

Viking Nordic in New Hands

By Jonathon Wiesel

Okay, that's a slight misrepresentation. **Viking Nordic** (802-824-3933) in Londonderry, Vermont, was bought about three years ago by a gent named Peter Foley, who lives in Colorado. You're reading about it here because I just heard the news and then had an intriguing conversation with Peter, who is a true snow lover. He began XC a few days after Bill Koch took the 30k silver medal at the 1976 Innsbruck Olympics. I remember that day because I was skiing with Kochie's former baby sitter, who went wild with excitement when she heard the news.

Peter and his wife used to live near Boston and would ski on made-made snow at **Weston Ski Track**. Then they moved to suburban Minneapolis, where Hennepin County provides you with lots of snowcat-groomed trail, lighting, and convenience. Now their three kids ski at **Eldora**, near Boulder. Along the way they visited a lot of XC centers and always had ideas on ways to perfect what they saw. Soooo - eventually Peter bought Viking with the intention of "making it the kind of place that people leave wanting to come back."

Viking is one of the oldest XC areas around and certainly one of the prettiest. I went to summer camp a stone's throw down the road, downhill skied at neighbor Bromley, and have always loved this part of southern Vermont, where by the way, they're having a dynamite winter.

It sounds as though the place hasn't changed a great deal with new (well, sort of "new") ownership. Dana and Malcolm McNair still manage the area, which has 35k of groomed trail, mostly winding through forest. Founded in 1970, there's a full-service ski shop (it's a Fischer Demo center), instruction, night skiing on Saturdays and holidays, and caf . They rent and sell pulks (kids' sleds).

Guests can rent the five-bedroom Guest House, a converted 1860s farm house, complete with kitchen, that can sleep up to nine. You get the whole place for \$400/night (two night minimum), which can include ski passes, night skiing, snowshoeing, and ice skating. Say hello to Dana and Malcolm for me, and my OnTheSnow.com editors Craig Altschul and Peggi Simmons, who once lived nearby and enjoyed the ski area.

About The Author

Jonathan Wiesel is a nordic guide, instructor, and ski area planner, who has written for over 120 magazines and newspapers on three continents. He wrote *Cross-Country Ski Vacations*, a guide to the great destinations of North America. He lives near Boulder, Colorado. For



Southern Vermont Cross Country Skiing