

JANUARY 12-13, 2008

# Comics

CLASSIC PEANUTS®/ by Charles Schulz



**The following stories were copied from email sent by Evan Tibbott dated March 13, 2023**

I am sending you another write-up from a more personal angle. I do not expect you to include it with relevance to our patrol activities. Since I have no living relatives within the age group who would be interested in this aspect of my life, I felt, perhaps you might find a way to archive this just for the record.

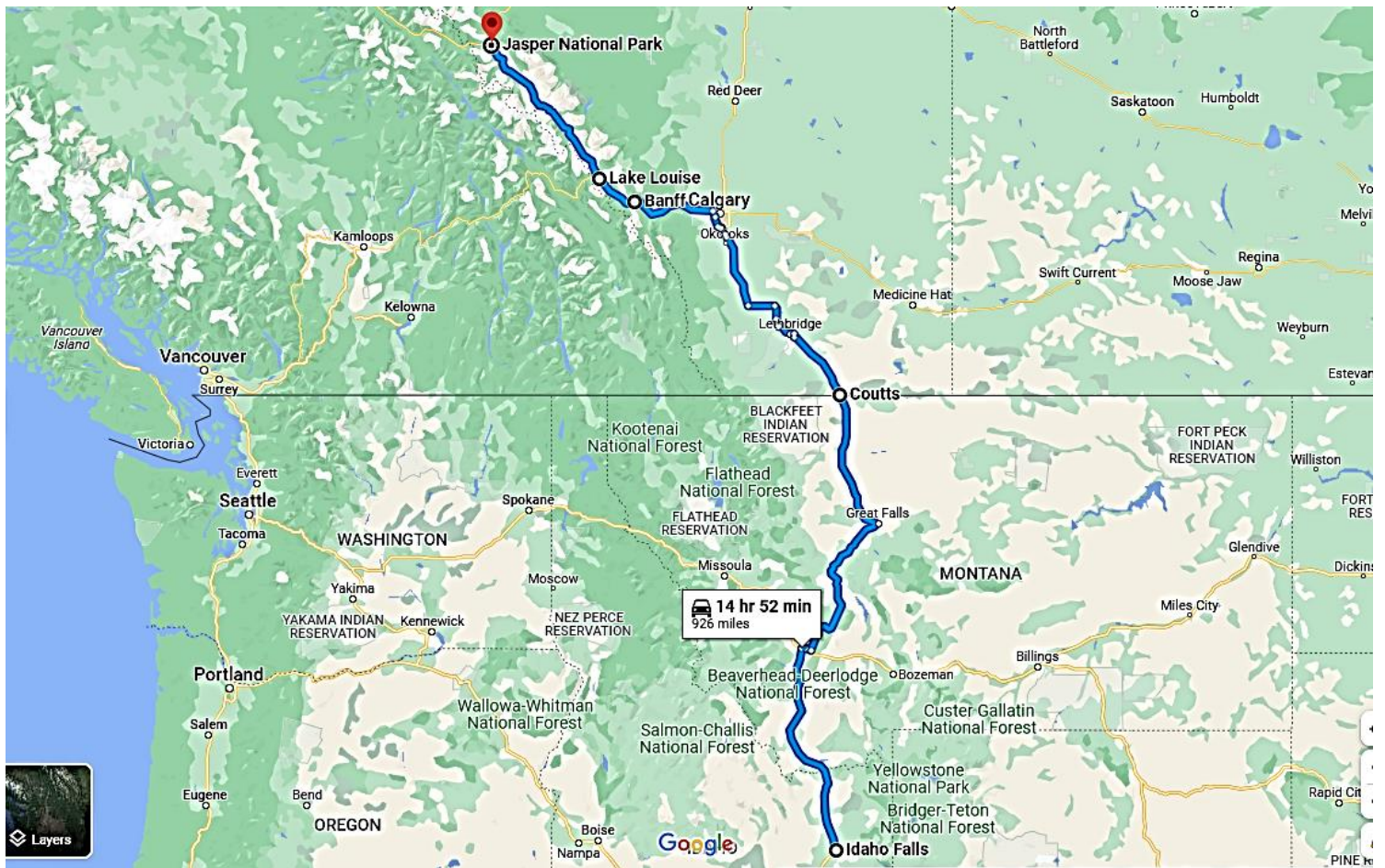
Here goes - - -

Shortly after I had become settled in eastern Idaho and, particularly, the Island Park region, I entered several long distance events of what was then known as The Great American Ski Chase at West Yellowstone. The race was sponsored by several national corporations and attracted the attention of certain foreign ski teams because of the region's reliable early snow, in addition to our own.

The first race was held in January in the early 1980's in blizzard conditions. Winds were gusting at least 35-40 m.p.h. I did the 25 km. event on the Rendezvous trail system and lost track of the trail up on the ridge south of town in the blizzard conditions. I managed to find the trail again and finish the race, receiving 2nd Place award in the 45-50 age group. Many of our local men and women whom I knew were in that race. We had a fairly tight-knit group of enthusiasts, both from within, and outside the newly organized patrol.

After that winter the races were moved to March to avoid the most severe weather. I had entered one other race the following year and came out No. 3 in my age group. I have a photo of that taken at the Finish. Former member and our first aid instructor, Marion Weitle, was in those races. She was a hardy outdoors person who was with us on canoe trips on various reaches of the North and South Forks of the Snake River.





In 1976, I traveled by Greyhound bus into Banff, Lake Louise and Jasper National Parks for a Christmas week ski trip. I traveled via Canadian Greyhound lines through the Coutts, Alberta border crossing carrying my wooden Splitkein skis, strapped onto the outside of the bus. It was a very dry, almost snowless winter both stateside and up through the Canadian prairie province of Alberta. After doing some cross-country skiing at Banff, we backtracked around through Calgary and on up to Edmonton, AB, as the inter-park highway was not open at the time. Despite the overall lack of snow, there was enough in Jasper to make it worthwhile.

The parks were full of college age young people who were there for some Christmas vacation. I was carrying only a day pack and enough for overall needs. Upon arrival in Jasper from along the Athabasca River, the provincial park headquarters were right next to the hotel. Upon checking in, I learned there was a tour leaving in ten minutes. I hopped up for my pack and we were off into the interior of the park. Most of the passengers were of college age and either had rented skis and poles or brought their own. When we reached the tour area, the park guide asked if there was anyone who had cross-country skiing experience.

I volunteered that I was a member of the Idaho Falls Nordic Ski Patrol in the state of Idaho, at which the guide asked if I would follow along behind the group to provide support and oversight of the skiers. The guide had hoped to see some moose, but we didn't see any at the time. Everyone seemed to be getting along well. The Canadians treated me well. At Banff, a young Canadian couple invited me to share breakfast with them at the Banff Springs hotel dining room. I had warmed up my skis on their large lawn area.

All temperature readings and mileage is in Celsius, as I learned later in traveling through the Yukon and British Columbia with a friend. Multiplying mileage by 0.6 will solve the issue for statesiders. The Canadian Rockies are distinctive with their sharply glaciated outlines. It is a vast country and the evidence of the Ice Age is evident nearly everywhere.

## **Ambassador's Cup Ski Race 1988, 1989, 1990**

Former Ambassador to Finland, Keith Nyborg, a local rancher whose family lived near Ashton, and who hosted the annual Mountain Man rendezvous for several years, developed the idea for a long distance ski race out of Ashton, Idaho. The first race was held February 11, 1988 and was sanctioned by the U.S. Ski Association and the Federation of International Skiing and drew 97 skiers for the Saturday event, starting from Route 32 at 9:00 a.m. and was 60 km (about 40 miles long). The route headed out across the farmland, circling around through the apron of mixed forest west of the Tetons and back into Ashton. Both the initial Saturday event and the rescheduled Monday race were interrupted by flash blizzards, the Monday event being canceled after six hours somewhere near the Aspen Acres Golf Course east of Route 47. Slower skiers were retrieved by race officials on snowmobiles and brought back into the high school at Ashton, where a delicious spaghetti and meatball dinner was awaiting them.

Members of the Idaho Falls Nordic Ski Patrol provided valuable support along the trail, as several faster skate skiers became disoriented by the blizzard conditions in more remote sections. A second race was held in 1989. Taking into consideration the logistics of the original races, the event was held for a final time at Harriman State Park. At this race, Bill Radtke and Evan Tibbott provided polka music with Bill's sound system for the finishers outside the Jones House Ski Hut. One tall lanky skier broke into a dance on skis as he approached the Finish line.

**Side note:** Patroller Evan Tibbott participated in the original 1988 race that was rescheduled for Monday. Toward the final stage of the course, Evan and a young Navy man had been skiing within sight of each other for several miles. The second blizzard hit them as they were leaving the forest area into the open farmland. By this time they were close enough to communicate by voice and decided not to continue into open whiteout conditions where they would have no point of reference. They found a log to sit on, hoping the blizzard would be short lived and they could continue on. About this time several race officials appeared on snowmobiles with word the race had been canceled once again and they were taken on in to Ashton for a delicious spaghetti and meatball dinner at the high school. On the way in the sun came back out. But the day ended well overall.

A month later during a meeting in Idaho Falls, the race organizer was present and sought him out. Evan was awarded First Place trophy as he would have been the first in his age division (55-60 years) to reach the Finish, had the race not been canceled. He had gone about 26 miles.

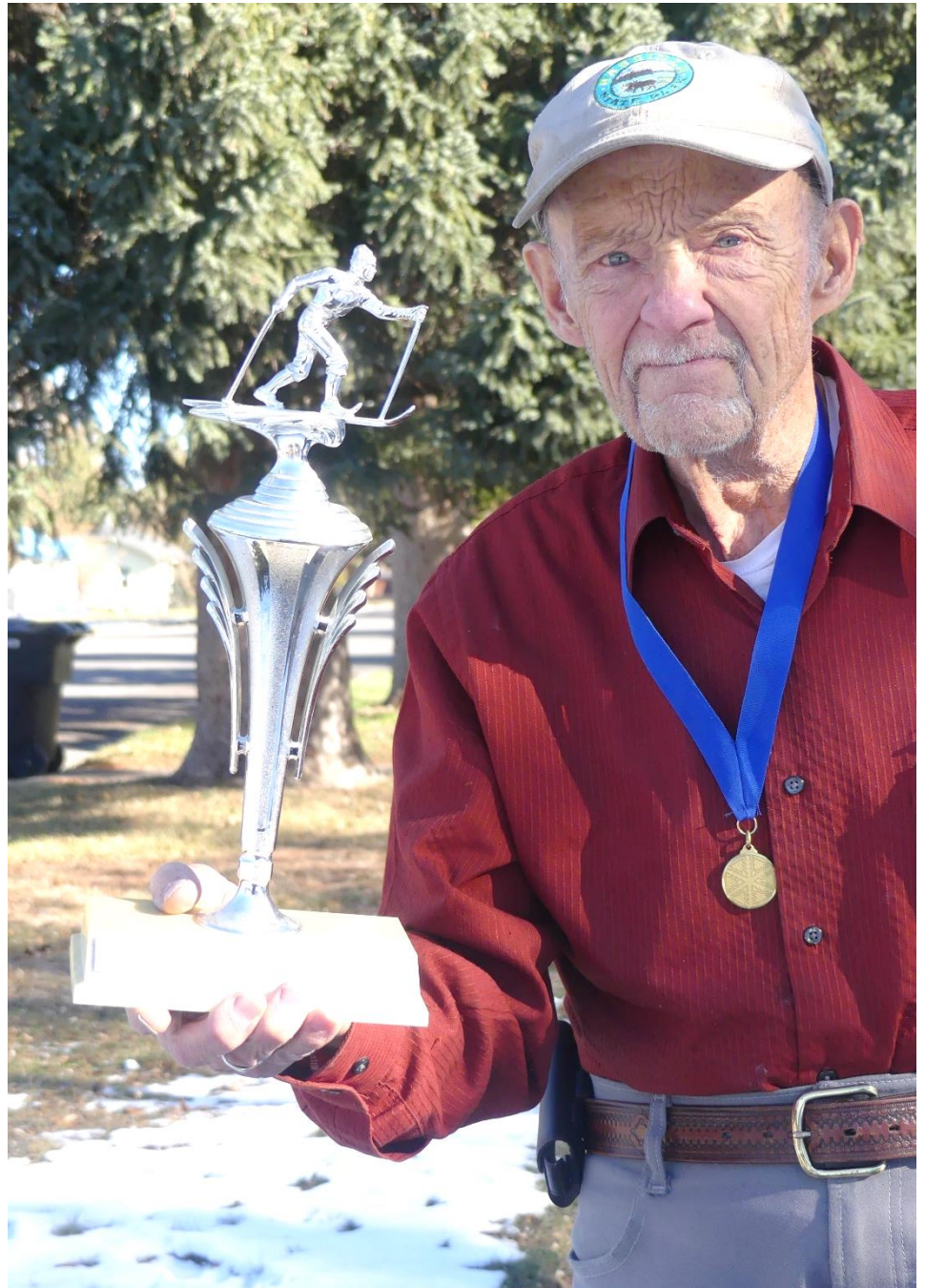
Due credit should be given to former patroller Bill Radtke with whom Evan had skied many times for emphasizing the importance of conserving energy when on extended skiing treks. An experienced mountaineer himself, Bill's sage advice paid off. The race is not all about winning, but the experience itself and the inner fulfillment of recreating in such superb back country and testing one's self under rigorous conditions where decisions have to be made. In the process, you meet the best of human kind.



The Ambassador's Cup International Ski Race  
February 13, 1988 Ashton, Idaho

**EVAN J. TIBBOTT**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place Men's Division, 55 - 59 Years**



THE AMBASSADOR'S CUP INTERNATIONAL SKI RACE  
FEBRUARY 13, 1988      EVAN J. TIBBOTT      ASHTON, IDAHO  
1st PLACE      MENS DIVISION      55-59 YEARS