



# **SKIWI NEWSLETTER**

## **WINTER 2020**

### **From the Office of the President!**

Greetings to all and a Happy New Year.

I hope everyone's holidays were filled with joy and happiness. Unfortunately, mine were dampened by the passing of my sister on Christmas eve. She is resting in peace now.

Now that winter is in full swing, and I hope that some of you have had a chance to get out and do some skiing. There have been plenty of opportunities. Our Europe ski trip is already completed, and our weekday ski trips are going as planned, along with winter hiking, and Tavern nights have started.

There are plenty of great trips still ahead, so if you haven't gotten to the slopes yet, or have not signed up for one, be sure to do so soon, as winter will be gone before you know it (some of you may be hoping for that).

In closing, be sure to check the web site and events calendar, for anything you might be interested in, or just plain forgot.

Remember: Take a quote from Warren Miller. If you don't get out and do something now, you will be a year older when you do.

Hope to see you at some of our many events.

Tony Fralowicz – President, Skiwi Ski Club

## Skiwi February 1 Candlelight Cross Country Ski Event

Honestly, we were a little concerned about the weather and if there would be enough snow for skiing. Our hostess, Kathy Krebs thought we would be able to ski and she was so very right! It snowed north of I69 all the way up to Port Austin. 2 inches of fresh snow made for a magical night of Cross-Country Skiing. Jars of lights, along with the fresh snow, made a brightly lit path for the event. It was amazing how much of the forest was able to be seen from the path - gorgeous night for a two-hour ski. We did have one walker who had as much fun as the rest of us.

We ended at a bon fire that the state park rangers prepared, and talked to many of the other groups that enjoyed the evening. Next, we went to dinner in Port Austin and, like all good Skiwievents, we danced to the DJ playing in the restaurant. Oh, what a night- new snow, new friends and new memories! And it did not end there.

We woke to three inches of new snow on Sunday so of course we headed back to the park and skied a three- mile trail of beautiful snow. The pictures do not do the beauty of nature justice, but it helps to show that YES, there really was snow and the event was just as wonderful as Kathy described.

Thank you, Kathy for hosting and helping us discover the sleeping beauty of Caseville, Port Austin and Sleeper State Park!

Julie





## Schuss Instructional Weekend 2020

Well the rain on Friday did not dampen any Skiwi spirits! We actually had a number of people skiing and enjoying the runs on Friday. We officially welcomed everyone with a gathering on Friday night. We enjoyed snacks and beverages while meeting all participants- new members and old. We then went to Ivan's to enjoy the band and make use of the drink tickets provided with our Ski Package. We even enjoyed the shuttle bus as we sang songs on the way!

Saturday morning found good conditions for skiing so after a fabulous breakfast at the Lakeview Restaurant we split up for our lessons. We met for lunch at the River Bistro and enjoyed exchanging stories of our morning lessons. The afternoon brought more good skiing and some sore muscles to the hot tub. We enjoyed the buffet dinner on Saturday night and each of us won some type of ski equipment compliments of Schuss. One of our newest members - Candace won a 2021 season ski pass for Schuss! Congrats!! More fun was had by our group after dinner with a few going to Short Brewery in Bellaire, and others enjoying the music in the Lakeview restaurant. We danced there too!

Sunday provided a repeat of a great breakfast and skiing but this time we had snow! Great fun to ski in some fresh snow. Most left in the afternoon however we had 4 that were having so much fun they stayed until Monday!

What a memorable week – new friends, great memories and a nice way to start the ski season!

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**Poland and Italy, what a combination! (Think pierogi and pizza!)**



It was the evening of MLK Day and we were boarding a Delta flight with final destination of Krakow Poland. Trips to Europe typically leave in the evening and travel all night with arrival the next day. We arrived in Krakow with enough time to get checked into the Hotel Royal and still have enough time to get out and do some quick exploring and dinner before nightfall. Well, some of us did and some of us took a “nap”, travel can be rough!

We were in Krakow 4 nights, giving us 3 full days to explore the city and other attractions in the area. This year was the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp liberation which occurred on January 27, 1945. Many of our trip participants attended the tour of the camp and saw this sombre and sorrowful site which was the most infamous of all the Nazi concentration camps. More than 6 million Jews, around two-thirds of Europe’s Jewish population, were murdered during the Holocaust.



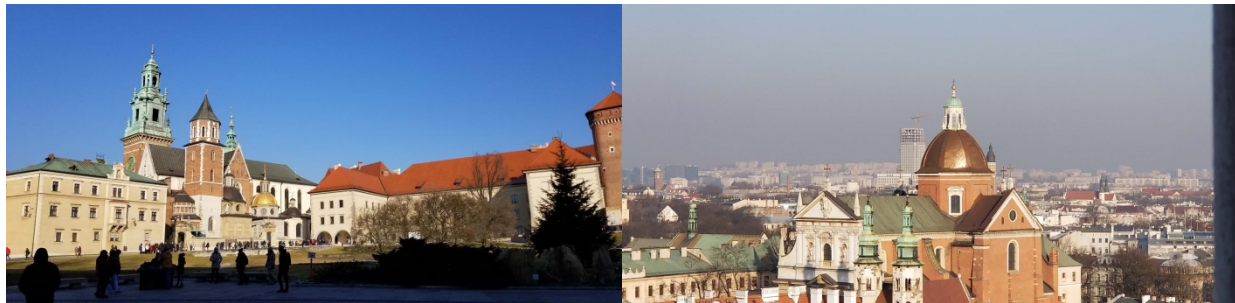


Another popular attraction in Krakow is the Wieliczka Salt Mine located in the metropolitan Krakow area. The Wieliczka salt mine, excavated from the 13th century, produced table salt continuously until 2007, as one of the world's oldest operating salt mines. This natural resource was a blessing and a curse over all those years. Before refrigeration and other preservative methods, salt was more than worth its weight in gold! This made the Krakow region very wealthy, and also very attractive for overtaking by other empires and nations. The Wieliczka Salt Mine reaches a depth of 327 meters (1073 ft), and extends via horizontal passages and chambers for over 287 kilometers (178 miles). The rock salt is naturally of varying shades of grey, resembling unpolished granite rather than the white crystalline substance that might be expected. The mine features an underground lake, exhibits on the history of salt mining, and a 3.5-kilometer (2.2-mile) visitors' route (less than 2 percent of the mine passages' total length) including statues carved from the rock salt at various times. There is a chapel, and a reception room that is used for private functions, including weddings. A chamber has walls carved by miners to resemble wood, as in wooden churches built in early centuries. A wooden staircase provides access to the mine's 64-metre (210-foot) level. A 3-kilometre (1.9-mile) tour features corridors, chapels(Pope John Paul II visited many times and actually said mass before he was Pope!), statues, and underground lake, 135 meters (443 ft) underground. An elevator returns visitors to the surface; which holds nine persons per car and takes about 30 seconds to make the trip back to the top, much better than hoofing it up over 400 steps! This is certainly a “do not miss” attraction in Krakow.



The Wawel Castle was only a 10 minute walk from our hotel and several of us took advantage of this by taking a tour of the castle and the cathedral. Built at the behest of King Casimir III the Great, it consists of a number of structures from different periods situated around the Italian-styled main courtyard. The castle, being one of the largest in Poland, represents nearly all European architectural styles of medieval, renaissance and baroque periods. The castle is part of a fortified architectural complex erected atop a limestone outcrop on the left bank of the Vistula River, at an altitude of 228 meters above sea level. The complex consists of numerous buildings of great historical and national importance, including the Wawel Cathedral where Polish monarchs were crowned and buried. Some of Wawel's oldest stone buildings can be traced back to 970

AD. The current castle was built in the 14th-century, and expanded over the next hundreds of years. Outside the castle wall toward the bank of the river is a very impressive “fire breathing dragon” statue dedicated to Smok the mythological dragon who lived under the castle - really cool! Or hot if you are standing close enough!



Another main attraction is the Town Square, also near our hotel and only a 15 minute walk up Grodzka Street which connects between the castle and the square. The main square of the Old Town of Krakow is the principal urban space located at the center of



the city. It dates back to the 13th century, and at 9.4 acres is one of the largest medieval town squares in Europe. The main square is a square space surrounded by historic townhouses and churches. The center of the square is dominated by the Cloth Hall rebuilt in 1555 in the Renaissance style, topped by a beautiful attic or *Polish parapet* decorated with carved masks. On one side of the cloth hall is the Town Hall Tower (the actual town hall did not survive to modern times), on the other the 10th century Church of St. Adalbert and the 1898 Adam Mickiewicz Monument. Rising above the square are the Gothic towers of St. Mary's Basilica. Grodzka Street and the square are filled with shops, restaurants and places to get wonderful things like paczki doughnuts (all year round!) and some of the best hot chocolate in the world! If you didn't order your hot chocolate with milk it was served as an almost "pudding like" consistency that you ate with a spoon! With the Polish "zloty" currency exchange rate of around 4 to 1 and reasonable prices, you could dine and shop like a king or queen!



An added "bonus" for the group was a day trip to Zakopane. Zakopane is a town in the extreme south of Poland, in the southern part of the Podhale region at the foot of the Tatra Mountains. Zakopane is a center of Goralculture (mountain people) and is often referred to as "the winter capital of Poland". It is a popular destination for mountaineering, skiing, and tourism. Zakopane can be reached by train or bus from Kraków in about two hours. The Skiwi's took 2 shuttle busses for the day where along the way we all stopped off at a Vodka and Goat Cheese hut, a traditional dirt floor hut with a central fire pit, to have, well, vodka and goat cheese of course! About half of the group actually skied and the other half just toured town and ate lunch. In the evening we all met for a visit at the mineral baths which were a very large indoor/outdoor facility with huge pools and hot tubs within those along with "swim up" bars for refreshments.



Wow, all that was just the first 4 days of our trip! Saturday was a travel day where we flew from Krakow to Amsterdam and then on to Venice. Once in Venice we met 'Franco' our bus driver and helped him load our luggage under the bus before our 3 hour drive to Canazei. As a reward for helping, Franco took us to the last outer compartment on the bus and asked "Do you like Grappa?" Yes of course we do! He



opened the door and there was a mini-bar with various liquors and metal shot glasses! Several of us were treated to little shots of Grappa, a distilled liquor of the region, to keep us warm and cozy for the drive. The last third of the drive was up winding roads with hairpin corners through “open topped snow tunnels” which was actually the road with 6+ feet of snow on each side in some places! We arrived late to the Hotel Cesa Tyrol and were welcomed with our first dinner of the week in Italy. Oh the dinners!



Our hosts at the Hotel Cesa Tyrol were Michale' and Mary who took very good care of us all week along with the entire staff. We especially enjoyed the “head waitress” Christina, a Hungarian woman who now lives in Italy and really loves her job! Christina kept everyone in line, staff and Skiwi's! Our stay included breakfast and dinner every day. Breakfast was quite impressive with everything from yogurt & fruit, eggs, breads, pastries and an assortment of cold cuts too. Dinners were all 5 course and most excellent, we ate so much!



The first “day” in Canazei was Sunday. Many people hit the slopes that first day and others spent the day walking around town checking out the international cross country

ski race – the Marcialonga – which is 70km long and had over 7500 participants! The racers went right through the streets of town and did a hairpin turnaround at the town hall, to mark the midway point of the race. People also had plenty of shops, and restaurants to visit for snacks and sweets and an espresso or two! The town has both Italian and German influence so you could find some interesting food and desserts. Ah yes, food and desserts!



The first day of skiing encountered some flat light but by the second day (Monday) we were treated to crystal blue clear skies! Tuesday brought some high wind conditions. The hotel had a 2-lane, "Cosmic" bowling alley in their lower level, and after dinner Tuesday, they offered it to our group! This turned into a lively competition for our whole group and provided us a well needed energy burst after a big dinner and strenuous day of skiing.

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On Wednesday the entire group took a bus to Trento for sightseeing and fun. Trento is the capital of Trentino, which is the province the ski village of Canazei is in. Trento dates back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, when was conquered by the Romans in the late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, who named it Tridentum. There certainly were a lot of historic structures (castle, cathedral, fountain, etc), museums and ruins to explore here. These ruins showed how they even had “in home” toilets with underground wastewater plumbing, and heated flooring! Technology sure went backwards in Medieval times! We returned to a special evening for dinner at Hotel Cesa Tyrol where they started you off in the bar with champagne while two guys on accordions played! Entertainment continued through dinner with one guy on an electric organ while we once again enjoyed some excellent food and what many agreed was probably the best desserts ever, even better than the food for some of us. The night was capped off by our bartender, Edwardo, convincing Karen, Shelley and Jenny to serenade us with Karaoke (which he videotaped).



Thursday and Friday were once again crystal blue skies for skiing! Through the week several people bought the 'Dolomite Super Pass' which allows you to go entirely around the Sella Ronda circuit. Sella Ronda means "Round Saddle" and describes the Sella mountain range. The Sellaronda is a ski route that loops around the massif of the Sella mountain range. It is truly one of a kind with its network of lift facilities in a setting surrounded by rocky peaks, thick forests and snow-covered landscapes. Completing the Sellaronda loop is quite easy and very gratifying, all you need to do is reach one of the four main starting points located around the Sella massif. The main starting points are Val Gardena, Corvara, Arabba and Canazei. They are all linked together by numerous lift stations. The signage is very clear, and directs you either clockwise (Orange Route), or Counter-clockwise (Green Route). The total distance of the loop, including lifts, is about 40 kilometers and since the level is considered to be medium-high it is advisable to be physically fit and have a good knowledge of skiing.



Approximately 2 hours are spent on lifts, without taking into consideration time spent waiting in lift lines and stopping for breaks at the numerous huts and lodges along the way. Some of the many on-mountain Après-ski bars along the way can really be a distraction. Actual ski time is around one and half hours if the slopes are done consecutively. You end up back where you started and on the last day a group of us did the Green Route with a trip up the “Funivia Seilbahn Sass Pordoi” tram at the end for a 360 degree view from the top! We caught the last ride up for the day and only had 6 minutes to quickly take some pictures and get the panorama view of this awesome area.



Another adventurous group of Skiwis made use of this extensive inter-connected trail network to explore a distant ski run – the Hidden Valley. This involves partially circling the Sella Ronda, then traversing the length of the valley at Corvara, taking a shuttle van to a huge tram, which climbs a jagged cliff. At this point you are perched high atop the very scenic Hidden Valley. As you ski down this 7km long valley, you are surrounded

by magnificent rock walls and numerous frozen water falls. At the terminus of this run, you come to a "Horse Lift." A sleigh, drawn by 2 horses, pulls a large group (holding on to long ropes) back to the next chairlift, about a mile away! From there you begin your journey back to Canazei, hoping you have allowed enough time to make it before the lifts close. As we neared our valley (Val Di Fassa), we were 7 minutes late for the last chair...but they still had it running for us! After this ordeal, the many (crowded) Après Ski bars at the Canazei base were a welcome relief.



On the last night some of the group visited a local bar to listen to a "Rockabilly" band for some drinks and fun as well. The next morning we had an early breakfast provided by the hotel then loaded up the bus and headed back to Venice to catch our flight. As we left Italy and flew back toward Amsterdam for our connecting flight, we flew right over the mountains we skied! It was a beautiful but sad sight and many of us are already dreaming of the next trip to ski Italy!

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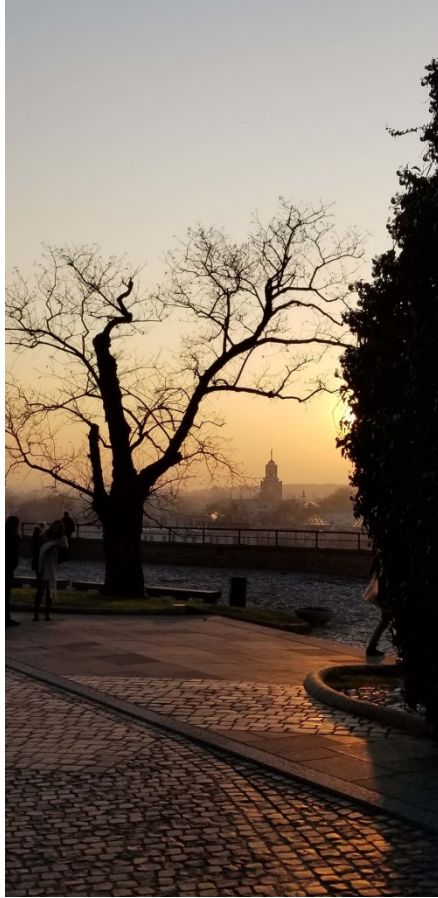
**Some beautiful pictures from the trip!**







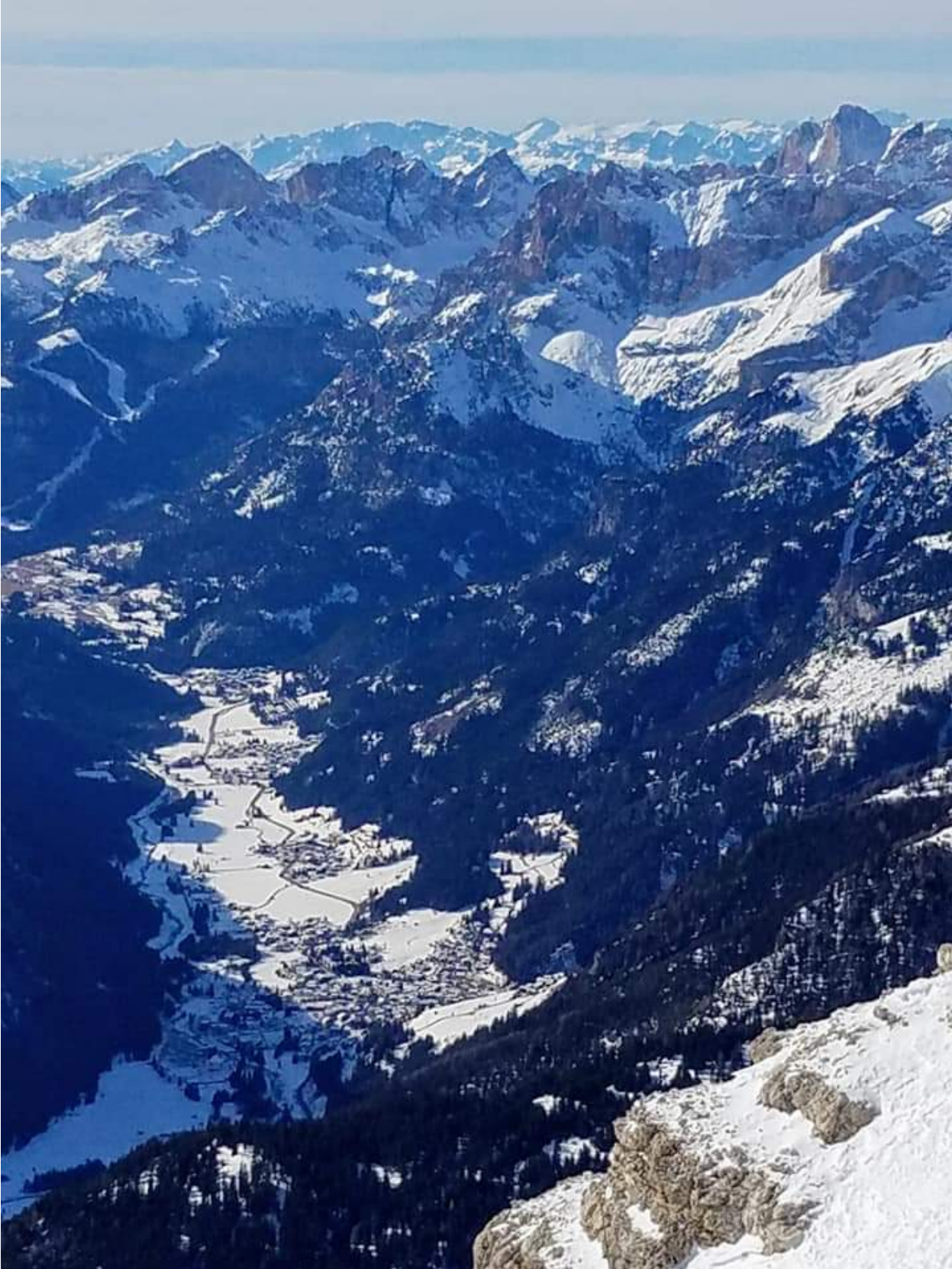






















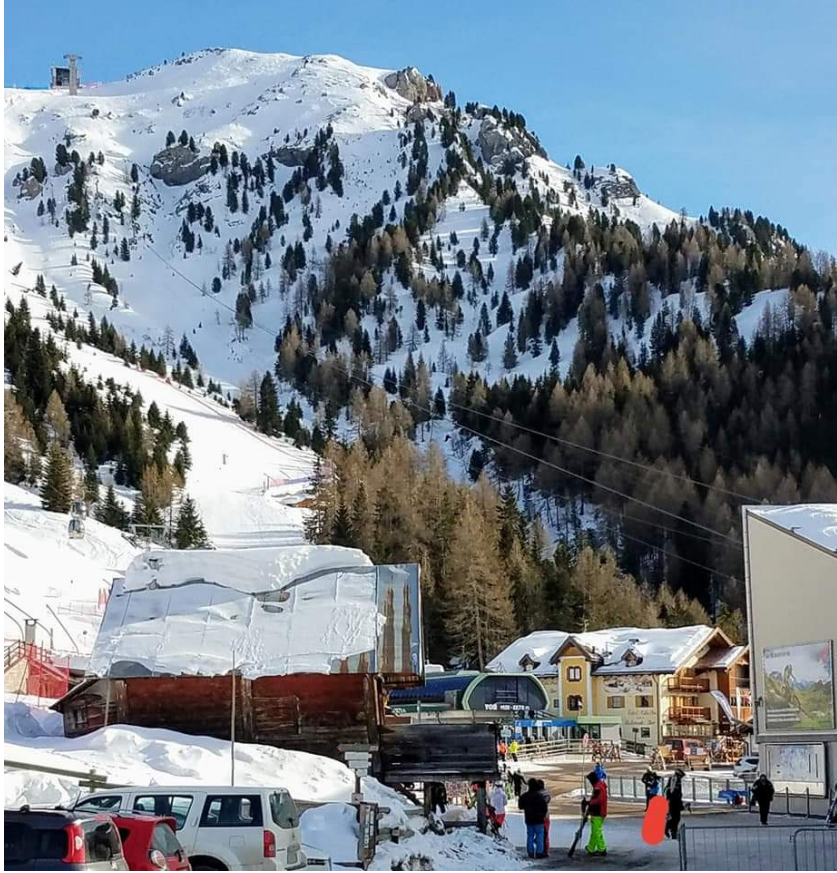




















**Ciao, arrivederci! Your trip leaders John Mascarello & Rick Kuhn**



## WINTER PARK 2020

This Skiwi Ski Club ski trip edition just made it to fruition under the radar of the Corona virus Pandemic.

*For more pictures, please see SkiWi website tab, PHOTOS, Winter Park 2020*

It was a picturesque photo op bus ride into The Winter Park Colorado resort area and town of Fraser where we stayed and played cozily in our midtown hotel.



The two Mountains: Winter Park and Mary Jane although standing stoically side by side are otherwise distance cousins offering a plethora of terrain to satisfy all.

Beginner to off piste junkies.

While Winter Park offers wonderfully manicured cruisers and rolling runs, Mary Jane serves up a tasty menu of moguls, tree skiing, and steeps to satisfy the most adventurous. Our three most adventurous Brian, John, and Shelley tackled all the above with a vengeance (and a smile). The hats-off award goes to Shelley who was right on their heels through it all. An additional congrats goes out to our Hanne for successfully skiing upper Mary Jane. An admirable feat indeed.

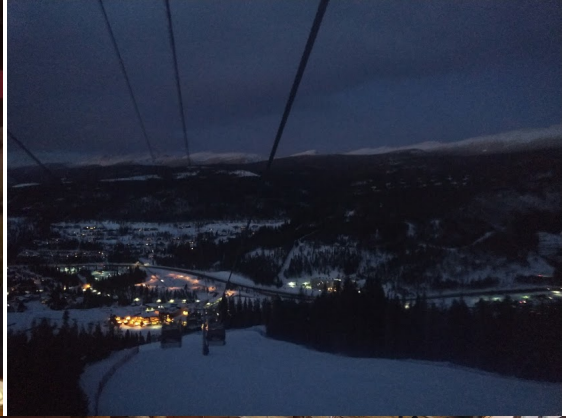
Ronald holds the record for longevity. First up last down Ronald. He would fly up to the gondola for one more trip.



We were most fortunate to have Lori and Karen as our social directors. After a long day on the slopes they would have a Happy Hour/Dinner spot selected in town. It was so convenient to walk to these spots from our hotel. The offerings and variety were enjoyed by all: Brew Pubs, Mexican, and Irish. Much appreciation to these ladies for their efforts that were enjoyed by all.







This was a successful ski trip with a homey Atmosphere.  
John/Debby, Ski Committee