

The Chama Chile Ski Classic is proud to introduce its new Title Sponsor, The Lowe's Chama Valley Supermarket. We appreciate the support of Roger Lowe, Store Manager Robert, and the whole gang at our new beautiful Supermarket. We are pleased that the Ski Classic has grown from approximately 18 skiers in 2006 to 126 registrations this year! The 2008 Lowe's Chama Chile Ski Classic was held in perfect conditions with warm temperatures contributing to some very fast ski times.

In the 10K Ski, the UNM Lobos were well represented, taking nine of the top ten places overall. At 44-years-old, UNM Coach Fredrik Landstedt finished in 5th place overall. Even though the course skied a bit long, eleven skiers managed to break 40-minutes on the course, including Clay Mosley, from the Southwest Nordic Ski Club, who also groomed the course.

The 5K Ski was the more popular event with 43 skiers completing the course, many of whom were our own local citizens. Some impressive performances were seen by the Pagosan skiers: 14-year-old Evan Greer who finished in ninth place overall (38:17); Ed Furtaw, a brand new skier entered in his first ski race, finishing in 13th place overall (40:57); 72-year-old old Abby Linzie who broke one-hour on the course (57:50).

The 5K Snowshoe grew in popularity from seven entrants in 2008 to 24 entrants this year. Two Colorado runners battled it out, with 31-year-old JD Kurz edging out last year's winner, Greg Hartman. 56-year-old Robin Hale (in her first snowshoe race) finished ahead of a field of seven women in their 50s. Seventy-year-old Mary Middlebrook broke the one-hour barrier in the snowshoe.

Three competitors vied for the coveted "King of the Mountain" award. This event combines the 10K Ski with the 5K Snowshoe. Tarik Saleh, 36, placed first with a combined time of 1:34:47. George Ferland and Travis Dotson also competed in the event.

For the 3rd consecutive year, Team High Country won the team challenge in the 5K ski. Congratulations to Dave Burdette, Gayle Guerin and Che Johnston!

The Awards Ceremony hosted by Che and the Gang at High Country was the perfect way to cap off the races. The UNM skiers graciously removed themselves from the Awards so they were passed down to the "citizen" winners. Two very happy raffle winners each received a one-night-stay at the Spruce Hole Yurt compliments of Cumbres Nordic Adventures.

There were two examples of good sportsmanship demonstrated this year. 14-year-old Evan Greer was honored with a Good Samaritan Award for graciously offering his own ski pole to another skier whose pole had broken. Skier Amanda Wang inadvertently thought the ski race was "freestyle"; an honest mistake given that the race was opened up to "freestyle" for the 35th Anniversary last year, the first year that Amanda skied the "classic" (Note: A Golf "Classic" is not necessarily a "classical style" event. Amanda wrote a lovely note apologizing and removing her self from the "competition". The RDs

made the decision not to DQ Amanda since the oversight was partly ours; we never should have changed it last year. Everyone, please pass this on: The Lowe's Chama Chile Ski Classic is a "Classical 5K and 10K Ski Event For All Ages and Abilities".

And now for a glimpse into who makes these races happen:

Lowe's Chama Valley Supermarket: Our Title Sponsor who supported these races financially and donated product.

The Village of Chama, the Chama Lodgers Tax Board and High Country Horseman Association and KZRM Radio, who sponsored advertising costs for these events.

Dream Weaver Lodge and El Meson Lodge who donated rooms for the UNM Lobo Team.

High Country Restaurant who hosted the Race Registration and Awards Ceremony.

Skier Pat Hogan, our event photographer (photos will be available to download in a couple of days).

Taos Motors, LLC who sponsored the Chile Ristras for the Awards.

Chama Steam who sponsors our printing and mailing.

Cumbres Nordic Adventures who donated the Grand Raffle Prizes (overnight Yurt stays).

High Speed Wax, Inc. and Hammer Endurance Fuel who donated product for the skiers.

Our Course Groomers Bill Kuzar at Cumbres Adventure Tours, Soni and Will at G-Force Choppers and Clay Moseley and Dave Wykoff from the Southwest Nordic Ski Club who spent approximately 20-hours combined grooming and preparing the racecourse.

Our new co-race director, Lynette, who is especially talented with website management, became my right hand... she's a "keeper".

Our team of Volunteers: Khane and Che (from High Country) who decorated the warming hut with awesome igloos (Khane also timed the 5K); Donald and Roxanna Bayer (who timed the Snowshoe); Cathy Baer and forest service ranger, Kyle, timed the 10K; Jay Wimer who worked Registration; and all the volunteers from the Chama Valley Rotary Club who gave up their time to make this event successful.

Please mark your calendar for Sunday, January 17, for the 2010 Lowe's Chama Chile Ski Classic. Until then... "Let it Snow"!

Nancy Dervin, RD
Lynette Cannon, RD