

# CRESTED BUTTE 2020 TRIP REPORT

by Linda Erdman, Trip Coordinator

The fun started with a pre-trip party at Jax Grill on the same day as the Texans versus the Chiefs playoff game. Everyone was in high spirits as we watched the Texans score 3 touchdowns in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. Unfortunately for the Texans, there were 3 more quarters to play. Fortunately for us, the party was over well before the game ended.



A little over a month later, we were headed to Crested Butte for the TSC Winter Shootout. Kasia Rezmer was so excited that she got to the airport 4 hours before the flight and Dave Stotz and Janet McKenzie weren't far behind her.

Yours truly, TC Linda Erdman, along with ATC LaDaune Ashley and her other half, Derek Shoobridge, tried their best to keep the group informed of United's multiple terminal and gate changes. After sending everyone from C to B and finally A, they found out that bags couldn't be checked at A so some club members, including new member Lidia Mayforth, ending up rushing back to B to check their bags.

Also on the direct flight to Gunnison, Colorado were Rita Cardenas and Robert Rowley, Andy and Leslie Cashio, Nancy DuFrane, Kat and Ken Feaster, Ed Freiter, Jim Hodges and Marina Wang, Maria and Keith Koterak, Linda Kuper, Daniel Kuper, George Lopez and Camille LaRoe, Marsha Lutz, Sue Muenks, Bob Reidenbach, Paul and Sandra Stolnacke, Marda Waters, Mike and Stephanie Willis, and Laura Zavala.



Since this was a TSC trip, we weren't surprised to find some of our old friends from the Clear Lake Ski Club on the flight with

us. One of the great things about TSC trips is running into old friends and making new friends from other Texas clubs.

After a short shuttle ride from Gunnison, we made it to the Plaza condos at Mt. Crested Butte and caught up with Craig Campbell, Sam and Sandra Cornelius,



Keith Kirkman, and Laurent Muller, all of whom made the trip by car, and Dan LeMay and Susan Williams who flew in from Tulsa, Oklahoma. Bill Bomberger and Sharon Simandl, along with Renata Jurczak, arrived later that evening with Renata coming in from Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. Ross and Diane Baker made it in on Sunday and Ann Rogers arrived on Monday to bring our final count to 45.

Joining us for the Winter Shootout were members of the Dallas Ski Club, Lone Star Skiers (also a Dallas club), Los Amigos (San Antonio) and Texas Twisters (Lubbock). Nothing like having 130+ Texans invade your community for a week.

Less than 2 weeks before the trip, Stan Kuper had to cancel and his son, Daniel Kuper, took his place, causing some quick condo reassignments. The switch worked out well for Daniel and Linda but not so well for Derek Shoobridge, LaDaune Ashley and I. We ended up with their condo which had furniture made for giants. LaDaune had to find a ladder to climb into bed which lead to a lot of laughing and some pretty funny sounds coming from their room.



There were a few issues with the condos involving leaky ceilings (just ask Marsha Lutz and Janet McKenzie) and bunk beds but kudos to the Plaza for handling things quickly and efficiently. Special thanks to Kat Loughan, the front office manager, for all her behind the scenes help while we were at the Plaza.

Cheryl Slaughter, the TSC trip coordinator, did a great job of organizing TSC events for the week. There was a TSC Welcome Party on Sunday evening with representatives from the tour operator and the resort available to answer questions and provide information about the resort and optional activities.



On Tuesday evening, Cheryl organized a scavenger hunt/pub crawl in town. Wednesday was TSC race day and there was also an après ski at the base and Thursday evening was the TSC Farewell Banquet and Awards Ceremony.

As a club, we had daily suggested lunch and après ski meeting places that were all well attended. Many in the group turned après ski into dinner instead of cooking or venturing into town. One of our favorite places ended up being the Iron Horse Tap on the lobby level of the Plaza because it was so convenient.



In between the organized activities, there were plenty of opportunities to try out the restaurants in town and do a little



shopping and/or sightseeing on Elk Avenue. The town of Crested Butte is just a 10-minute shuttle ride from the mountain and is extremely pedestrian friendly.

Because we were staying in condos and it was really cold outside, several in the group opted to stay in and cook for their condo-mates which was a good deal if you could get it. Kat Feaster, Stephanie Willis and Bob Reidenbach also spent 4 nights working on a 500-piece jigsaw puzzle with results to be revealed at a later date.

The lift lines were short to non-existent which was great news for us. Most of the runs were groomed daily and we only had a couple of days of really cold weather followed by almost perfect weather. The biggest problem many of us had was with the altitude. Coming from Houston to an altitude of over 9,000 feet at the base was rough to say the least. There was a lot of huffing and puffing going on, especially walking from the condos to the lifts.

Even with the cold weather and high altitude, yellow Space City flags were seen all over the mountain with almost everyone in the group skiing at least 4 days and many skiing 6 days. All agreed that Crested Butte is a great ski mountain.



The resort offered free daily mountain tours as well as discounted lessons which many in the group took advantage of. Because the resort wasn't crowded, many of the group lessons turned out to be private lessons, including Marina Wang's snowboard lesson.

Monday was one of the coldest days with snow and low visibility so many in the group waited until the sun made its appearance to hit the slopes. Others, like Daniel Kuper, decided it was a good day to sleep in. Still





others decided it was a good day to go into town, including Sue Muenks, Sharon Simandl and Marda Waters.

On “Fat Tuesday”, the town held a Mardi Gras parade and Marsha Lutz, Camille LaRoe and George Lopez were able to secure spots on a balcony and watch the parade for free which never happens in Galveston or New Orleans. The fact that it has been described as the world’s shortest parade at just about 5 minutes (don’t blink or you’ll miss it) may have been a factor. After the parade, they joined Craig Campbell, Dan LeMay and Susan Williams for the TSC scavenger hunt/pub crawl, managed to hit all 3 bars and find the ship, the Texas flag and the treasure chest to come home winners. Marsha was excited that she won a mini bottle of rum from the local distillery.



The races were held on Buckley trail on Wednesday morning. The day started out cold but was beautiful by race time. There were

a total of 51 racers from the 6 clubs. Space City started out with 12 racers but Ed Freiter injured his ribs on his first run of the week (discussed later) and Dave Stotz had an eye issue which he swears was caused by following Keith Kirkman. That left LaDaune Ashley, Craig Campbell, Andy Cashio, Leslie Cashio, Sandra Cornelius, Nancy DuFrane, George Lopez, Kasia Rezmer, Derek Shooobridge and Paul Stolnacke. All racers finished standing up which is a good thing in itself. Sue Muenks was in charge of filming Nancy as she raced (be sure to ask Nancy about her “up close and personal” encounter with the pole at the exit to the race course).



At the TSC Farewell Banquet on Thursday, Space City was awarded 2nd Place in Division I for the Winter Shootout. In the individual categories, Nancy DuFrane won a gold and Sandra Cornelius won a silver, both in the 45-59 female bracket, and Andy Cashio won a bronze in the 70-79 male category.



The winner of the “Show Me Your Texan” contest at the banquet was our friend Jeff Wright of Clear Lake. He came dressed as “ZZ Top” and really blew the competition out of the water.



After the awards and medals, it was time for some dancing. Ed Freiter and Renata Jurczak tore up the dance floor, along with Derek Shooobridge and LaDaune Ashley, Dan LeMay

Williams, Jim Hodges and Marina Wang, and Keith Kirkman and Renata (yes, the same Renata...she likes to dance).

On Friday night, Space City held its own private "Taco Tuesday" and Awards Dinner in the Plaza conference room which was great because we didn't have to dress for the cold... some even wore slippers to the party. After a week of bundling up, it was nice to stay inside. We had a really good crowd, with only Daniel Kuper and Mike and Stephanie Willis not being able to make it.

Everyone seemed to have a good time visiting and telling stories. We found out that Maria Koteras and Laura Zavala met the mayor of Mount Crested Butte who lived in Galveston until 2008 after Hurricane Ike.

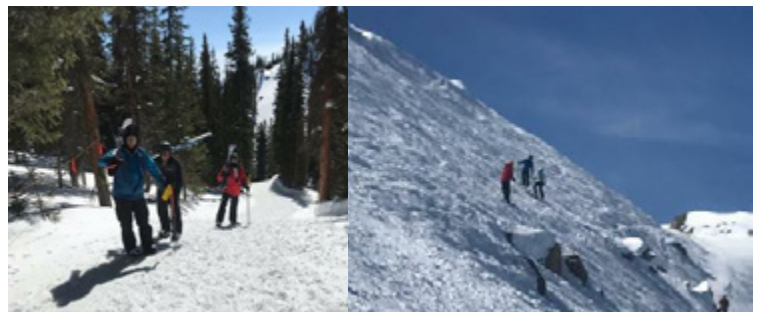


We also found out that George Lopez had a misadventure involving his street shoes. He skied demos and left his shoes at the shop. When he returned, he put on what he thought were his shoes until, two days later, he noticed that he had a mismatched pair. His missing shoe was never returned to the shop.

Space City's club racing medals were handed out after dinner and, based on points, Sandra Cornelius and Nancy DuFrane won gold, Andy Cashio, Leslie Cashio, Kasia Rezmer and Paul Stolnacke won silver and Craig Campbell won bronze. Nancy couldn't contain her excitement at winning both a TSC and a club medal and rushed back to her condo to get her TSC gold medal so she could have her photo taken with both medals. Andy wasn't able to wear his 3<sup>rd</sup> Place TSC medal to the dinner because it was wet from the shower. It is rumored that he also slept in it.



Back to skiing...As usual, Trail Boss Keith Kirkman and the other "Big Dogs" on the trip (Ross Baker, Diane Baker, Bill Bomberger, Ed Freiter, Jim Hodges, Dan LeMay, Renata Jurczak, Kasia Rezmer and Susan Williams) skied the blacks and double blacks and were the only ones that ventured into the Extreme Terrain that Crested Butte is famous for.



Ed proceeded to fall on his first run on Sunday and bruise his ribs (nothing broken) which slowed him down for the week and kept him from racing. He did manage to make it through half of the day-long Extreme Mountain Tour on Monday with Keith, Bill, Jim and Renata. Apparently, there was a treacherous track to ski before they even got to the extreme ski runs which were, according to Bill, indeed extreme and steep. I'll have to take his word for it.

Keith was later assessed a beer fine by Bill, Jim, Renata and Ed for taking the group on a short 20-foot hike to get to Bakery Glades. Turns out that after 20 feet, they could ski 10 yards to climb another 20 feet, ski 10 yards to climb 10 more feet and finally reach the top only to find no defined ski trail.

On the final day of the trip, Keith, Bill, Ed and Renata got the courage to venture into unexplored Teocalli Bowl and beat the official walk-out time of 15 minutes by 3 minutes!!!

LaDaune Ashley and I caught up with Sandra Stolnacke on Monday and she led us onto an ungroomed run where I proceeded to lose a ski. A run that should have taken about 30 seconds ended being a comedy of errors and taking at least 30 minutes as LaDaune took off her skis and tried to help me get my ski back on. We finally decided to walk down at which time my ski clicked into the binding and I headed down, not

realizing that now LaDaune couldn't get her skis back on. Eventually some good Samaritans and a liftie helped us and we were finally back on our way. No more following Sandra!!!

Tuesday morning, Nancy's new boyfriend "Joe", the Director of Activities (what activities you may ask), lead her and a few others, including Sue Muenks and Janet McKenzie, around the mountain.

Robert Rowley reported with great pride that Rita Cardenas had an incredible run down Mineral Point when everything came together for her as she made each turn perfectly and was totally lost in the moment.

Beginner skier Lidia Mayforth was nervous about some of the runs so Laurent Muller scouted them for her and let her know which ones he thought she could ski. What a nice thing to do!

All in all, everyone seemed to have a good time and made it home safe and sound, hopefully with a lot of good memories and maybe a new friend or two.

LaDaune and I would like to thank everyone that went on the trip with us as you are what made the trip fun and memorable. We were hoping to see those of you who live in Houston at the post-trip party but COVID-19 had other ideas so I guess we'll all just hit the pause button for a while.