

Virginia Meissner Background By Ron Hoyt

Virginia and her husband moved to Bend and started the first Nordic ski school at Mt. Bachelor in 1964. Prior to this, she had lived at Odell Lake and had been a ski instructor at the Willamette Pass ski area.

In 1965, Virginia became a Nordic Ski instructor at Central Oregon Community College and, over the next several years, offered many other special-interest classes. Wilderness survival, map and compass reading, winter snow camping, hiking for fitness, biking for fitness, and ball room dancing to name a few. Through these classes, many lasting friendships were formed.

The hiking classes included history of the area, plant and wildflower identification. So students learned about Central Oregon as well as getting exercise. The biking classes included bike safety, some bike maintenance, and how to ride for enjoyment. Virginia led bike tours in the San Juan Islands for three summers.

Virginia was a member of the Bike Committee which was instrumental in getting bike lanes in and around Bend.

Virginia was a Girl Scout leader for 35 years sharing her knowledge and skills with hundreds of girls in that time.

Virginia authored three books: Day Hikes in Central Oregon (1981), Cross Country Ski Tours in Central Oregon (1984), Hiking Central Oregon and Beyond (1987). All the books were self-published through Meissner Books.

Virginia served as president of the Central Oregon Nordic Club in 1987 and had been an active member of the club for many years.

Virginia was a top-notch ski instructor and tour guide. She introduced many Central Oregonians to the joys of cross-country skiing.

Virginia worked with the Forest Service in scouting and marking many of the cross-country ski trails in this area. This entailed many volunteer hours. She also worked with the Forest Service to get funding for new ski trails in the Ochoco National Forest.

Virginia was appointed to the snow-park committee, serving for several years. She worked very hard to get a snow park designated at the intersection of Tangent Road and Century Drive. The snow park was dedicated as the Virginia Meissner Sno-Park on November 11th, 1989.