

PURGATORY

by Mike Montgomery



We had one hell of a – no it was a heavenly – no, it was a half way in-between ski trip to Purgatory. I don't remember many details about it; however, that won't preclude me from making up stories about everyone. Everyone but me of course.

We all arrived at the airport bright eyed and bushy tailed – well, at least everyone arrived. While Continental isn't my favorite airlines, we were able to resolve an overbooking problem and include **Mitch Gaspard** (alias the Hat man) on the trip. We may have been better off to have left the Hat man stay in Houston.

An exciting event of the trip was the two passes the pilot had to make to attempt to land in Albuquerque. The fog was low and we circled for awhile before we were cleared to try and land. And we do mean try. We aborted about 50 feet above the ground. The third try was the charm; we landed to loud applause and cheers. Several of the **Bomberger** clan from Virginia were less fortunate. American Airlines had mechanical problems in Virginia, which kept them from making the bus ride to Purgatory. Speaking of the bus ride, it was long and boring as usual.

Well, maybe the bus ride wasn't so bad, after all. The TC, **Cheryl DeWitt** and her children, (11 year old twins), **Steven** and **Dana Kummins**, had worked hard to prepare us all "made to order" gourmet sandwiches and great chocolate chips and raisin oatmeal cookies, washed down by plenty to drink. Since this was a family trip, we will not admit to

consuming anything stronger than Kool-Aid. The highlight of the bus trip was a Road Rally along the way, led by ATC, **Mike Montgomery**. The TC and ATC had gone on a FAM Trip several weeks before and developed a rally of easy and hard clues to find various signs,

markers, and objects along the way. Because the plane was late getting in, the bus ride was completed in the dark and only a few die-hards played the game to the end. Although it was dark, that did not preclude **Bill Bomberger** from winning first place – that guy must have cat eyes. Winners



were awarded prizes at the Tuesday night Pizza Party. Actually, **Bill** barely beat out the team of **Steven Teoh** and **Jon Montgomery**. Coming in, close on the winners heels, were the third and fourth teams, **Judy Mensinger** and **Bob Dyer**, and **Carolyn Rolsten** and **Tom Cowper**.

Marsha Shainwald turned in one correct answer and finished last – but at least she tried. **Marsha** had about the same luck trying to talk someone into fathering her child – **Mitch** refused, but only because of the legal liability factor. Besides, he

doesn't need another tax deduction. Just ask **David Bemish**, **Mitch's** Little Brother. He was overheard to ask for a receipt in the ski shop, "Because I am a tax deduction for my Big Brother."

After a quick stop at **Albertson's** in **Durango**, we arrived at the condos around 9:00 P.M. There was snow everywhere so everyone was pretty excited to see the sun the next day...and see it, we did. The day was beautiful and we had fresh powder. What could be better? If you wanted to find **Mark** and **David Sager**, just look somewhere on the slopes. They spent every minute they could up there having a great time. The first day out, **Aaron Pyle** hurt his shoulder boarding, and the last day he jammed his thumb...but nothing stopped him. He said he had a great time and the new snow board park was "awesome." That goes for **Jon Montgomery**, too. He spent all his time on the board and is looking forward to the next family ski trip.

Monday night was the night of the Sleigh Ride and dinner. Several, including **Judy Mensinger**, **Bob Dyer**, **Aaron** and **Pam Pyle**, **Cheryl DeWitt**, **Dana** and **Steven Kummins** braved the cold and had a great time. The night was perfect and the food delicious.

That same night **James**, **Betty**, and **Susan Bomberger**, **Katie Foote**, **Steve** and **Jacqueline Teoh**, and **Emily Montgomery** were entertained in the hot tub outside by **Mitch's** incantation to the Snow Gods for snow. It snowed all day Wednesday and Thursday. He is convinced he saved the trip. The kids were impressed with



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the seriousness of his incantation but the rest of us knew it was a load of horse hocky. **Mark and David Sager, Steve Teoh,** several of the **Bomberger** clan, **Mike Montgomery** and **Nora Corke** spent some time in the Jacuzzi, where some more "adult issue" Kool-Aid was consumed. We can assure you that those who were immersed in the hot tub are still germ free. The chlorine ruined several swimsuits and burned eyes. However, the chlorine wasn't too strong for **David Bemish, Aaron Pyle, Wes and Brad Dyar** (*our second set of twins, 18 years old and the oldest "kids" on our trip*). They were still able to goggle eye those girls in the pool (*thank goodness, the girls were from another group*). We left before the show began, but we understand that they all went for a dip, although there wasn't a bathing suit among them. Is that true, boys? Can you explain, in detail, what happened?

Tuesday night everyone gathered at the Pizza Party, where along with the great pizza, **Cheryl** produced some more homemade goodies – chocolate and caramel brownies one would kill for. A good time was had by everyone, and as mentioned before, the Road Rally awards were passed out. **Cheryl** took all the booze (*oops, Kool-Aid*) back to her condo so anyone could come and help themselves whenever the DT's hit – or whenever they were thirsty.

Wednesday it snowed and everyone was on the slopes. Ask **Cheryl, Tom Cowper, Steven** and **Dana Kummins** how many times everyone fell on the Gelande Dead End. The story seems to change drastically, depending on whose version you are hearing. How-ever, the

consensus is that **Dana** might hold the record for falls. **Dana**, is this when you decided to try snow boarding? We understand "Board Rules" and you may never ski again. On the other hand, **Tom** seems to hold the record for the worst fall when he skied over some ice, fell down and took a beautiful (*yet not so graceful*) fall, and rolled down the mountain. We understand that was a sight to behold. What do you say, **Tom**? **John Hollister** was on the slopes that day - maybe he can collaborate someone's story – anyone's – can you, **John**?

This may have been the same day a fellow by the name of **Bill** took his niece, **Lauren Lindley** up the hill; his plan began to unravel, when she had him ski over the gravel. It will be a long time before **Lauren** is taken up the hill by Uncle **Bill** again.

We had what we came for – a White Christmas. **Melinda** and **Peter Coulter** wish to thank the **Bomberger's** and **Tom Cowper** for arranging for a special visit from Santa for **Caitlin** (5) and **Cameron** (3) - the youngest children on our trip – although maybe not the youngest acting. The **Bomberger's** and **Tom** delivered a wonderful inflatable Santa on Christmas morning to the sheer delight of the children.

Also on Christmas morning, **Cliff Aymes** was testing his fire alarm while cooking eggs - but that doesn't explain why **Mike Montgomery's** fire alarm went off when **Joyce Keppinger** visited him BEFORE breakfast. What happened, **Joyce**? Can you explain the smoke? Can you also explain why **Melinda Coulter** spent more time walking and sliding down the blue runs than skiing them? We understand that you and **Peter Coulter** had something to do with that but we aren't sure what. It sounds like **Joyce** has a lot of 'splaining to do.



Following is a Christmas Story by **Mitch**: "Once upon a Christmas day, a petite, young lady, **Susan Goucher** (*alias The Man "Hater"*) sweet talked a true Southern Gentlemen, **Mitch Gaspard**, down a run named Gelande Dead End, whereupon **Gaspard** proceeded to launch himself and loose all contact with spatial reality and entered the Twilight Zone. Upon re-entry, who should appear up-mountain but Santa Clause, himself. Santa, with great courage, skill and kindness, picked up **Gaspard's** skis half-way up the mountain, skied down and gave him the best Christmas present **Gaspard** could ever have wished for. And as Santa turned to ski down the run, he was heard to say, "Ho Ho Ho". What is a dumb-ass idiot like you doing on a Double Black Diamond anyway?"

Christmas night several on the trip enjoyed a wonderful, buffet dinner at the restaurant at the condos. This is a five-star restaurant and as far as we know, everyone was pleased with their meal. They must have been since they grazed for hours.

Friday was the big day – RACE DAY. **Bill** kept everyone in suspense until the bus ride home. Everyone was curious, but ole "closed mouth" wouldn't even give a hint. However, overheard Friday night, after the races: "What does it take to be a really good skier? One who can compete with great zest and zeal?" "Plenty of sleep, plenty of booze, and no sex." No wonder you finally won a medal, **Bill Bomberger**. No one could figure out why he was so secretive.

While some were racing, **Fran Margolis** pampered herself at the Pergosa Hot Springs, while her future husband, **Lou Kleinman**, and his friend **Cliff Aymes**

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Cliff Aymes spent another day on the slopes. When they go to ski – they ski. This was just one of many ski trips that Lou takes each year – that’s the life of an attorney.

Everyday Mitch entertained us with a different hat – each day getting more bizarre than the other, climaxing with his prized “Chicken Hat.” He said if you think his hats are bizarre, you should see his Mardi Gras costumes.

Someone on the trip has had several lessons, both in Colorado and New Mexico and you would think she could at least navigate a beginner green without a face plant or yard sale by now; however, turning is important — or at least snow plowing to stop is. You may want to ask Nora Corke what kind of superlatives she says after a wipe out.

Friday night Mitch led a group, including Steve and Jacqueline Teoh, Emily Montgomery, Marsha Shainwald, Bill Bomberger, David Bemish, Mark and David Sager, Joyce Keppinger, Tom Cowper, Susan Gaucher, John Hollister, and Carolyn Rolsten into Durango for dinner at Gaspchos and shopping. After dinner the group learned the sidewalks roll up early and missed out on shopping. Nonetheless, they all had a good time and were glad they could spend some time in the quaint little town of Durango.

As you know, all good things must come to and end. We boarded the bus on Saturday morning headed back to Albuquerque. Lo and behold, there were still some of Cheryl’s goodies left which everyone enjoyed. If anyone didn’t gain weight on this trip, it was not Cheryl’s fault.

Bill Bomberger announced the results of the race and awards were passed out: Participation: **Jim Bomberger**. Green: **Steve Kummins** and **Steven Teoh**. Blue: **Bradley Dyar**, **Mitch Gaspard**, **John Hollister**, **Julie Lindley**, and **Jacqueline Teoh**. Black: **David Bemish**, **Susan Bomberger**, and **Susan Gaucher**. A gold medal

went to **Peter Coulter**; Silver to **Bill Bomberger** and **Cheryl DeWitt**. Bronze medals went to **Clifford Aymes**, **John Bomberger**, and **Lou Kleinman**. Our overall medal winners for the men were **Peter Coulter** (*First place*) and **Clifford Aymes** (*2nd*). The medals went to our outstanding women, **Cheryl DeWitt** (*First*), **Susan Bomberger** (*Second*), and **Jacqueline Teoh** (*who is only 12 years old but placed Third*). Looks like we have another great competitor to help SCSC bring home the gold. NOW WE KNOW WHY BILL WASN’T TALKING.

Thanks to **David Bemish** for being our “Trash Monitor” on the bus ride back. He must have made a dozen or more trips up and down the aisle gathering everyone’s discards. Mitch shared some of his hats with **Jacqueline Teoh** and **Caitlin Coulter**, but no one was allowed to touch that Chicken Hat – nor the Armadillo Hat which he kept in a bag (*the smell alone said something*). When **Wes Dyar** wasn’t being our “Howard Sterns wanna-be,” he and his brother **Brad** and **David Bemish** were reading **Emily Montgomery’s** young girl’s magazine. Now none of them know if they are heterosexual or something else. The test did not go well for any of them.

Congratulations to **Fran Margolis** and **Lou Kleinman**, **Judy Mensinger**, and **Bob Dyar**, **Nora Corke** and **Mike Montgomery** on their upcoming marriages. Does this have anything to do with this being a family ski trip?

A good time was had by all. Special thanks to **Cheryl DeWitt** for her hard work arranging a great trip for everyone to enjoy.