

## **Alta 2009 Ski trip**

Written by Wendy Brescia

Well, it is Saturday, February 28 and all but one traveler are getting ready to depart on their plane ride to their final destination of Salt Lake City, UT! As the day progresses, each traveler arrives at the “Miles House” at the foot of Alta Mountain. Alta is approximately 10,500 ft. Some of the trails were pretty steep and with the altitude, made you feel a little nauseous. The “Miles House” was a PERFECT set up for our group of 12! Most of us shared a room with a buddy and never had to fight for a bathroom. There was plenty of space where nobody was ever stepping on toes.

Dwight was thinking well in advance and had each traveler put together a meal plan for one evening. We placed one order using Albertson’s Grocery Store, which delivered the goods the day we arrived. And, boy, did we order a lot of food especially mandarin oranges! We all took turns cooking and cleaning and it really felt like a family every day. **Matt and Jason thought that they would spend the week acting like the adults, but Frank had different ideas. The BRG’s (Beer Retrieval Guys) were busy, and I mean busy, fetching libations from the snow on the deck for "Papa's" enjoyment. Dad thought they would also serve him, but noooooooo. Six more years before Frank fetches for them!**

Hans had been spending time with family prior to our arrival and as each of us arrived at the “Miles House”, Hans was already preparing the evening’s dish – Chili. There was not much snow as we approached the mountain. The roads were quite dry and the snow banks were not so white. We were a little nervous about the skiing conditions, but hey, it is a new mountain to explore – live it up! Because of the time difference, we were all in bed pretty early on day one in preparation of our first day of skiing in the morning.

Morning came and everyone was up pretty early. Ken took charge and cooked 3lbs of bacon and eggs to order. Thanks to Nicole, we had the white boards to display what was for dinner and to take breakfast orders. So, we all ate breakfast family style and then headed to our rooms to figure out what was the best gear to wear in 40 degree weather.

Bill went on his way to take his morning lesson while the rest of us headed up to the lift line and waited for everyone to arrive. The lifts opened at 9:15 so there was not much rushing to get there early. We all went up on the chair lift to the top of the mountain – a chair lift that picks up at mid-station but does not allow you to get off – pretty interesting. Because of this concept, they leave every 10<sup>th</sup> chair open so those waiting at the mid-station can go back to the top without having to ski to the bottom. There is one slope called “Warm-Up”. It was usually the last run of the day. This day, Dwight took a fall rolling down the trail but was lucky enough to keep his gear with him. At the end of the day, most of us would meet at Slop Side Joes for some “Cut Throat” beer to put a nice ending to a hard day of skiing. Shortly after, Donna and I headed back to the house and took first shot on the hot tub. As everyone started returning back to the house, dinner would be prepared by those in charge for the evening. This was a daily ritual throughout the week.

On day two, we all skied together at first and then we broke off into smaller groups. We all skied at our own level, but experienced a majority of the mountain and all had a hard day of skiing! We did chutes, bowls, steep, steep trails and trees. At one point, Don took a wrong turn and we all kept waiting and waiting looking for Don. As the morning went on, we kept seeing others with a green jacket and yelling out "Hey, is that Don"? We did not want him skiing by himself, but he was no where to be found. Lunch time came, and everyone met at the designated meeting spot, including Don. So, we all ate lunch together and then headed back out for some more fun! In the afternoon, it became a joke when anyone saw someone in a green jacket. Donna, Frank and I decided to take one last run down "Warm-Up". This day, I was tired and had my share of falling down. At the end of the day, it was off to Slope Side Joes for that well deserved "Cut Throat" beer. Donna and I headed back to the house to get our shot once again in the hot tub. Later, dinner was served and we all ate family style. Others took turns cleaning up and then it was on to "Who Wants to be a Millionaire". Thanks to Nicole, we were well entertained with some TV games. Jason and Matt were in charge of their team and making sure scores were kept and no cheating to be had.

On day three, we all went up to the top of the mountain to get a group shot taken. It was so unbearably windy that the cameraman had a hard time getting a clear, crisp shot. But, after all we looked through, we finally agreed on one group photo to hang at the lodge. Our last run of the day, it was Dwight, Frank, Donna and me. Again, we decided to take "Warm-Up" since it seemed to be the last run of the day, every day. This day, it was Frank's turn to fall. But, not only did he fall, (he was suppose to be clean up)...he ended up with a yard-sale, leaving Dwight and I for clean up. Donna skied over towards Bear Paw, so she missed the entire escapade. Later that night, Jason was to read a book for school. He had no desire to do any school work (who would?) and as he was lying on the couch, Jason turns to Frank and says..."Papa, will you read to me?" It was the funniest line we all heard and could not stop laughing. So, every day I would tell him he needed to read 10 pages by the time we went skiing...hahaha! Frank then gave me the nick name Mamma and that stuck for the rest of the week as did Papa.

On Wednesday, most of us took a day trip into Park City. Dwight had arranged for a bus to pick us up at 1PM from the house and bring us back around 9PM. We were dropped off at the top of the strip and walked through stores, and of course, stopped at each bar. We stopped at the "No Name Saloon" for a drink and lunch. The restaurant/bar was pretty interesting all around. Our last restaurant/bar stop was at Easy Street. This bar was dim-lighted and stone walled all around. The bar was put together with ornate wood and had a very relaxing atmosphere. At the end, of our journey walking down the strip of Park City, we decided to call the bus company to come pick us up. As we headed home, snow was starting to fall and was getting heavier and heavier. We were all pretty nervous in the van, as the driver did not seem as experienced as he claimed to be. Thank god Papa Frank was in the front seat and ready to take charge at any moment.

On day five, we woke up to some REAL SNOW! We were all excited to hit the mountain today. Some of us were a little nervous, but excited at the same time. Hans took charge of the group and we headed up the chair lift. Hans took us over to

“Simulation” and “Punch Bowl”. This was my first experience skiing in snow that was not hard packed. It was about a foot of snow and a much different feeling to ski in. It makes your legs work and your mind focused. We skied a majority of the mountain this day, since there was snow to slow you down and help with control. Dwight wanted us all to do this one trail, which I think was called “Collins Face”. So, we all skied over to it and most of us falling on our way down over and over again. By the time we reached the bottom, Dwight was not feeling so well. His ribs were really hurting and he was unable to use his poles to full potential, but he continued to ski for the remainder of the day. Donna headed down a run before me cause it was a hard skiing day. Trying to keep up with the more advanced skiers, was very tiring as the day went on. So, I decided to take one last run and followed everyone through the woods. Well, I followed Frank and kept trying to get myself down by talking to myself...”You can do it Wendy”. Well, I got to a point where I lost control, hit some woop di doos, and could not stop myself. My skies stayed in a ditch, while I jerked forward and then backwards. Because I had my powder straps on, the ski came around and wailed me in the calf. Ken came skiing over to me to make sure I was ok. Thank god Frank and Ken were there. I was in a lot of pain where the throbbing would not go away. I took my boot off and tried to work out the throbbing pain. I sat there for a good 20 minutes or so. I then put my boot back on and tried to stand up. There was NO way I could ski. I could not put any pressure on my foot. Needless to say, that WAS my last run down. Ski patrol had to come and bring me down on the snowmobile. Thank god I did not have to ride in the sled. I was brought directly to the clinic. I tried to get anyone on the radio when I finally got a hold of Dwight. I asked him to go to the house and tell Donna to grab Han’s keys and come get me at the clinic. A bit later, Donna (Mamma 2) came to my rescue. She helped me with everything I needed! THANKS MOM ☺. So instead of going back to the house, we headed to the bar at the hotel next to our house. The boys had a Captain N’ Coke waiting for me and Donna....I don’t think I ever drank so fast....those crutches and pain, were enough to feel embarrassed. This was my first true skiing incident – EVER. To continue the evening, it was Captain N’ Cokes to help the pain – of course, with help from Donna (thanks again, for being my buddy! HAHA).

Friday came and everyone but Don and I went skiing. They all went to experience Snow Bird. Don and I relaxed, read, had a nice lunch together and just chilled till everyone came back home. Todd and Mary Pat stopped by to check up on me after their day of skiing. Later that evening, we had so much food left over that it became a smorgasbord. The boys (Jason and Matt) made 4 pounds of pasta and grilled chicken marinated in bbq sauce. We had a salad, garlic bread and deep fried tofu that was left over in the fridge. After dinner and after cleaning up, some of us packed our things to leave bright and early the next day. After that, we played Family Feud and broke out into our teams. We laughed and accused the opposite team for cheating.

Morning came and Nicole, Donna and I took turns in the bathroom getting ready to head out. The van was there on time and we left for the airport at 7:15. There were six of us heading back on the same plane. Bill, Peter, Don, Nicole, and Donna were so helpful!

Overall, it was a GREAT trip with a great group! Dwight did a wonderful job and we look forward to next year's adventure. Now, if we could take the "Miles House" with us on all vacations, it would top any vacation yet!