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Open skiers enjoy the view from Findorff Bridge at the Capitol Square Sprints. Photo; Renee Callaway

MADNORSKI News

News for members of the Madison Nordic Ski Club

February 2007 Vol. 26 No. 5

Local Snow Creates Skiing Enthusiasm



Dirk Mason and Walt Meanwell

The snow storm on Sunday, January 21st reminded me of the simpler times of Nordic skiing. When was the last time you could strap on the boards in your front yard? What a pleasurable experience it is to ski from your door down the street to the nearest open space and go exploring. Best of all, to go skiing did not require any combustion emissions from driving. Or at the very least, your trip for snow did not require significant drive time.

Kudos to the volunteers responsible for the Capitol Square Sprints. This event

certainly requires many man hours, particularly this year having to make snow.

Your enthusiasm and energy have helped put Madison, WI on the Nordic skiing map worldwide.

And how about our Race Directors (Dave Bell and Tom Gallagher), being able to pull off at least two Elver races thus far, including the high school race. Hmm, I wonder what sacrifices they made to Uller? Thanks guys!

The Madison Nordic Ski Club is in full swing now.

Let's keep that momentum going! All the Youth programs are out in force. Thanks to Mark Weber the KidSki has actually made it out on snow! Youth programs at Blackhawk not only have a huge man made base, but can use the area trails now. The Juniors will be hosting a Chili Feed at

the next meeting. Please come hungry and help support the program.

We hope most of you have had the opportunity to use the new MadNorSki web site. Thanks to everyone who has used the Trail Reporting feature. Your input is what makes that a valuable local resource. Please be patient as we load content onto the site, we have snow now so progress may be slow. If you would like to contribute content please contact our Webmaster Craig Heilman. Thanks Craig for helping keep the website running.

Considering Nordic skiing is really hopping now. If you have ideas or thoughts about how your club can do things better, please come to the board with your ideas. We are always looking for ideas and volunteers to improve MadNorSki.

Keep on skiing....

Miles of Smiles

Walt Meanwell

In need of therapy? There is none better than the smile on the face of a child. Even if you don't need therapy at this particular moment you can still experience miles of smiles. Come on out and help teach children to ski.

The very successful Fit City Kids program has gone weekly. Every Wednesday afternoon at 4:00 a bus load of children arrives at the East shelter at the Blackhawk ski club. We can use your help getting the kids geared up and skiing through the pines

with them. There is a lot of laughter and the children seem to have a great time. You can too. After skiing we enjoy Marie Heilegensteins world famous hot chocolate and there may even be an extra cookie for you.

Can't make it? You can still help. Many of these kids need hats, gloves, coats and snow pants. Bring any extra winter clothing items to the February club meeting. Can't make the meeting? No worries. There are drop boxes for donating clothing at REI on the West side and Cronometro bike shop on

Willy St. on the East side.

We had several items donated to the Fit City Kids program at the Capitol Square Sprints. Over 85 children were turned loose that Saturday afternoon on everything from old 3 pins to snow shoes. The kids had fun and it was interesting to hear Mayor Dave describe his unchanged 15 year old wax job.

There have been too many volunteers to name that helped to make the Fit City Kids program such a success. You know who you are. THANK YOU!

A Volunteer's Perspective of the Capitol Square Sprints

Renee Callaway

Ice crystals, hand warmers, magical snow, photo snapping, warm drinks, fun people, and fast action describes for me the Capitol Square Sprints.

My Capitol Square Sprints actually started on the Tuesday before the race. I found out that a few more volunteers were needed at snow-making central and so I headed out bundled up in various layers of long underwear, fleece and topped with rain pants and jacket. I've never made snow before but through the years of alpine skiing, snowboarding and now Nordic skiing have taken advantage of other's labor

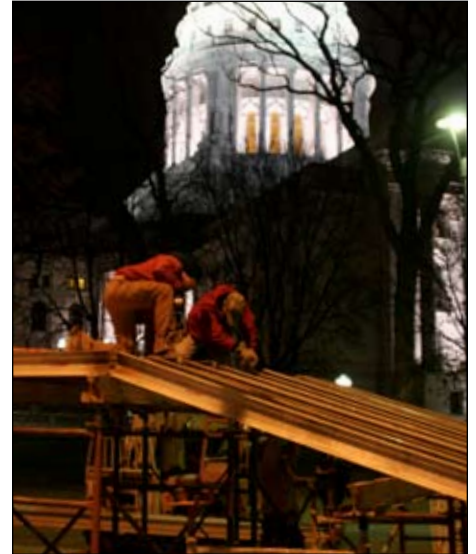
many times. I have to admit I was curious.

After spending only a couple of hours making snow I really appreciate all the work that it takes. From keeping the generators loaded with diesel fuel, to pushing the snow guns around the area, to keeping the trees from building up too much ice, there was no lack of glamorous work to be done. The best part is getting completely covered in a thin sheet of ice which got me some funny looks when I went straight from snow-making to dinner out.

The start of the event on Friday night came very quickly as the excitement

built to see what the course would look like with the amount of snow that was available. I had an easy night actually. My first job was to meet with the professional photographers from Competitive Image. I joined them for dinner and by the time we were done and walking back over to the Concourse the course set up was in full swing. It was an amazing sight to see a road that is usually dominated by automobiles being transformed into a winter setting. Every year when I see this happen I can't help but daydream of seeing all our city streets filled with snow and groomed so you can ski to work or the grocery store!

continued on page 10



Clockwise from top left; urban snow-making at Aliant Energy Center; Findorff crew build the bridge Friday Evening; Colin Mahood from Bend, Oregon, on his way to second in Friday night's 100 meter dash; Chris Lawn sets a track in front of the starting line. Photos: Renee Callaway

2006-2007 Calendar



February

- 8 Board Meeting 6:45 p.m.
12 Club Meeting; 7:15 p.m. Social begins
at 6:30 p.m. Lussier Center
18 Ice Age Challenge

March

- 8 Board Meeting 6:45 p.m.
12 Club Meeting; 7:15 p.m. Social begins
at 6:30 p.m. Lussier Center

Board Meeting	Club Meeting	Meeting Theme	Meeting Agenda
Thursday, Feb. 8	Monday, Feb. 12	Birkie stories	Juniors fund raiser
Thursday, March 8	Monday, March 12	Racing wrap-up Pot Luck	Election of officers

February 17 Bus Trip to the Northwoods

Paul Matteoni

Haven't skied enough during this low-snow winter? Need to get in one more depletion ski before the Birkie? How about a unique Valentine's Day gift? We can solve any of these problems!

Once again, MadNorSki is planning a bus trip to Minocqua Winter Park or ABR in Ironwood, MI. We had so much fun on the December bus trip that we decided to do it again. A \$50 check to "Madison Nordic Ski Club" gets you the bus ride (No driving! Snooze on the way up! Party on the way back!), Ski pass for the day, guaranteed skiing!

Bring your check to the February meeting or use the form below. Here's the itinerary:

Board the bus at 6:30 am and depart at 6:40, Arrive at Minocqua Winter Park at 10:30 am, Depart for Madison at 4:30 pm, Arrive in Madison at 8:30 pm

SEND \$50 PAYABLE TO: Madison Nordic Ski Club, c/o Errol Hartman, 1111 Grant Street, Madison, WI 53711

BY: February 9, 2006

Your name(s): _____

Your evening phone: _____

E-mail address: _____

If Minocqua isn't white enough we'll travel to Active Backwoods Retreat in Ironwood, MI, where we'll get 4 1/2 hours skiing before heading home. Expected arrival in Madison is 9:30 pm for that option.

Look for the bus in lot 60, near the Nielsen Tennis Center and Walnut Street Outdoor Track / Soccer Facility.

Bring your equipment, snacks and food for the ride (you may bring alcoholic beverages!), DVD Movies. Last time we saw Dirty Dancing and Fargo.

Bring a \$50 check to the February club meeting (or mail a check by February 9).

Cancellation Policy

This trip is contingent on receiving checks from 33 people by Tuesday, February 13. Send your check as soon as you can; plan to ski; checks are non-refundable.



2006-07 Board

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Dirk Mason: ddmason@charter.net
Walter Meanwell: waltmeanwell@tds.net

Vice-president

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Margie Sprecher: margies@tds.net

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Tom Galliger;
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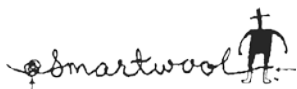
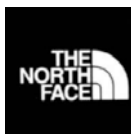
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Saturday 10-6
Sunday 11-5

What Can We Do To Make a Difference?

Brock Woods

I and many of my Ski Club colleagues have noted the irony of XC skiers complaining about the lack of snow these days as they are driving north, one or two people per car, to find snow as it, too, moves north. The data linking our poor-snow years with human-caused rising levels of greenhouse gases like CO₂, are now well-accepted within the scientific community worldwide. Make no mistake, there is now no serious debate over whether or not we are significantly contributing to global warming: we are.

In fact, every time we drive our cars to “find snow” we are contributing to this problem. Car-pooling with friends or riding on a club-sponsored bus minimizes this effect.

In fact, on our last bus trip to ABR, 50 people used almost 8 times less fuel per rider than if we had each been driving,

two people to a car, averaging 30 mpg!

What follows is more about what’s been changing in our own city and state. We have all heard about global changes through virtually every media source, and if you have not seen Al Gore’s Movie “An Inconvenient Truth” you owe it to yourself, your children, and the rest of humanity to pick it up (by bicycle, if possible) and view it. Via the web, you can also access a talk recently given by Prof. John Magnuson to state employees about some of the effects of global warming on the world and, in particular, Wisconsin, at: <http://media2.wi.gov/DNR/Viewer/?peid=6abafab1-6226-4657-9cc4-fd80975df908>.

For those of you who cannot access the file, in short, the last hundred years of data from Wisconsin, despite annual variability, show that the climate here has been warming and ice cover of lakes (along with snow)

has been declining for that period, but both took a dramatic turn for the worse in the 1970s. These data can only be explained, especially the recent dramatic changes, by adding CO₂ level data to natural recorded climate cycles. Future prospects look even worse, as long as greenhouse gases continue to rise. In the 1890s Lake Mendota was ice covered 4 months a year. There will be little, if any ice this year, and sometime in the future there will be no complete ice cover at all! Snow cover will likely follow a similar pattern. In years to come, the weather here may be as if Wisconsin was moved to the current location of Arkansas...

We owe it to ourselves to do all we can to make sure this doesn’t happen, and that the joys and benefits of XC skiing remain available to future generations. Whenever possible, carpool to your vehicle’s capacity (and sign up for the bus trip)!



Clockwise from top left; Joe Kline demonstrates how its done; Wausau Nordic High Schoolers cheer on their temmmate; MadNorSki Junior Elisa BeckerMemorial team finishes the High School relay. Fit Kids ski in our Fit City. Photos: Renee Callaway

Lapham Loppet High School Race

Jeff Schimpff

Teenage skiers in southern Wisconsin have to be not only physically flexible, but geographically flexible as well. With thin mid-January snow cover in southern Wisconsin, the MadNorSki Juniors skiers were set to ski the Snekkevic Classic in Wausau on January 20. Then the classic technique race there was cancelled, leaving a skate race for highschoolers.

Then word arrived that the Lapham Loppet might still be held at the trails near Delafield—then maybe it wouldn't—then it was on again, saved by the new snowmaking capability supported by Friends of Lapham Peak. Coach Lorie Wesolek and parents decided to attend that event, sparing the skiers more than an hour each way of travel, with Final Exams looming

a few days ahead. Nine of our high school skiers, joined by about dozen adult club members, made for a strong MadNorSki showing at this event, which the sponsors used as a fundraiser for expanding their snow-making system.

The Lapham Peak State Park groomers did a good job with last week's snowfall, supplemented with the addition of machine-made snow. There were only a few dirt spots to avoid with their race skis.

Waukesha West arrived with a strong team to provide the main competition, along with a few other Waukesha county area teen skiers. At 10:30 a.m., with bright sun and temperatures in the mid-teens, the first wave of boys, aged 16-18, blasted across the flat start area loop, followed at one-minute intervals

by boys 13-15, then two waves of girls.

A strong Waukesha boy led the field for nearly the entire 4.5K race, until sophomore MadNorSki Birken Schimpff powered ahead in the last hundred meters to win by a second. Junior Thomas Ostby and senior Eric Delain were the next Madison skiers across. New team members Dylan Meacham and Gavin Folgert won awards for placing 2nd and 3rd respectively, in the 13-15 age class.

In the girls' race, new skier Anna Young showed she is catching on quickly, placing 3rd in the girls' 13-15 division. Corrina Jones, Kelsey Eskrich, and Stina Seaberg also had good races and enjoyed participating in a rare event—a high school ski race in southern Wisconsin.

Some heavy
SNOW this season
would be NICE!



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February 18: Ice Age Challenge, Biathlon, Children's Race

The fourth annual Blackhawk Nordic Fun Day will be held on Sunday, February 18th at Blackhawk Ski Club. This event promises to be a lot of fun for participants and for those who want to come out and watch. Cosponsors are Blackhawk Ski Club, Madison Nordic Ski Club, and Wisconsin Biathlon.

Once again, the Ice Age Challenge Nordic Ski Race will be held in conjunction with this event. Other events during the day will include a youth and adult biathlon (which includes Nordic skiing and target shooting) and a children's race. The biathlon is a great way for skiers to try out one of the oldest Nordic sports. Air rifles set up for biathlon will be available to use during the race. The race course and lengths will be

determined based on existing snow conditions but all races are expected to be relatively short, 5K or less. The length of the children's races will be based on age and ability.

For spectators there will be plenty to see. One of the highlights is always the biathlon, specifically to see if the strategy of skiing slow to keep your heart rate down pays off in shooting success. Food and drink will be available throughout the day.

Schedule of Events:

9:00 a.m. Biathlon site-in / warm-ups /and safety information (mandatory to compete)
10:00 a.m. Adult Biathlon Competition
4.5K with 2 shooting stops

11:15 a.m. Youth Biathlon

1:00 p.m. Children's races .5K to 3K

2:15 p.m. Ice Age Challenge 5K

Awards will be handed out after each event and the events are free to members of Blackhawk and MadNorSki in good standing. The events are open to non club members for a fee of \$20 for adults and \$5 for children. Registration will be up to ½ hour prior to each event in the east chalet at Blackhawk Ski Club located just west of Middleton. Since this is a fund-raiser for the Nordic Programs at Blackhawk Ski Club donations will gladly be accepted.



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Wax to Share

Duncan Bathe

As part of this sport the topic of most discussions after “is there any snow”, is what wax? I’m not sure why, as everyone says that the most important thing is ski stiffness followed by structure and finally waxes. OK the “engine” may have something to do with it but that’s no easy fix. After listening to many conversations about wax, it become obvious that any “good” wax box must contain Rex Blue. Surfing the web I saw a “steal of a deal” for Rex Blue in a bulk buy of 600 grams (over a pound). I discussed this with our illustrious co-president Dirk Mason who said he’d take some if I was ordering. A couple of days later a package arrived and with child-like enthusiasm I open the parcel. And there it was, not a bunch of small packets that can be easily shared but a single brick large enough to be used as a corner stone in my garden wall. “OK” I thought, “I’ll just cut the brick into smaller chunks”. So started the saga of mind over matter, intelligent being over inanimate object.

I went to the kitchen drawer and extracted a fine bone handled knife with a thin, Sheffield steel blade, made when Britain ruled a third of the world. Slowly bearing down with this colonial blade resulted in nothing more than a superficial surface scar. So I gave the blade the benefit of my full body weight, nothing. The brick just sat there with a Gandhi inspired serenity. “So that’s how you want to play eh,” I muttered under my breath, “the 12” Chicago chef knife for you”. A swift blow resulted in nothing more than a few shards of wax, spat out by the brick

with a contempt bordering on belligerence.

Down to the basement work shop we trudge. If a knife won’t do the job then something with teeth must. Wrong! After the first stroke with my trusty hacksaw, which by the way is more than adequate for cutting through stainless steel, the brick just filled the saw’s teeth with a plaque-like gumminess that Listerine couldn’t shift. Repeated strokes with the saw just resulted in smooth lateral movement. Frustration was setting in, “It can’t be that hard!” I exclaimed, so I decided to visit the “lower room” and extract a bottle of Australia’s finest.

Now I know they make this stuff by pouring molten wax into containers, but I didn’t have enough empty wax containers to apportion the brick into, which by the way seemed to be silently expanding every time I looked at it. “That’s it, heat.” I said in an Archimedean moment. The red nectar has worked its miracle yet again. With zeal that Edison would have been proud off; I dash and cut a beautiful U shape from the finest piece of scrap plywood. I rummaged around a portion of the basement that hasn’t been visited for the best part of a decade to find a piece of high resistance wire. Next a DC power supply that has enough power to jump start my lawn mower. I staple the wire across the opening in the U shaped wood and gingerly connect the wire to the power supply. The wire glows a satisfy red, “It’s alive!” I shriek in my best Gene Wilder impersonation and crank up the power until it glows a bright orange. I thrust the hot wire across the top of the brick screaming hysterically “take that fella!” and

with a glee bordering on maniacal the wire slowly sinks into the brick. “You’ve got to be kidding me” I gasp. The wax slowly flows back over the gap healing itself as if inspired by “The Terminator”. “Now what?” As I sniff the air. “Bloody hell!” I squeal as the wood spontaneously combusts. I frantically blow at the flames but only manage to fuel the embers even more. A dash to the washing sink finally prevents me from burning down the house. “Nothing dear, everything’s under control” I shout reassuringly to by better-half upstairs.

“OK that’s it. Don’t say I didn’t warn you. It’s the caldron of death, it was your choice” I babble. Off I skulk, and reappear with my camp stove and an empty Hills Brothers coffee can (normally reserved for the finest blood worms and night crawlers). “In you go, you stubborn bugger, melt like the polar ice cap” I mumble as I empty old inexpensive waxes into a communal bag so that I can salvage enough plastic cartons to pour and set the wax into. Inspired by the mad Brit chemist I stir in some Krytox for the last carton to make the “ultimate fluoro”. “You know after all this, maybe I wont share!”

Skiing in the Shadow of Bill Gates

Ansel Schimpff

Note: Long-time MadNorSki junior skier Ansel Schimpff in his freshman year at Western State College in Gunnison, Colorado. He recently qualified as a member of their varsity Nordic ski team. The team's assistant coach is Hennie Kashiwa, son of 1972 Alpine Olympian Hank Kashiwa. On a recent training stop en route to a conference meet in Bozeman, MT, the team participated in a publicity shoot at the Yellowstone Club, featuring the club's new Nordic trail system. It turns out that Hank Kashiwa is the Yellowstone Club's marketing director, and Mr. Kashiwa gave the team the run of the place for a couple days, in exchange for their appearance on the trails. Ansel reports what it's like to be a "Gated Community" skier

"Let me tell you about the Yellowstone Club (just outside Big Sky, Montana). Yesterday we got up at 6:30, ate

breakfast and then drove to the ski trails on the grounds of the Yellowstone Club. We met up with a photographer just as the sun was coming up for a photo shoot to promote their new Nordic trails.

After an hour of skiing past the camera in the sunrise, we were given free-run of the trails and chair-lifts. We were the first people to ski most of the trails, which were some of the best I have ever skied, with amazing views of Big Sky, Lone Mountain, and the surrounding peaks. After an hour of skiing the Nordic trails, we swapped our good skis for rock skis and shorter poles and headed up for some Alpine skiing.

With about 400 total members and access to 13,400 acres of private skiing, we saw maybe 12 other people on the mountain, and were the first skiers of the day on most of the runs. The grooming was so good we skied the giant slalom course on our Nordic skis. On our way down to the Warren Miller Lodge, we took a few passes through the untouched terrain park.

Inside the lodge we were invited to buy whatever we needed and put it on Hank Kashiwa's tab. After some more skiing, we went back to the condo for lunch, homework and napping. At 7:00 we went up to the mid-mountain lodge for the tastiest dinner I have ever had. After 3 hours, I had enjoyed about \$130 worth of caribou ribs, bison stew, lobster bisque, "white salmon," and raspberry-chocolate tort.

Prices at this place are amazing. House lots cost about \$4 million and homes have to be about \$9 million to \$10 million to meet the zoning standards. (Microsoft founder) Bill Gates has a heated driveway so he doesn't have to have someone come plow it.

We were invited back for Spring Break, so how could we say "No"?"

For information on this exclusive ski club, see page 5 of the 2004 *Outside* magazine article on ski filmmaker, Warren Miller: http://outside.away.com/outside/features/200411/warren_miller_5.html

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Clockwise from top left; SuperTour Men slide through the turnaround; Fit City Kids experience skiing with snow falling; Volunteers assist Fit City Kids with their equipment; High School girls climb Findorff Bridge. Race photos: Renee Callaway, others: Ruth Bachmeier,

But there was little time for daydreaming, as there was much work to be done to be ready for the Friday night sprints. I wandered around snapping photos of the dump trucks unloading snow and the volunteers at work as the professionals handled the actual race photos. It was interesting to see the bridge being built, the fencing being delivered, the banner unfurled and hung and the snow being graded into place. Many a passerby just out for a dinner downtown couldn't help but stop and marvel at the undertaking.

On Saturday Ruth Bachmeier, the other volunteer photographer, took the morning shift so I could attend the other big Madison event, the Bike Swap. By early afternoon though, I was pulling on my long underwear,

windproof fleece and winter boots as I headed back out to the races.

I arrived in time to assist photographing the High School relays. It was a great job as I circulated the course watching the action. Shooting at the turn-around around was exciting as the high school racers attempted different techniques for negotiating the 180° turn. I decided that positioning myself behind the hay bales was the safest choice as I watched crashes in the corner.

This was in sharp contrast with the Super Tour racers where the speed and skill level of the racers was awe-inspiring for a struggling skier like myself. The elite racers flying across the snow with beautiful glide and well-

timed poling.

The final event for the evening was the citizen races. I always enjoy this event because I get to cheer for all the racers that I know but also because there are usually some comical moments. Well, I'm not sure if the racers are laughing but the spectators sure are. The biggest action always takes place at the bridge. The bridge is steep and it can get icy. It's also narrow so it's hard to pass especially if someone stalls out or falls down. Of course, this always happens so there is plenty of action to see as someone falls and everyone tries to get by which usually makes the situation worse. Next thing you know several people are down and the bridge is worse than the beltline on the first snowy day of the year.

Continued on page 11

Continued from page 10

The racing is packed in on Sunday with SuperTour races, high school races, JOQ races, Citizen races, the US Disabled Ski team races and a Corporate Snowshoe relay to end the day. I'm not sure exactly how many photos I snapped on Sunday but it was well over 1,000. There was so much great racing to cover on Sunday you didn't want to miss a moment. I even had the good luck to be able to station myself at the top of the bridge for awhile where I felt the agony of racers who stumbled and fell on the bridge and I watched with amazement as the disabled skiers double-poled up the bridge three times.

One of the great things about being a photographer for the event is that you get to move around. Not only do you get to see the racing from different vantage points but you also get to see all the volunteers doing their jobs. I watched as the technique judges watched for infractions, the starters

sent off the racers, the finish line volunteers collected bibs, the course marshals raked the snow to cover up bare spots, and so much, more more. Were people tired? Eventually sure but everyone I talked to was having fun and seemed in good spirits.

Even at the end of Sunday as the work began to tear down the course people were ready for action. I never thought I would involve myself in the world of porta-potties but I joined a crew in pushing them from the street to the sidewalk. I got to relive my days as a farm girl as I helped load the hay bales back on to a wagon. There was no lack of tasks but it seemed to go fast and was over much sooner than I expected.

One of the truly amazing parts of the weekend happened that night as we were cleaning up the course. The Men's SuperTour winner, Eric Strabel, bought a bunch of pizzas for the volunteers to show his appreciation. In a sport that is under-appreciated and under-funded it speaks volumes about the caliber of the

athletes that one of them would make such a gesture.

I encourage you to come down to the Sprints next year and bring your kids, your friends, your neighbors. Watch the races, cheer on the athletes, do the citizen races, volunteer for a shift and help make Madison one of the best cities in the country to live.



Photo: Renee Callaway

CXC SKI

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