

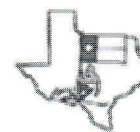


The Sitzmarke

SPACE CITY SKI CLUB

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WHISTLER/BLACKCOMB MOUNTAIN

By Cindy Moore

A few weeks before we took off to Whistler, some of our trip participants were worried about the snow conditions, so we started to monitor it. This has not been a good year for Whistler. They didn't have a good base, and there hadn't been much recent snow. It was recommended to download from mid-mountain rather than ski down. We even had someone drop from the trip the week prior, and Rita Tucker Wright eagerly grabbed the spot. That same day, it started snowing. Rita, and the rest of us, BELIEVED!

The trip got off to a late start as our Continental flight left one hour late. We arrived at the beautiful Vancouver airport only to wait over an hour to get through the Customs line. Then the fun began as we played a little game called "find your luggage". We were told our bags would be on a certain carousel, but when many of us looked for them there, and on the floor around it, our bags weren't there! About a half-hour later Mike Mason, Cindy Moore, Ron Hayes, Judy Schiro, Leona Schroeder and others finally located their luggage on the floor beside a different carousel. Finally, we left the airport and enjoyed a scenic, narrated drive to Whistler. We stopped for food at an IGA in Squamish and ultimately arrived 3 hours later than planned.

ATC Cindy, with help from Chuck Ratliff and Rick Jaeger, got the Easter dinner underway and finished stuffing the Easter eggs, while TC Leona made a mad dash to the liquor store with the help of Manolo Valle, Susan and Al Austin. The full turkey and ham dinner was served an hour later and the adult Easter egg hunt commenced. Twenty-six prizes were won by trip participants after matching a clue in a found egg to a trip participant. Thank you to Sun & Ski Clear Lake and Sun & Ski Westheimer for donating several great prizes! Also, thank you to Whistler for donating many nice items.

The next day was Easter Sunday and many went to various churches that were on the list Mike Mason put together. Many went skiing, reporting the snow wasn't bad mid-mountain and above; but the visibility was poor. Many got a free circular tour of Whistler after they discovered the hard way, that one had to catch bus number 5 if one wanted to get to our condos! Later in the week Mimi and Mark Markel, TC Leona and Penny Howell missed après ski, trading it for the joy of that circular bus tour yet again!

The next day, after a terrific breakfast in Leona's condo cooked by Penny Howell, Ute and Phil Cezeaux, and Leona, we discovered that the visibility was still a



Whistler's Party Animals

challenge. Have you ever skied THROUGH a real cloud? It is quite exciting, and a bit scary, when you can't see 5-feet ahead of you, and you know the skier or snowboarder coming down from above can't see you either. Thank God the visibility got substantially better—and then it started snowing! The change in snow was amazing. At the top of both mountains, you found the most perfect, soft powder. But, down towards mid-mountain, you suddenly hit snow much like "mashed potatoes," which felt more like water-skiing. After what we had heard about the snow conditions, we were just happy to HAVE snow!

Unfortunately, we had two injuries. Alice Allbritton hurt her leg on Tuesday and made a welcome appearance at the big dinner party at Buffalo Bill's on Thursday. Tor Lileng was her "crutch buddy" teaching her the finer points on crutch movement as he nursed his re-injured leg. He told me that although he had just hurt it on his last ski trip, he figured, since he danced okay the week before, he could ski on this trip! Well, Tor gets the award for "best party animal", never missing an après ski gathering and always being the last to leave all parties. He even danced with Cindy on two nights! That is quite a feat to dance with crutches!

The salmon and chicken buffet feast at Buffalo Bill's was well received. After dinner, the DJ played swing and two-step music. Chuck tried to teach

(See Whistler/Blackcomb Mountain Continued on page 2)

Whistler/Blackcomb Mountain *(Continued from page 1)*

Janet McKenzie these dances. Janet said she had difficulty remembering her left foot from her right foot despite all of Chuck's repeated efforts. She had less difficulty maneuvering down the trails with moguls than dancing as it didn't matter whether she skied to the left or the right of a mogul! Carmen Mikhail was also seen cutting the rug with Chuck. Harry Melnick only got in one day of skiing before receiving a call that his mother-in-law expired and he had to head back to Houston. Our sympathies to Harry's wife.

The final party on Thursday was followed by the final, final party on Friday night, in which we finished leftovers and lots of wine in Leona's condo. After that, some of us retired to the outdoor hot tub, too.

It was snowing hard Saturday as our bus departed. Whistler employees said it was the best snow they had experienced all season! I told them SCSC seems to bring snow wherever they go. They should pay US for visiting!



WHISTLER - Toast to the Good Life



WHISTLER - Art in Ice



I am so excited about next year's trips. I have been busy working on getting TCs and ATCs plus initial arrangements for all the trips. It has been hectic.

All the trips are special, but I want to mention a few great things to look forward to:

- Bring your children (grandchildren?) to Keystone at Thanksgiving for the Youth Camp. For only \$152, they can have 4 days of lessons, lifts, rentals and lunch. Normally this package costs \$502.
- Finland/Stockholm will be a truly exotic and unique trip. We will be spending 5 days in Levi (see the northern lights, take a snowmobile ride to a husky farm or feast on reindeer) and 2 days in Stockholm (one of my favorite cities, where the beauty always astounds me).
- Big White/Kelowna brings the best of British Columbia skiing and fabulous wineries to the same trip. Again the trip will be split with 5 nights in Big White and 2 nights in Kelowna. Plus, we hope to offer a short trip that leaves Wednesday, returning Sunday, and staying in Kelowna the whole time.

I thought it might be worthwhile to mention some of the issues we find when trying to put together trips for 30 to 80 people. I know that most of you prefer to fly Continental, and that is normally the first call that is made. However, we sometimes find that Continental's prices are much higher. For instance, to fly to Denver, Continental quoted a price of \$455. United quoted us prices ranging from \$198 to \$209. Obvious choice – United.

This year, we are looking at a club trip to Aspen. Continental does not fly to Aspen, so we called United. The round trip price quoted for the dates requested was \$696. So we looked at flying to Eagle/Vail and bussing to Aspen (much closer than bussing from Denver). American gave us a price of \$418 but the flight times are not ideal. Continental won't sell us anything but a first class seat at this time.

Another example - We are looking at a club trip to Snowbird/Utah. Continental quoted a price of over \$700.

It goes on and on. But experience tells me that you keep working it, calling airlines and tour operators and eventually we have a fabulous trip. Of course, not all are happy with the flight times, not using Continental or long bus rides. Arranging travel for a group is not as easy as your trip for two or four. But where else can you be with 50 of your closest friends? I find it is worth it.

TO BE CONTINUED...



"Take Me Out to the Ball Game" CHEER FOR THE ASTROS

Cost \$35.00 per person

Houston Astros vs. New York Mets

Sunday, July 31st at 1:05 p.m.

Field Box Seats * Join other SCSC members for a great Sunday afternoon

AC: Penny Chancey (713) 686-4863 pschancey@msn.com

RENEW YOUR SCSC MEMBERSHIP ONLINE

Renew your membership online. Pay your dues with a credit card utilizing PayPal and take advantage of multi-year membership discounts. And its secure, no one within SCSC will ever see or know a members credit card information. The dues for multi-year memberships in SCSC for 2005/6 will be as follows:

SINGLE MEMBERSHIP

	Renew Before 5/31	Renew After 5/31
1-year	\$30	\$35
3-year	\$81	\$86
5-year	\$125	\$130

DUAL MEMBERSHIP

	Renew Before 5/31	Renew After 5/31
1-year	\$50	\$55
3-year	\$135	\$140
5-year	\$210	\$215

For the 3-year membership, your membership will expire on 4/30/2008.

For the 5-year membership, your membership will expire on 4/30/2010.

To renew your membership online, follow these simple steps:

1. Go to the club website www.spacecityskiclub.org
2. Click on "MY SCSC"
3. Enter Username and Password (If you do not yet have either set-up, please follow on-line instructions to get a username and password.)
4. Click on "Update my membership profile"
5. Click on renewal button at bottom of profile.
6. Click on which type of membership renewal you wish to do (1-year, 3-year or 5-year).
7. At this point you will be taken automatically to the Pay Pal secure website to arrange payment. Verify your information and follow their directions. When finished you will be returned to the SCSC website where you can update your profile. You will also receive some payment verifications via e-mail.

Please note that the 3- and 5-year discounted memberships can only be obtained online through the SCSC website. Single year memberships can be done either online or by the check and completed application procedure that has been used in past years.