

Snowmass

by Beth Wood

I would like to begin the article with a special note to **Fred Straube**, from all of us on the trip. We wish you the best as you grow stronger everyday and recover from surgery. We are all thankful you will once again have the opportunity to ski. A special thanks goes out to the two cardiologists from Albuquerque and the two cardiovascular nurses from Houston that became Fred's guardian angels.



We arrived in Snowmass on Saturday with time to unpack and see the sights of Aspen. With a few problems on condos, **Leona and Neal Pleasant, Fran Spitzberg, and Harold Kaminsky** were well taken care of with a little Texan hospitality. **Kevin Foster**, who had been seen the previous week in Park City and didn't get enough skiing, joined us in Snowmass. He was gracious enough to also escort **Lotty and Karl Gautschi**, who had also been in Park City. On Sunday, we hit the mountains, skiing like crazy. Space City Ski Club is known throughout many resorts for their great members and activities, but we left our mark with Snowmass in bringing with this the best week of snow they had seen all season. It snowed each day 6-8", except for Thursday a total of 17" was recorded. **Charles Allen and Todd Buxton** took advantage of skiing at Aspen Highlands. The week before they were skiing the rocks. Monday, we celebrated a number of birthdays for members on the trip, with dinner at the Hard Rock Café in Aspen. Those in celebration were **Irma Rosendahl, Harry Gaston, Merlyn Harger, Walter Hester, Ray Naudain...** What a way to

celebrate another year, but to start it off in Aspen (We toasted **Fran Spitzberg & Stephanie Klimas** also). On Tuesday, more skiing and snow was to be had. **Ralph Lojo, Fran Spitzberg, Harold Kaminsky, Howard Schoenike, Barbara Giescke, Jennifer Schreck, and Beth Wood** paid a visit to Buttermilk Mountain. With only about 150 people on the mountain, they had most runs to themselves. Others chose to ski Aspen Mountain and truly fell in love. They claim the snow and conditions were better, but we believe it had to do with exclusions of snowboarders on the mountain (nothing personal **Jamie and Walter**). **Chuck Gore, Stephanie Howell, Wayne Kanak, Theresa Tanchak, Greg Conary, Carl Vos, and John Stoner** were seen checking their skis there at the end of the day, so they could return. That evening for **Apré ski** the Silvertree Hotel and Aspen Village Property Management hosted the club for a wonderful happy hour: beer, wine and hot munchies were included. Several members made it in for the treats, **Mike Birowski, Diane Jamail, Ray Naudain, Hartley Chelin, Cathy Phillips, The Gealy family** (who gave it a shot to

land in Aspen, but ended up bussing from Denver), and **Al and Stephanie Klimas** (who flew in just for the occasion and a little skiing also). Later that evening **Kayleen Kill, John Rice, Ralph Lojo, Lila Davis, Irma Rosendahl, Leslie Adams, Steve Ellsberry, Al and Stephanie Klimas, Wayne Kanak, Theresa Tanchak, Greg Conary, Lynne and Walter Hester, Howard Schoenike, Mary Ann Harrell,**

Eric Prentis, Skip Lang, Dale Allbitton, Tom Hogle, Patti Richards, Chuck Gore, Kevin Foster, Jennifer Schreck, Beth Wood, Stephanie Howell, Ron Noska, and Mike Gerstenberger headed out for the dinner sleigh ride at Gracie's cabin. We were provided entertainment by a father and daughter duo, along with a few unnamed club members who enjoyed singing along. **Tom Hogle and Patti Richards** showed everyone how the two-step was done - rather well I might add. The highlight of the evening came after we almost lost **Mary Ann Harrell**, who was heard yelling at **Eric Prentis** to pull her back on to the sleigh after falling due to the bumpy ride back. **Eric** found her dangling off the edge and yanked her back to her seat and told her to stay put and no more checking out the underside of the sleigh. The most eventful part of the evening seemed to be the team of horses which was hooked to the bus to pull it out of the snow, so we could return safely to the condos. In essence, we received two sleigh rides. **Mike Gerstenberger** seemed to be well entertained by this. Wednesday, was another great day for skiing. However, a few of us chose to take a snowmobile trip



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through Independence Pass. Ask **Jennifer Schreck** how much a new windshield costs. She has become an expert on snowmobile spare parts. Thank goodness the snow snakes grabbed her and pulled her into the powder before the snowmobile disappeared off the edge. **Skip Lang** offered his shoulder for her to cry on. All things considered we had a great time, even though we didn't dare ask **MOOSE** to have a drink when it was all over. **Stephanie Howell** and **Beth Wood** became known for their power shopping. **Chuck Gore's** head was left spinning when they managed to buy an entire outfit in less than 8 seconds. Possibly this should be a new event in the Houston Rodeo. Thursday morning we woke to the most snow that the area had seen in quite awhile. They actually received 17" that day. The NASTAR races were cancelled due to safety, because of the storm, not because they had actually seen the Space City Ski Club members on the mountain skiing. However, the picnic was a great success. Some of our members chose to join the Cardiology group - it was told they had better food. **Mitch Gaspard** finally finished his trial and was able to get away and join us for a great day of skiing. He was seen looking like a large icicle traveling down the mountain. **Carl Vos**, **John Stoner**, **Jamie Grana**, and **Al Klimas** had an opportunity to revive a portion of the Magnificent Seven from Steamboat. Although it was short lived, the guys had a great time learning a few pointers from **Al** and tearing up the mountain. After a full week of cross-country skiing by **Irma**

Friday brought beautiful ski weather for our last day of skiing. That evening we had a wonderful Apre Ski at the Stonebridge Inn. Many were in attendance, but a few



didn't make it trying to get in that last run on the mountain. We stayed on for dinner, with desert to follow at Jennifer and Beth's condo for a final hoorah. Thanks to **Lotty Gautschi** and **Leona Pleasant** for helping with the coffee and desserts. The next morning came very early with a 5:00 a.m. bus arrival. Unfortunately, the bus had trouble with the driveway due to icy conditions and we slide carefully down to it. Everyone slept for the majority of the trip home. **Jon Welkey** can share with any club members on what not to throw away from your airline ticket information.

Rosendahl and Lila Davis, **Lila** decided to check out the orthopedic doctors in Aspen. She took a spill on the ice near the bus stop at the cross-country ski area and had to have surgery due to a break in her leg. We wish her well and hope she continues to have a full recovery.

You may not board at DFW with only a boarding pass and not your ticket. He was mistaken at one point for a DFW maintenance employee as he was seen desperately digging in the trash can in an attempt to recover his ticket. Even though the tarmac was pulling away from the plane, he made the jump and left with us for Houston. **Mike Gerstenberger** and **Ron Noska** were seen every evening at a club in Aspen called Shooter's - looking for cowgirls to dance with. **Charles Allen** was noted for his great dancing techniques and lessons there, while **David Rafes**, **Todd Buxton** and **Mike Birowski** took careful notes. **Sandra & Ed Brockhausen**, **Brenda Peavy** and **Connie Smith** were seen on the bus to and from Eagle/Vail. We hope they enjoyed their trip also.

Special thanks go to **Barbara Giescke** from Beth, Steph and Jenn for putting up with us for an entire week. We're not sure how she survived, but was seen popping cold medicine for her sinus infection on a regular basis. Hope you are feeling better.

Joe Hale sent accolades to his condo mates: **Harry Gaston**, **Jon Welkey**, and **Mike Wolfe** for putting up with him and making this another trip to remember.

A special thanks goes out to **Mike Wolfe** and his wife **Becky** for hosting the post-trip party and to **Jennifer Schreck** who served as the ATC of the trip. **Jennifer** did a great job coordinating the parties and keeping my sanity inline. Thanks for all of your help and support.

