

LAKE PLACID NEWS

ROTARY CLUB NEWS: Lake Placid Community Ski Program is growing



Participants of the Lake Placid Community Ski Program (Photo provided)

In the fall of 2019, Lake Placid parent Heather Odell saw a real need for kids to get outside in the snow and burn some energy.

Both of her kids are avid cross-country skiers, and she wanted to help start a community ski program in Lake Placid modeled after the successful community ski programs offered in Keene and Tupper Lake. With the snow starting to fall, Odell pulled together a coalition of parents to create a program that would meet the needs of the community. In its inaugural winter the Lake Placid Community Ski program offered a wonderful opportunity to 20 kids from the Lake Placid Elementary School.

In the winter of 2020-21, during the thick of the pandemic, the Lake Placid Community Ski Program was one of the few after-school programs available to keep kids active and outdoors. It was essential to ensure that all families had access to this enriching program by creating a scholarship fund. The Lake Placid New York Rotary Foundation provided the perfect partner to help kickstart the fundraising for the ski program. The Rotary Foundation provided fiscal sponsorship enabling the school district to fundraise for the program without completing the time consuming process of creating a separate 501c3.

Through the generous community donations managed through the Rotary Foundation, the Lake Placid Community Ski Program was able to offer equipment rentals and 10 weekly lessons provided by a combination of parent volunteers and state Olympic Regional Development Authority instructors.

In 2020, the Community Ski Program had 75 kids from kindergarten through fifth grade out on the trail at a cost of only \$10 per child thanks to donations.

This winter brought some new challenges for the program, including an increase in the per participant costs for rentals and instruction and additional challenges related to the pandemic staffing levels.

Fortunately, the partnership with the foundation allowed the ski program to subsidize the costs once again and offer additional scholarships for

those in need. Despite this year's challenges, 65 kids started the 10-session program. Ski jumping was also included this year.

This program is helping our community continue the tradition of fostering a love of Nordic skiing in our local kids.

Looking forward to next winter, the Lake Placid Community Ski Program is hoping to solidify program funding by applying for one or more local grants. The fiscal sponsorship of the Lake Placid New York Rotary Foundation provides the expertise and financial management that has made this possible and attainable for all.

Donations to support next year's season are welcome in any amount. Please make your tax-deductible donation payable to: LPNYRF with "*LP Community Ski Program*" written in the memo. Mail your check to LPNYRF, PO Box 854, Lake Placid, NY 12946. Inquiries may be sent to rotarylakeplacidfoundation@gmail.com.

The Rotary Club of Lake Placid meets weekly on Thursday mornings at 7:20 a.m. All are welcome.

Learn more online at rotarylakeplacid.org.
