

Charlotte Ski Club Attracts New Younger Members and Club Officers

By Pat Harvey

Charlotte Ski Club Past President and Crescent Ski Council President

The Charlotte Ski & Snowboard Club in Charlotte, North Carolina's efforts to attract younger members to the club have been very successful and at this time about 60% (or more) of our 200 members are new members and are younger skiers and snowboarders. The Club's current president is 29 years old and our vice president is 25, and our secretary and treasurer are in the 40- to 50-year-old range. We now have "guests" show up at our board meetings who are volunteering and getting involved.

Moving our membership meetings to a local brewery in Charlotte has been a really good attraction resulting in 40 and 50 people attending our meetings. The brewery is owned and managed by a skier, and he regularly publicizes our club and our events. We hold other events there as well, including our annual gear swap.

We've had various events that have been a definite pull for the younger and prospective members, including a "trampoline dodgeball" event. We schedule two showings of the latest Warren Miller movie annually which is held at a theatre in the center of Uptown Charlotte and

they're usually sellouts! Our club Facebook, Meetup, and Instagram pages are regularly updated with new posts and pictures and we are up to 553 "likes" on our Club's Facebook page alone. We have a lot of new and potential members finding us on Meetup and as a result, attending our events, meetings, signing up for our trips, and best of all, getting involved!

Some suggestions that are a plus to gain and retain younger new members: (1) the older members should reach out to the younger attendees and members at our meetings and on our trips and make them feel welcome; (2) snowboarders are a way of life -- especially among younger people -- and the clubs need to realize that and accept the boarders who are as much a part of the club and its future as the skiers; and (3) the on the other end of the age spectrum, the new younger members need to realize that they and the older members can work together. It can be done and it is being done. All of us started out as young skiers once upon a time. The next generation is just moving into where we once were and while doing so are bringing success to the continued existence of



Pat Harvey, President of the Crescent Ski Council.
Photo: NSCN.

our club. It can work; we've proved it!