, upon its formation in 1901, is the largest business enterprise ever launched in the U.S.

Soon American Steel and Wire is also producing steel cable, or "wire rope" (a term coined in 1841), surpassing, in fact, the production of the John A. Roebling and Sons company in Trenton, New Jersey, which has been manufacturing wire rope since 1849, including all the miles and miles of cable that had gone into that engineering marvel of the century, the Brooklyn Bridge, designed, built, and completed in 1871 by John's son, Col. George Washington Roebling, an R.P.I. civil engineering graduate and a hero of

the Civil War. (The Colonel, sadly, dies an agonizing and untimely death as a result of contracting the bends while on an inspection trip in one of the massive Brooklyn Bridge caissons.)

So what's all this got to do with Mad River Glen, you may be asking?

Plenty, my friend, plenty. But before getting into it, let's talk a little about bananas because most of you, I'm sure, are painfully unaware that the popularity of bananas and skiing go hand-in-hand, which, albeit sounding a little ridiculous, is a little known but vital fact in this historical saga. Here's why.

In 1870 a ship's captain, one Lorenzo Baker, buys 160 bunches of bananas in Jamaica—for peanuts, so to speak—and delivers them, in eleven days, for whatever reason, to Jersey City, New Jersey. They're an instant hit, well before banana splits (no ice cream, yet) or Chiquita Banana even exist. They sell for big money, the equivalent of about \$3 each in today's dollars. So Captain



*Fashions change but the mountain remains virtually unchanged since the early days.*

Baker, like John Gates, knows he's on to something big. The demand for bananas, in fact, sweeps up and down the East Coast, and by the early decades of the twentieth century banana production is booming. But how to get around the cumbersome, time-consuming, very labor-intensive schlepping of bunches of bananas into the holds of ships, and then hauling them out again at their destinations?

Enter Omaha native James Michael Curran, a bright and studious second-generation Irish American who, in 1935, is about to revolutionize the sport of skiing. Here's how it plays out. Curran, a night-schooled, self-taught civil engineer is employed as an ironmaker and draftsman during his school years. During the mid-1920s, by way of whatever connections, he's hired by the Brown brothers' huge United Fruit Company in Honduras to design an endless conveyor system for



This was Mad River Glen's original trail network when the single chair was cranked up for the first time in 1948.

Notice how this advertisement from the early 1950's touts the single chair as the "finest" lift in the east.

loading and unloading bananas into and out of the holds of ships. Basically, he does it by attaching hooks to a wire rope that runs over a series of pulleys ("sheaves" in today's ski area parlance) which are suspended from lattice towers. And it works like a charm.

Then, in the mid-1930s, railroad magnate Averill Harriman and some of his well-heeled cronies hear about Curran's banana conveyor system. (At this point Curran is a bridge engineer with Harriman's Union Pacific Railroad, which wants to develop Sun Valley, Idaho, into a destination ski resort for the expanding and lucrative railroad

passenger business.) So, to make a long story short, Harriman asks Curran to design a fixed-grip, mono-cable chairlift, similar to the banana conveyor system, but outfitted with chairs instead of hooks. (At this time surface lifts abound at ski areas, but they all have their inherent ground-based limitations.)

Well, the design doesn't come off the drawing board without certain trials and tribulations—Curran has to work out a multitude of problems such as chair design, cable clamping methods, cable size and speed, tower configurations

*-continued next page*



*Gen. Stark (Sandy MacIlvane, the architect of the Basebox, and George Neill assist Miss Vermont 1948 off of the single on opening day.*



*Massive early snows in 1947 forced the delay of opening until the next season.*

## Bananas, Barbed Wire, and the Brooklyn Bridge-continued

(people weigh more than bananas), drive and return station plans, engine type and horsepower, and much more in the process of developing the world's first practical chairlift. In fact, in the dry and dusty Union Pacific railyard in Omaha, a volunteer wearing roller skates, of all things, is scooped up and dropped dozens of times from a prototype chairlift chair attached to the side of a variably-moving truck (shades of Mad River Glen's recent Fourth of July parades) until all the loading and unloading kinks are worked out, which they are, eventually...more or less.

Once completed, Curran submits his blueprints to American Steel and Wire (by now a subsidiary of U.S. Steel), which has been selected to build the world's first chairlift on Mt. Baldy, at Sun Valley. It has also been awarded the contract to supply all the wire rope for the project. And so, with the modified banana conveyor (now called an aerial ski chair ropeway) completed in 1936, and lots of

wealthy skiers eagerly waiting to try it out, Sun Valley quickly becomes a multi-million dollar business—the sparkling jewel-in-the-crown of all the ski areas in North America. And, as anticipated, and despite the Depression, the money pours in.

So, the stage is set not only for Sun Valley, but for ski areas all over the world, to expand the sport of skiing well beyond the limits of what was thought feasible or possible at the time. Curran, in fact, preeminently revolutionizes the sport of skiing by designing a relatively simple, moderately inexpensive, aerial transport system for comfortably and quickly getting skiers up a mountain.

The single chairlift goes on to become the workhorse of the industry (until doubles come into vogue many years later), enjoyed by millions of skiers, worldwide, for the next 68 years (and still counting...at least at Mad River Glen and Mt. Eyak, a small town-

run ski area near Cordova, Alaska, where Mt. Baldy's old single chair still runs, albeit without safety gates or footrests.)

The Mt. Baldy single chair is subsequently replicated by American Wire and Steel at Stowe in 1940, at Mad River Glen in 1948, and, after that, at many ski areas across the U.S and Canada. (There are many single chairs, all basically of Curran's original design, still operating in Europe. But, obviously, they weren't built by American Steel and Wire, as most of ours were.)

For his pioneering work in ski lift design—Curran was literally the inventor of the chairlift—all those years ago, he was posthumously inducted into the National Ski Hall of Fame at Ishpeming, Michigan, in September, 2001. Curran died in 1968 at the age of 65, shortly after retiring from his prestigious position as the chief bridge engineer for the huge, sprawling Union Pacific Railroad.

### POSTSCRIPT TO PART ONE

Coming in the next Echo: A profusely illustrated history of how Mad River Glen's Old Faithful single chair was built, the cast of characters who operate(d) and maintain(ed) it, why it should be reconstructed and preserved, lots of great old photographs, everything in chronological order, and, of course, much, much more. Don't miss it!

*Bill Heinzerling, MRC's unofficial historian, has been skiing at Mad River Glen since 1954 and has been on the ski patrol since 1958. Bill moved to "the valley" in 1967 to become assistant manager under long-time GM, Ken Quackenbush's. Bill also served as patrol leader for 5 years. Bill is still an active member of the Volunteer Ski Patrol and can usually be found after a day on the slopes in the friendly confines of Gen. Starks Pub.*

# Kids Program Choices

## The Rockin' Robins

Children ages 4 to 12 who are learning to ski for the first time.

Designed as an introduction to skiing, this is the best way to get children started safely. The key to success in the Rockin' Robin group is our intimate 1-to-3 instructor-to-child ratio. The focus is on fun, while children learn to master the basics of balance, sliding on skis, making a wedge, controlling speed, and turning in both directions.

## The Chipmunks

Children ages 4 to 7

The Chipmunks are for kids who have already had experience on skis and are able to ride the lifts. The focus at this level is developing basic skiing skills while enjoying the camaraderie of skiing with friends.



Photo credit: Mike Riddell

## The Panthers

Ages 7 and Up

The Panthers are for kids who want to have fun skiing with their friends in a supervised and safe environment. The program offers kids an opportunity to explore Mad River's terrain and improve their skiing as they build lasting friendships.

## Development Team

Ages 7 and Up

This program is a collaboration of the Ski School, the Freestyle Team, and the Junior Race Program. It is designed for kids who are not quite ready to commit to freestyle or racing and want to explore all their options. It's for all mountain skiers looking to improve their skiing, carve better, ski the woods, run some gates and bang the bumps. Kids in this program must be able to ride the Single Chair on their own.



## The Freestyle Team

Ages 7 and Up

Mad River Glen's top-rated moguls make it a perfect place for kids to rip it up! The team skis under the supervision of our expert coaching staff. The focus is on developing skills while attacking ALL of Mad River's legendary terrain. A key goal of the program is for the kids to compete in freestyle events throughout the season. The Freestyle Team runs weekends from 9:30 AM to 2:30 PM.



Photo credit: Mike Riddell

## NEW! The Telemark Team

Ages 7 and Up

New for this season, this is the program for kids that love to Telemark. They must be able to ski down from the top of the Sun-side Double chair.

## Junior Race

### Program

Ages 7 and Up

Challenging terrain and top notch coaching make Mad River Glen an ideal place for youngsters to learn racing skills, have fun and become better skiers. The program runs all season long on weekends and holidays from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.



## The Goal of our Ski School

The goal of Mad River Glen's children's ski school is to infuse our programs with fun and knowledge of safety while teaching techniques that will allow your child to improve his/her ability. Our commitment to a small instructor/student ratio allows the children who participate in our program to not only have fun and become awesome skiers but also to experience a strong sense of camaraderie while developing lasting mountain friendships. We look forward to your child skiing with us this year!



Terry Barbour  
Ski School Director



Another great sticker shot! Vic and Kathy Oburg sent us this image from Antarctica. How did that penguin carry that sticker so far?

## Upcoming Events

DATE	EVENT	TIME
September 25	Mountain Work Day	9 AM to 3:30 PM
September 25-26	Fall Foliage Weekend Chairlift Rides	10 AM to 2:30 PM
September 30	Last Day 2004 Mad Money is Valid	
October 2	Mountain Work Day	9 AM to 3:30 PM
October 2	Homeowner's Association Meeting	1:00-3:00 PM
October 2	Co-op Shareholders Town Meeting	5:00PM
October 2	Allen Clark Memorial Hill Climb	9am
October 2-3	Green & Gold Weekend - Chairlift Rides	Lift will run from 10:00 AM to 2:30 PM
October 3	Stark Mountain Hill Climb Running Race	11 AM with registration beg. at 9AM
October 7	Shareholder Relations Committee Meeting	6:00 PM
October 15	Season Pass & Free Kids Pass Program Deadline	4:00 PM
October 16	Mountain Work Day	9 AM to 3:30 PM
October 24	MRSC Dryland Training	1:00-3:00 PM
October 31	MRSC Dryland Training	1:00-3:00 PM
November 6-7	Mad River Ski Patrol Refresher	8 AM to 5 PM
November 13	Co-op Board of Trustees Meeting	8 AM
November 14	MRSC Dryland Training	1:00-3:00 PM
November 30	APR Late Fee Deadline	
December 4	Co-op Board of Trustees Meeting	8 AM or 5 PM if the mountain is open for skiing
December 15	Last Day to Buy a Mad Card	Midnight
Dec 25-Jan 2	Christmas Week Holiday Period	
December 26	Tubbs-Mad River Glen Snowshoe Festival	9:00 AM to 3:30 PM
December 26	Co-op Shareholders Town Meeting	5 PM

Check out the Shareholder Only Page  
[madriverglen.com](http://madriverglen.com)  
 Username: single  
 Password: gogogo



Visit [madrivervalley.com](http://madrivervalley.com) for a comprehensive listing of events throughout the Mad River Valley.

## Where's the "single" best place to party?

Are you or someone you know getting married? Planning a special event, hosting a holiday party or family gathering? Why not hold your get-together at Mad River Glen? The Basebox and surrounding grounds are available to rent for private parties and business functions. With catering and bar service available to fulfill your party needs, Mad River Glen offers a variety of options to suit your party size. Visit [madriverglen.com](http://madriverglen.com) for rates, sample menus and an on-line event questionnaire. If you would like to discuss the opportunities available for your special occasion, please contact Glenn Gutterson in the Basebox, by phone (802) 496-3551, Ext. 33. or via email at [glenn@madriverglen.com](mailto:glenn@madriverglen.com)



Let's all THINK SNOW!



Photo credits: TJ Greenwood

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