

# Red River/Taos, New Mexico Ski Trip

by Roger Holzman, TC, and Patty Finch, ATC



Before the plane boarded on December 6th, we were all acquainted. One thing we didn't know was that MAX AMERY would be our comedian throughout the trip.

After landing in Albuquerque, we boarded a bus for our lodge while ATC PATTY FINCH distributed our goodies. It was also enough time for TC ROGER HOLZMAN to introduce those on their first ski trip: LISA THOMAS, BECKY MAITLAND, RON STROUP, JIM HEWETT, EVAN LOWE, SHANNON POWERS, PAT PIECH, KIM KUJAWA (first-time ever skier), MAX AND DIXIE AMERY, AND ROB BURTON. CLAIRE FINN is an old-timer on ski trips, but this was her first time to ski NM. The most improved skier was definitely DEBORAH CHRISTIE. The most determined skier was Claire Finn, and best instructor was Rob Burton. Always-happiest skier was LARRY CHRISTIE, with a toss up between Max and Evan as the craziest skiers.

We arrived at the Riverside Lodge and discovered the huge common kitchen that we'd use throughout the trip. It was not only a hangout, but a great place to cook breakfast, dinners and have parties. The 103-year old lodge was beautiful and very rustic, with hand-built furniture.

The first day of skiing, the group met in the common kitchen to devour more of Patty's goodies before heading to the slopes. Snowfall had been limited so only the Beginner slopes, one Green and one Blue slope were open. No one complained, though, as we passed each other on the ski lifts or flew down the slopes on man-made snow. Most of us skied all days available since there were no lift lines and wide-open slopes. Shannon had to have her "Latte fix" each morning before joining the race clinic. CHRISTINE MARCH adopted a snowboard while BOB WRAY often checked on her. Dixie shopped the town. Sunday, Wally drove Patty, CAROLYN MCGINNIS, ANN ODEGARD, the Amerys, Kim and Lisa to Taos for a day of touring and shopping.

Many met after skiing at the Lifthouse for drinks and to compare bumps and bruises, but we usually couldn't hang out for long, for many other activities were planned: Wally Dobbs hosted a Welcome Party at the lodge one night, complete with Capo's Italian Restaurant pizza and cheese sticks. While we sat

around the tables, Wally regaled his many interesting tales about the history of Red River, our lodge, and his life experiences. The next night a Wine & Cheese Party was held in our honor at the Lifthouse and it was a perfect night to watch the torch light parade coming down the mountain. Roger and Patty thrilled us all when they cooked a lavish dinner for the group! Deborah and Larry Christie along with Ann and Roger danced the tango that they learned on last year's Argentina trip! It was then that Ann made the comment, "I expect so much more of my zippers." Ann blushes beautifully.

The partiers in the bunch kept the stories rolling: The first night, the Bull in the Woods Saloon was invaded. A blues band provided dancing opportunities for Lisa, Kim, Carolyn, Ann, Jim, Pat, and Roger. Evan was in the group and needed an extra push to the dance floor. The following night the Mother Lode Saloon welcomed the group where many locals joined in. Max rescued Kim from one of them. All the ladies made sure Jim had little time off the dance floor.

Monday, we were to ski Taos, but the resort was closed due to lack of snow. That didn't stop OUR fun. There was snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, shopping, and relaxing available. The real thrill was the wilderness hike! Wally, Frank (from Capo's) and Drew Judychi, (ski resort owner), drove us to the La Junta Wilderness Area for an experience of a lifetime. The highlight was standing at the crossroads of the Rio Grande River and the Red River. After a picnic, we climbed back up the 800 foot mountainside and hiked back on a narrow trail. The day of the hike, like all the other days, was filled with beautiful, royal blue skies, crisp clean air, and lots of sun.

We received word that Pat's father was ailing so she had to leave Sunday. Claire received word that her father was critical, so she and Rob rushed back to Houston to be by his side. We were all saddened to hear of the passing of Claire's father, and our sincere sympathy goes to her and her family in their loss.

Overall, the trip was great! The people were great! We shared many laughs, a few drinks, a little dancing, a round or so of pool, and a heck of a lot of skiing! As we left the Houston airport headed home, I heard someone say, "I think I just made new friends for life." Yep, that about sums it up.







*No Snow? No Problem! The LaJunta Wilderness Hike at Taos was an experience of a lifetime!*



*Skiing At Red River*

