



Liftline

The Official Newsletter of the Garden State Ski Club

THE PREZ SEZ.....

By Dennis Young

As I write today, it is with great sadness; I believe this ski season is over. It was quite apparent as I rode past Bear Mountain and saw our winter wonderland rushing down the mountain side into the river. But even so, I had a good run and hope you all did as well! Hopefully you took advantage of the bus trips, week-long trips or just a weekend at the Vermont Lodge. I would like to thank Lionel, our Ski VP, and all the committees under him for a great season. Now it is time for our spring and summer activities to gear up.

Increasing membership has always been a goal of mine. A couple of years ago, our membership was going down. Quorum levels had to be changed in order to conduct club business. Last year at this time, you, the membership, passed a By-Laws change regarding membership. I am pleased to say that our membership is back on an upward trend. I do attribute this to the "easing" of the membership requirements. As I enjoy working with numbers, I gathered some statistics from Club directories from 1993 to the present. Here is something to "ponder over with your morning bagel". (Kas, can I use that line?)

	Total Membership	Regular	Provisional
1993	429	315	114
1994	398	331	67
1995	413	311	102
1996	419	320	99
1997	476	375	101
1998	438	372	66
1999	475	399	76
2000	473	408	65
2001	443	383	60
2002	383	362	21
2003	399	373	26
2004	421	385	36
3/23/04	434	396	38

Hope this didn't bore you too much. I think you would agree that things are looking up. As you can see, people are not remaining as provisional members as long as they did in years past and are moving more quickly to regular membership. I would like to thank Sue Amdur-Coburn, membership chairperson, for a great job she has done with the membership committee.

The GSSC News Letter is one year old! I know from your comments that this has been very well received. I feel that this has brought more members out to our meetings and gives more useful information about Club activities than the Hot Line alone.

For the most up-to-date information, please check out the GSSC website at www.gardenstateskiclub.com. For any last minute trip cancellations, call the GSSC hotline at 973-478-8722.

See you at a GSSC function soon.

Dennis



Happy skiers from Carol Alesso's trip to Andorra
Photo by Dennis Young

Did you know?

Andorra has no rail lines or major airports. The only access is by road from France or Spain. Regular bus service to Andorra is available in Barcelona.

Read Lisa Gordon's Andorra trip report on Page 3.

Sugarloaf Trip (El Cheapo)

Sun-2/1/04 thru Fri 2/6/04

By Ron Lichtman

There is so much to do at Sugarloaf, both indoors and out (and so little time).

We arrived on a Sunny Sunday and were blessed with sunny weather for our first ski days.

Our happy group of 34 were in various size condos ranging from a studio to one with five bedrooms.

A group dinner on Wed. evening introduced us to the best London Broil ever. Thank you Maureen Lent for putting together a sensational evening.

Out of 5 1/2 ski days we had 3 1/2 perfect days. One day was windy enough so that lifts closed at midday and only a Sno-Cat (holding 20) was going up and down the mountain for a while. That day also turned out great. Sugarloaf gave replacement vouchers for those who stopped skiing, which are good for a year at ski areas, which include Killington.

Some of us then went cross-country skiing. It turns out that Sugarloaf not only has great downhill skiing but great cross-country trails as well. The lift tickets are good at the cross-country ski area as well as the downhill areas making El Cheapo even more of a terrific value.

The terrain at Sugarloaf is varied and provides great skiing for all ability levels from beginner to expert. The area also has a fun terrain park for kids of all ages.

The ski school at Sugarloaf is top-notch. We had daily lessons from a group of very dedicated teachers who teach all ability levels. Even Lou Cizek, our PSIA (Professional Ski Instructor) skier enjoyed them.

The health club was a great way to stretch those tight muscles after a day on the slopes. A very nice pool, indoor and outdoor hot tubs and a well-equipped gym were available for our use. There were also racquetball courts, although I was not aware of anyone in our group wanting to play after a day on the slopes.

On Monday night we had a welcome party, which was followed by a group dinner in one of the nice restaurants at Sugarloaf.

In summary – Sugarloaf is a great ski area, and an incredible value.

Wayne's Trip to Jackson Hole

By Helen Weisgal

Wayne's trip to Jackson Hole, Wyoming was *first class*. The hotel accommodations at the Best Western, "Bears" were superb! (It is nicknamed "Bears" because there are carved bears everywhere — climbing poles, holding up benches and even on balconies looking in some of the bedroom windows.) Not only were there two hot tubs, one indoors and one outdoors, but there was an indoor/outdoor swimming pool so one could swim out into the falling snow. There was a refrigerator in each room and bathrobes for each guest. Needless to say, many GSSC members were seen wandering the halls in their white, fluffy bathrobes.

Jackson Hole skiing was, as expected, lots of challenging terrain along with some more forgiving slopes for those who preferred to cruise. The ski school offered group lessons for \$90 for a full day, with only four in a group. The classes started at 10:00 AM and ended at 4 or 4:30 PM, depending on the group. But, regardless of the number in the group, a lesson is still all day. As an example, if there are nine skiers in a particular level and there are two groups of four who want to be together, then an instructor will go out with the one remaining skier - even if he is old enough to be her father and she is young and beautiful. That resulted in a ridiculous S _ _ _ eating grin on his face all day — the sun glare off his teeth was very annoying to the rest of us. That silly grin can last several days at the mere suggestion of a lesson.

Many of us had the opportunity to ski Grand Targhee, known for its powder skiing –the real talcum-like thing –not the heavy cement "powder" of the East. When you fall, it's just plain old fluffy - no hard pack, no digging skis out – but watch out for what appears to be bumps- they are usually just mounds of fluff - planting a pole in it to turn doesn't work - the pole sinks in and you just end up on you're A _ _ fast. Some Garden State skiers found powder skiing absolutely terrific. One, in particular, discovered that if she buckled her boots tighter it made a world of difference in her technique. Now, she only has to be careful not to ski in powder that's too deep—for her it could present a visibility and breathing problem – unless she attaches a snorkle to her goggles.

The bus trip from Grand Targhee back to Jackson was NOT uneventful. On the way back our bus blew a head gasket and we could go no further. The good part about the break down (yes, there was a good part) was that there was a conveniently located rest area where the driver could pull off the road. The reason the rest area was at that location was because it was at the border of Idaho and Wyoming. One side of the road had a sign that read, "Welcome to Idaho" and across the road the sign read, "Welcome to Wyoming." Being typical GSSC members, always looking for a good time, we gathered for photographs in front of the signs – with the help of a nice stranger loaded with everyone's cameras – a good time was had by all (fortunately, it wasn't a very long time).

ANDORRA, BARCELONA, PARIS

By Lisa Gordon

Those who took a day off from skiing had the opportunity to go to Yellowstone National Park and ride on individual snowmobiles to see Old Faithful and the hot springs. Of course, not without some glitch, which resulted in the newly engaged couple having to double up on one snowmobile. Do you really think that was a mechanical malfunction or a planned event? Others took a sleigh ride to the elk preserve. Those of us who rode a town shuttle with the school kids were surprised to see three moose in town and of course we had to point at them. The kids probably thought — “*tourists*,” (No S_ _ _!).

Jackson Hole ski area closes on April 4th, no matter how much snow they have, because it is part of the Grand Teton National Park and it is in the path of the annual elk migration. Can't they just shuttle them around the ski area? I mean how difficult could it be to give a herd of elk a ride?

The trip ended much too soon, as usual. On the Saturday we left there was a blizzard. The road beyond the turn off to the airport was closed. Those people don't fool around, when they close a road they do it with actual metal gates across the road.

Because the runway at Jackson is very short (approximately ½ the length of the usual runway), if there are strong headwinds a fully loaded plane cannot take off. Therefore, a plea went out from the airline for passengers to give up their seats in exchange for a free round trip ticket anywhere in the US for anyone who did so and possibly an extra night in Jackson. Several people volunteered, BUT, apparently they needed one more person to get off the plane. An announcement was made — “*I need one more person to get off this plane or we will not take off. We need to make weight to take off and clear the mountains.*”

I don't know about you, but I was thinking that the one more person better weigh 300 lbs. But, nooo, they were asking for someone named Mary to join her friends in the airport. Mary weighed about 130 lbs. I'm thinking if 130 lbs is going to make the difference, maybe the pilot should rethink the entire thing about taking off. My next thought was- Oh my God! I'm wearing thin shoes — my warm after-ski boots are in my luggage — if we crash my feet will be cold! What will I do? — (mind you- no thought I would die — remember the Argentinian soccer team? — who would be dinner?) Well, someone finally got off — I think he weighed more than 180 lbs — Ah safe!

Well, we all got home safely. No ski injuries. Lots of fun memories — some new friends. Can't wait 'till next year.

Well, again Carol Alesso outdid herself with our fantastic trip, even offering three options: Andorra-Barcelona, Andorra-Barcelona-Paris, or Barcelona-Paris. There were no major snafus, the weather was just about perfect, and no one broke any bones (flu and intestinal problems, yes.) There were many highlights and memorable episodes, most captured on film or digital chip, which we will get to view at our upcoming ‘picture party’. Carol had the group so well trained that we were all pretty much on time for our departures and events. We all had our fleeces and red noses (compliments of John and Mary Knierim.)

Andorra is a small principality (almost twice the size of Washington, DC) nestled between France and Spain in the Pyrenees. Catalan is the dominant language, but most people speak Spanish, French, and a little English, as well. Amparo and Marta were greatly appreciated as translators both in Andorra and Barcelona. There were 50 of us (41 skiers, 9 non-skiers) staying at a wonderful 5 star hotel located across the street from The Ice Palace, a large sports center and a short walk to the gondola which connected to several surrounding mountains; some even skied into France!

We broke up into groups of 5 to 9, each with a guide, for the first two days, then formed our own groups on the third day. Bob R. gave Elaine and Barbara a lesson this day - poor Barbara fell off the “magic carpet” lift on the bunny hill! The trails were wide, open (very few trees) and very well marked. It was a bit crusty the first day, but great after that and no crowds.

The second day we met the non-skiers for lunch at a sun-drenched, outdoor restaurant deck with picnic tables and beach chairs..... heaven! Our group used the Ice Palace two nights, one for ice skating (Elaine was the most fun to watch) and the other for go-cart racing on ice. I only watched the first heat; Tom G. was so funny wearing his red nose and waving to the crowd each lap!

There wasn't much to do in our town, Canillo, so several people took the local bus into the capital city of Andorra la Vella, where there were many shops and a spectacular spa/thermal center named Caldea, a HUGE futuristic looking glass spired building. Just about all of us took the excursion to Carcassonne, France, a 2500 year old restored walled medieval town still fully inhabited (since 1997 a UNESCO World Heritage site.) Because of its strategic location above the Aude River it was at the center of many military and religious conflicts. The movie “Robin Hood” with Kevin Costner was filmed here. A fascinating place to visit.

On our last day in Andorra the skiers were supposed to go to a favorite local mountain, but most of the lifts were closed because of high winds. They went to another area which turned out to be a bust, also because of high winds and mediocre trails. Most of them had a very long lunch. The rest of us had a tour of the countryside and a few sites before being dropped off in the capital city. Rob S. and I had a very leisurely lunch (2 ½ hours!) at a place recommended by Matt, our tour guide. Half the group showed up at the same place. YUMMY!

On to Barcelona.....

After a 3 ½ hour bus ride we arrived at our centrally located hotel in Barcelona where we were greeted by Bob, Denise, Lillian, Judy, Maureen, and Charles who had arrived the previous day. Most of us hit the ground, running. We were concerned that the bombing two days earlier in Madrid might have had repercussions for us, but it turned out OK. There were many peace demonstrations, candlelight vigils in the plazas, and, for those whose rooms faced the street, loud banging of pots and pans into the wee hours.

Barcelona was a cosmopolitan city and easy to get around. It was funny bumping into a contingent of our group at 'The Very Cheap' store, a version of our \$1 stores, a short walk from our hotel (great buys on bottled water and snacks.) The next day we had a fabulous, informative four hour tour of the city with our handsome Catalan guide, Frank. What an influence architect Antoni Gaudi had on this city: the Temple de la Sagrada Familia, the Park Guell, La Pedrera, and other buildings. We also saw the site of the '92 summer Olympic stadium at Montjuic. What a view of the city from this area.

Some of the sights within walking distance of our hotel were Barcelona's Port and Mediterranean Sea, Gothic Cathedral, Music Palace, Picasso Museum and the Rambla - a long, wide pedestrian pathway flanked by traffic lanes and lined with shops, vendors, and street entertainers. It was fun just poking around narrow cobblestone streets, although Earl and Maureen foiled a mugger who tried to grab her bag - frightening!

Tuesday, 4:30 AM we were on our way to the airport to fly to Paris where half the group caught their connecting flight home, while the rest of us began our three day visit with a guided bus tour of the city before checking in to our hotel (near the Opera.) The weather was unseasonably warm and sunny, trees were blooming, and there were beautiful flowers all over! While I was unpacking Robbie and John F. opened my door with their room key....surprise! After they straightened THAT out with reception, we hung out together for the day.

I was their novice guide because they had never been to Paris, and I had visited last spring and had a tentative itinerary of sites to see. We each bought a three day Visitor's Pass which entitled us to unlimited access to the metro, buses, and trains within the city.

Took the metro to the Louvre where the outdoor fountains and huge glass pyramid are attractions themselves. Strolled through the Tuileries Gardens to the Place de la Concorde, continued on to the Champs Elysees before hopping onto a bus where we sat all the way to the Arc de Triomph, where twelve avenues branch out like spokes on a wheel. Walked through the underpass to the Arc where we saw the eternal flame burning for France's Unknown Soldier, commemorating the dead from WWI. From there we took a bus to the Trocadero where the view of the Eiffel Tower is spectacular. We stood on a terrace looking down over 25 acres of gardens and fountains, toward the Seine, across the bridge to the Tower.

Made our way down to the Tower (several from our group made it to the top) and stared up from the base...over 1000 feet. Walked to the Seine to grab a bite at a restaurant barge to wait for the sunset cruise. Paris is beautiful in the evening when the sights are lit up, but the best part was at the end of the cruise, returning to the base of the Eiffel Tower, when its hourly, ten minute dazzling strobe light show began. AWESOME! We walked along the Left Bank to the metro and made our way to Montmartre where nuns were singing at the church, Sacre Coeur - their voices were beautiful. We walked around the area and saw many shops, cafes, and street artists. Stayed long enough to see another Eiffel Tower light show from afar, then made our way back to the hotel. Whew, that was just day one! The next day we saw Notre-Dame, Ile St-Louis, the Latin Quarter, working "locks" at the canal St-Martin among other sights.

On Thursday several people went to Versailles for the day. One afternoon Kathy, Elaine and Liz bought a hunk of cheese, a loaf of bread and a couple of bottles of wine and headed to the banks of the Seine - oops, no cups - well, straight from the bottle is good, as they waved to tourists cruising on the river! Early Friday morning we left for the airport to come home, filled with memories of a great trip - a fun, cohesive and cooperative group throughout.



Photo by Dennis Young

THE DOUBLE COMBINED RACE

By: Joy Daubenberg

Rather than reiterating the results of the Double Combined race (which Kas has already posted on the website) I thought I might enlighten you to some of the other activities that took place that day.

It was a cold day (zero when we arrived at about 9:00 a.m.) and people were putting on many layers. However, for the party, after all the racing and for those who were going elsewhere, these clothes can become cumbersome and warm (especially in a bar). So, naturally, one tries to dress down before après-ski.

Usually, in order to accomplish this routine feat, one enters the bathrooms at the ski lodge and does his/her thing. However, lately with the long, one piece suits; it is difficult to pull them down without them dropping on the floor. The same goes for ski pants. Normally, in your own bedroom, this is not an unusual feat. However, some of our ski lodge restrooms' floors are disgusting – to put it mildly and unless one can balance on the top of the toilet bowl, you risk getting your expensive ski clothes all wet, soggy and ugh!

However, there is usually a solution to every problem and one of our officers of the club as well as one of the top racers discovered a different way; which I would like to share with all our ski club members.

He sat in the ski lodge at about 3:00 on Sunday, February 15 and very slowly took off his jacket (no problem), then his sweater, his hat, his gloves, his long jon top (still no problem) and mind you, the lodge is bustling with people, singles rowdying, couples gathering up their children and those still hoping for a Valentine Date.

Now came the dilemma: we are sitting in our white t-shirt over which we have put a nice fleece top and those darn, long, heavy ski pants. But our esteemed gentleman snuck in the corner (next to the cafeteria line which was long), pulled open the door to the café beside him, sat down on a chair at a table and with scissor-like hands, slowly pulled down his pants! Of course, this reporter was watching with keen curiosity. We now have exposed to the general public a pair of black long jon bottoms. However, in his defense, they could have been taken for sweat pants. Okay so far but was he going to walk out of the lodge, through the parking lot and into his car like that?? No, our astute GSSC officer continued to disrobe – this time taking off the long jon bottoms (Oh, My God!!) leaving a Speedo type of black underwear now exposed to the entire world! My curiosity had now reached a new peak – what next? Just at that moment with bare, hairy legs taking in the sunlight and the form of the family jewels being very distinct (sidenote: good form too!); his hands slithered down to his ankles holding a pair of clean, blue jeans and quickly two feet hopped in them, he jumped to his feet, zippered and buttoned in a heartbeat before anyone had a chance to even notice (except me!).

Also, his bare feet were lying on a towel (since obviously the main lodge floor is just as dirty) and after putting on dry socks, removing the towel back to his ski bag and putting some lovely après ski boots, our handsome, dry, well dressed dapper Dan emerged!

I tell you, girls, it's not all about racing. Sometimes in the little corners and not the main arena, you can find the most interesting of things and this was such a wonderful Valentine present for me.

Here's to ingenuity and when you're thinking of a vote for Mr. Garden State, this man holds the title, hands down (or is it pants down?).

Happy streaking.

GSSC – Yesterdays (1975 – 1985 +/-)

By Bev Smales

A couple of weeks ago I was please to have visitors from the NE. David Ellison and Janet Ellison finally decided to visit me in Atlanta; I have lived in Atlanta for more than 15 years. Some of the older members will remember David and Jan, David was a former club President, and perhaps remembers me. I did the NJ Shore house duty for a couple of years.

Hugo Lopez (former Club President and Race Chairman) and his wife Lucille have lived in Atlanta for several years. Both Hugo and I were transferred here from NJ with jobs.

We all got together on a Saturday morning at my house, to have breakfast and catch up. It was like we had gotten together just yesterday. Nothing about our connection and friendship had changed. There was an ease and comfort and a lot to catch up on. It was just great and lots of conversation. Out of this gathering it became apparent to me that we have a network of friends that we have never forgotten, and it is a shame we don't have some means by which continue this network. I understand some of this group has now settled in Sarasota Fla. (retirement), some in NC, some in Rhode Island. We are all over the place. But those years we played together are a bond not forgotten.

We were in our 30's when we played, and now some of you are at that point in time and playing is fun. At that time in your life you really don't think about 25 years down the road and where you will be. Well, this group is now 25 years down the road and the network needs to be rekindled.

I have volunteered to make the effort to develop a GSSC directory of 1975 –1985. This can be expanded upon; it is just a period from which to start. We can do with this group whatever we wish. It can develop as we go. Any new ideas are most welcome. Any help is most welcome.

Directory Assistance (What you can do):

Please send an e mail to: bsmale56@msn.com including

- the person's name (wife's name if applicable),
- full address,
- phone no.,
- e-mail address.

I will develop a directory and mailing list.

This information will not be used for any public purposes. It is only to re-establish the network of friendships developed so long ago. It is only for the private use of the former members and possible current members.

Story Time: I will try and publish articles for the "Lift Line" and make it stories. So, I am including my first story.

What is a "mudder". Ask Pete Sternfel and Lou Wiley. During our romping days we did Dude Ranch Trips. I see you still do them and they are a lot of fun. I am quite comfortable on a horse and so are Pete and Lou. So, we started out in a group but immediately found ourselves, Lou, Pete and myself out in front of the pack. We started out in a lope which turned eventually into a race. One problem however, it had rained the night before and the logging road on which we were racing was full of puddles. So, the guy who stayed in front (3 of us), didn't get mud and stones in his face. We raced, romped and laughed a lot. We returned to the main corral and were so covered with mud that everyone was asking what had happened. I don't know who won the race, but we were called "mudders" from then on.

Not an exciting story, guess you had to be there.

Old Stories: Send me your stories and I will include some in the Lift Line articles.

I look forward to hearing from past members and working to develop this network. If we are successful, this can only enhance the future of current active members in GSSC. So let's make it work.



How I learned to ski or, at least, not fall head over heels down a mountainside!

By Greg and Karen Barrington-Smith

Hi, I thought I'd put pen to paper – oops I'm sorry I'm showing my age here – I meant finger to keyboard and tell you of my exploits skiing and how we both came to join the club!

Lets start at the beginning; otherwise you'll get way too confused! I moved to this country from across the pond back in 1998. I'd never skied as England is not known for it's snow skiing, just the water variety. I'd avidly watched ski racing since I was a small child. The only place to ski (at a reasonable cost) was Yugoslavia, but war broke out and dodging bullets whilst on 2 planks of wood hurtling down a mountainside did not seem to be a good thing!

Early in 1999 my chance came at a gated community in PA where Karen's (my wife's) parents live. The 'pimple' looked like Everest to me, and even the bunny slope proved hard work! I took a few hours to find my ski legs before I went all the way to the top! Oh my God- 200 yards to the bottom of this sheer cliff, how in all hell am I going to get down it! I did, not gracefully mind you, and with maybe just a couple of tumbles. Still the bug had bitten and I tried again and again and again until I got the hang of it and could do all 3 of the runs, even the dreaded Black Diamond. Now I look at the hill and know I could do it blindfold and backwards (after a few beers you understand!).

That was enough fun for one season so when 2000 came we went out to buy ski boots as the thought of renting boots that half the planet had used kind of made us feel a little queasy. We ended up walking out the store with bright new boots and ski's as well! That started it all as now we only had to buy the lift tickets and we were away – no more waiting in line for rentals.

The next couple of seasons we spent a lot of time on that 'pimple' practicing our turns but this stopping lark was not coming at all. Where the heck are the brakes on these things? I could snow plow to a stop but this hockey stop proved elusive as every time, without fail, I ended up on my butt in the snow. Karen had skied once or twice before meeting me and skated in competition so she got it very easily. One day on our last trip out for the season we went to Elk. We turned into the car park, looked up and, wait a minute there's no top to this mountain as it's in the clouds! This is a place fit only for deer, bears and other high altitude animals not tall lanky creatures like me! Still I had to try it just to prove I could do it – that's one thing with me I'll try anything once even if I make an idiot of myself which I have been known to do (ask the guys about Montage a few weeks back and my prowess on White Lightning!)! We had a great day and on my final run back to the lodge I went into a perfect hockey stop, and, wait for it, didn't fall over! I was so amazed I almost fell over laughing but kept my cool. Would I still be able to do it next season???

Next season rolled around and the hockey stop was easy – why, I have no idea but, hey, who'd argue? Karen and I were keeping pretty much together on the skill level, which was really nice as we could do the same runs. Each season we try and do a new hill or two and decided in 2002 to go to Tremblant. Awesome is the only word I can use to describe the trip although –28c is a little chilly! We took our first lesson since hitting the slopes and spent 2 hours with an instructor. We both learnt a lot and spent another 4 days practicing.

Later that year we moved to our current house up near Mountain Creek and Hidden Valley. We got our first season passes to the Creek and spent an enjoyable winter skiing 3 or 4 times a week on sheet ice! That taught us a lot but then on a trip to Stratton (\$10 lift tickets!!) in late March 2003, it all went wrong. We had heard of spring snow but were not sure why everyone mentioned it. The mountain was stunning but getting off the lifts into a 4-inch deep, by 5 feet wide, puddle should have made us think twice about staying. We had a good few runs and the speed on that wet, slushy snow was incredible. Then Karen screamed and went down as she lined up for a run – her acl and mcl torn apart. Ski Patrol were with us quickly and the first words from the nurse were “the first of many today”. Karen was told she'd be off skis for 18 months but by her sheer hard work and exercise her surgeon cleared her to ski at Christmas just 9 months later!

Two days after she took her first lesson and runs (the instructor wanted her to do blacks as she got back into the swing of things) at Elk I was at the Creek on my own. It was warming up and the bears (momma & 2 cubs) were watching these weird creatures floating by them in mid air with long planks on their feet! One cub's face was so expressive it was untrue – you could see him thinking what in the heck are those things! I decided after a couple of hours that the snow was getting slushy and cut up so that it was time to leave. Going down the green run, looking into the woods for the bears and, bang, yard sale time as I caught an edge and landed heavily on my back and left thumb. Needless to say my thumb was a mess and, 5 days later, I had surgery to rebuild it! So no skiing for me for a month although it rained a lot so I didn't miss much and did go back out before the Dr said I could – shhh, don't tell him! Well, he did only say that HE wouldn't ski with the injury, which to my warped mindset, meant I could do whatever I wanted!

I was in a Dr's surgery a couple of weeks after that as the back had taken a pounding and Karen came into the waiting room with some Bagels. A couple sitting next to us asked where we'd got them and rushed out to get their own. Then Hal asked what I'd done to my hand and as soon as we mentioned skiing both he and Lily mentioned the club, hence, here we are!

Sp far, we have had a lot of fun and the trips have been awesome. We've hung our skis up now as we both are wary of skiing at this time of year and look forward to more trips out (beer, food, company and, maybe some skiing between all of that!) next season. Karen already has done cross-country and I want to try that out plus I want to race more. I did a NASTAR session at Montage and had a blast as I love speed.

Now the time is coming for the other love of our lives – auto racing. Karen and I are safety workers at races across the USA (and England when we get there) so we get to stand/work within a few feet, if not inches, of cars moving at high speed and, sometimes, getting taken for high speed laps in them. One day that'll be me out there on track assuming I can beat Karen to the drivers seat!!

Anyhow I think that's enough to keep you busy for a few minutes. Thanks for the fun and see you at the next meeting

Greg and Karen Barrington-Smith

BAD GASTEIN, AUSTRIA AND AMSTERDAM, HOLLAND

By Barbara Johnson

Another wonderful winter wonderland ski trip by Fred Hotz took a total of 18 of us to Bad Gastein, Austria where there was plenty of snow for the skiers and sights to see for the non-skiers. Bad Gastein is a spa resort built on the side of a mountain. For the walkers, there were a few “cardiac hills”, but there were also some very lovely promenades that overlooked the valley along the side of the mountain.

A few of us went by train to Salzburg one day and then to Spittal another. In Salzburg we saw Mozart's birth place, the Cathedral and Square, and took the funicular up to the Hohensalzburg Fortress. In Spittal, which is a lovely Austrian city, we saw the Castle Porcia and the Malbaum (which is a pole which artistically depicts the history of the town). We also found, among many other little gems, a Woolworth's. Something we don't see here in the States any more.

Friday, our last day in Bad Gastein, was a beautiful, sunny day. The skiers had a great day skiing. A few people went snow shoeing up the to the top of the mountain. Me and Dennis, with a couple of young ladies from our group, found ourselves at the top of the mountain, the Stubnerkogel (2246m). What a breathtaking view it was. Of course, we not only took the gondola up, we took it down as well. As far as I am concerned, the only way to get off a mountain.

Saturday found us going our separate ways. Some went on to travel elsewhere, some went home, and 10 of us went to Amsterdam, which one of us likened to a huge Greenwich Village. Everyone went exploring in different directions in different groups. Our little group went on the canal tour and then got a 48 hour tram/bus pass and off we went. The transportation system is phenomenal. There are the trams, buses, canal buses, a few cars, and millions of bicycles. Where we would have a parking garage for cars, they have a parking garage for bicycles. They, of course, have a high theft of bikes where we would have with cars.

BAD GASTEIN AND AMSTERDAM CONTINUED

We managed to see a lot while in Amsterdam. We saw the Oude Kerk (Old Church) where Rembrandt's wife is buried. We saw the "Our Lord in the Attic" church, which was a clandestine catholic church built in the attic of a house to keep it secret. We went to the Anne Frank house museum, the Van Gogh museum, the Bloemenmarkt which is a floating market place for every conceivable plant and bulb you can think Holland has, the De Gooyer windmill which is the only remaining windmill in Amsterdam alongside which stands the only remaining brewery. Of course it was closed since it was Monday.

There was so much to see that we could not possibly see it all. (There was the red light district with the "ladies" in the windows for those who were interested in window shopping - and I don't mean for lingerie. There were even a few sightings of one of our group in that area, though he denies any knowledge of the district at all. Claims he couldn't even find it.) There were the museums some of us missed like the sex museum, the hemp museum, the torture museum. Though we heard they were quite interesting. Oh well, maybe next time. Thanks Fred for the opportunity to see more of Europe and another wonderful vacation.

Barbara M. Johnson



Why are these people looking at the back of a bus?
Better read *Helen Weisgal's* story on page 2

IN MEMORY OF STAN SHARAGA

By Kevin Feehan

Some may say that this is out of character for me, and that may be so. Never the less, I feel a deep compulsion to speak of one of our members. This club suffered yet another loss recently with the passing of our good friend and fellow member, Stan Sharaga. For those of you who knew him, nothing need be said. For those of you who did not know him, let me take a minute to reveal the man.

Stan was an intrinsic part of this club for many years, and being the giving person he was, he contributed much to the longevity and success of this club. He helped write the club's constitution and bylaws. He is responsible for initiating the discount ticket program that we benefit from today, and will for many years to come. He was a founding director of ASIA and the National Ski Federation. He served on the boards of our club and the New Jersey Ski Council.

Stan was our club's Parliamentarian for many, many years. In times of disputes (and there were many), the board knew that they could turn to Stan to hear the voice of reason, logic and compromise. He was truly a peacemaker.

I could list more of his contributions, but if he were here right now he would say, "ENOUGH ALREADY!" He never wanted to be thanked for what he did. GIVING was what Stan was all about. As the club moves forward and lives on, let Stan's examples become a corner stone of how to get it done right.

Maybe if the club is really lucky, another Stan Sharaga will come along. Thank you for allowing me to share this with you.