

Arriving at the airport at 5:45 am is a real eye opener. Everybody was wide awake and rearing to go to Banff. As usual, there has to be one person that arrives at the last minute. We had the perfect husband and wife team show up at the last minute, **John Gay** dropped **Becky Reitz** off at the front of the airport to check in all of their luggage while he parked the car. What team work!! After arriving in Banff, our group was checking through customs along with a group of 63 from England. All was fine until we found out that they would be checking into the same hotel at the same time as our group of 42. Imagine 3 buses unloading all of our baggage at one time. All went well until our trip leader **Sandy Hoffman** realized that her boot bag was missing. She last saw it at the airport according to the latest missing luggage report. The trip was now officially started. **Harry Melnick** has a unique way of telling jokes, but be warned not to ask him about #17, something about tennis elbow, #27 about a French man, and definitely not the \$64,000 question. Harry, being Polish, had a hard time remembering all of his jokes so he had to number them. All of Banff felt a little like Northern Exposure with the Elk and Moose wandering through the town.

Now it is time to get to the important facts about the real reason for the trip, Skiing. **Richard Dinwiddie** had a suspicious ski injury until we uncovered all of the details. Richard managed to get a toboggan ride down the mountain because of a broken ski binding?? Further investigation at the hot tub later revealed that the ski patroller was a knock out and that he became infatuated with her. On the lift at Sunshine Village, the ride can be a long one with a mid-point station for loading and unloading. **Ann Odegard, Jean Dowell, Charlotte Lynn, and Bill Clifford** startled 2 strangers on the lift by holding a fire drill at the midpoint and getting back on the lift. One of the most unique ski runs at Lake Louise is one called the rock gardens. It is not the easiest run to get too, but it is worth the trip. **Merlyn Harger** will have to explain about the 'Boulder Babes' that played follow the leader through the rocks. At the bottom of this run, there was a remarkable dip that claimed many a skier during the day, you had to be on your toes, literally.

One of our ski groups was the Mogul Mashers consisting of **Mary Kay Kitchens, Robert Knupp, Alan Brown, Harry Melnick, and Bill Bomberger**. This group managed to tear up the slopes. There was not a mogul left un-mashed on the 4 mountains. **Phil Maersch** was the "hill hugging, chair clutching, poma jumping, slope sliding member of the team. Every time that he had a spectacular crash, he tried to knock **Bill Bomberger** off of the mountain every time. On time he crashed twice on one fall. Phil, you are supposed to wait for us to return your skis and poles before diving down the mountain a second time.

Another special group was **Janet Arentzen, Tess Ong, and Karen Richards, "The Novices"**. They spent an equal amount of time on their skis as they did putting them back on. I was amazed that they continually got back up and continued their skiing. **Tess Ong**, while being a member of this group, had an interesting encounter with a snow boarder on the mountain. Was it really an accident?

Tom Hogle and Dale Albritton wanted more adventure than just skiing all over the mountains. They decided to become the Senior Citizens of Snow Boarding. Just watching them demonstrate all of the different moves required to master this thing called Snow Boarding made our whole group hurt. Next season they may be on the look out for proper "Shredder Clothing" which includes knee pads and butt protectors.

On the day that most of the group went snowmobiling, **Robert Knupp, Bill Bomberger, and Phil Maersch** made a day trip to Norquay. Robert and Bill just had to mess with the lift operators mind that day on the North American Lift. As you approach this lift, the signs all read expert only, no beginners allowed, double black diamond only. So with all of this information, Robert and Bill had to ask the lift operator as they stumbled their way onto the chair lift, where was the green run at the top. The lift operators eyes became the size of silver dollars, and blurted out that there were no green runs on this lift. So they told him that they would check with the operator at the top of the mountain. Evidently they scared the lift operator so badly, that he called the top of the mountain to warn them that these 2 crazy skiers were coming. After arriving at the top, about 3 of the workers at the top came out of nowhere to see if



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they were serious about a green run. Believe them when they say there are no green runs on the mountain.

The afternoon snowmobiling and dog sledding group definitely were not going to be outdone! They stopped at every liquor store on the return snowmobile trip!

Sarah faked a wrist injury to ride behind the guide "Boy Toy" Brad. The women were complaining about Whiplash in 2 delicate spots. Jean Dowell tried setting a record for flipping a snowmobile 3 times and is permanently banned from receiving a Canadian Drivers License. Charlotte Lynn claimed that she pulled her shoulder during the ride and the kisses by the dogs more than made up for the pain.

David Richards is hoping that when they find the "little black box" that the crash that he took will be proven to be mechanical failure and not pilot error.

Some of our after hours activities were just as fun as the skiing. Concietta Ruggerio was nicknamed "The Countess" after constantly quizzing the wait staff at all restaurants regarding the preparation of margaritas and all of the dinner specials. This usually resulted in extending dinner by 30 minutes. Tess Ong after several days looked like she belonged on the Dallas Cowboys Super Bowl team. She had bruises on both knees and a jammed thumb. Evidently her thumb hurt so much that she fell asleep holding a glass of ice water to help the pain. Just imagine what happened next when she rolled over in her sleep. All of the women that went to the Rose and Crown club loved it. There never were any lines in the women's restroom. Maybe because the men outnumber the women by about 10 to 1. Sarah Granbery and Sandy Hoffman need to explain about this "Tropical Fruit Fixation" that was occurring throughout the trip.

Our awards party on Friday night had a visit from some very helpful Hotel Staff. These special hotel staff members were Andre and Francois (alias Tom Hogle and Dale Albritton), two wild and crazy guys. The entire group were kept in stitches for an hour. Laughing was never better. After the visit by this special staff, Mary Ann Pierce, Harry Melnick, and Susan Wicker seemed to notice that their beds had become remarkably shorter via a very impressive session of short sheeting.



Special Awards:

Ski Patrol Tester - Annette Baker

Lumberjack Award - Ann Odegard

Snow Snake Award - Karen Richards

Garage Sale Award - Tess Ong; Dick Dinwiddie runner-up

Yard Sale Award - Phil Maersch

Shop Till You Drop Award - Christie Burke & Helen Harger

Ski Instructor - Merlin Harger (ask Merlin, Tom, and Dale how to get on a lift?)

Money Tender - Janet Arentzen

The plane flight back to Dallas was a memorable one for most of the passengers on the plane. Part of our group, Becky Reitz, Mary Ann Pierce, Ann Odegard, and Bobby Proctor were the life of the party. Most of their lively entertainment cannot be repeated or in this case published. After we arrived in Dallas, the airlines was offering a free nights stay and a travel voucher for \$250 because of over booking the flight to Houston. Even after we got back on the plane, they started offering a \$350 voucher to stay. We had several members take the airlines up on their offer for the nights stay. Just before we left 2 of our members got back on the plane and got to keep their vouchers. Keep these 2 clear of Las Vegas with their luck at gambling. After arriving in Houston, some more of us should have stayed in Dallas with our luggage. It did not arrive in Houston until Sunday Morning.

