



# The Sitzmarke

May 2004



Member  
Texas Ski  
Council

SPACE CITY SKI CLUB

www.spacecity.org

Vol. 37 No. 5

# ADVENTURE!



## General Meeting - Cadillac Bar

*Everyone is Welcome!*

**May 17 @ 6:30 p.m.**

*Bring a Friend!*

**Follies with ComedySportz**

Happy Hour - Thursday, May 27 @ 5:30 p.m.

Sam buca Jazz Café

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P.O. Box 22567  
Houston, TX 77227



**SPACE CITY SKI CLUB  
2003-2004 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

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christine .a.march@usdoj.gov ..... (281) 491-1129
- VP-PROGRAMS** ..... Marc Fellows  
mjfrieb@ev1.net ..... (281) 286-0503
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**DIRECTOR(S) OF TRIPS**

Volunteer for this Appointed Position

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**SITZMARKE STAFF**

Editor ..... Ross Baker  
Photography ..... Ron Hayes, Bruce Lowther

**SITZMARKE**

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**On the Cover**

Various pictures from the adventures of our club members in Chamonix, Vallee Blanche. Also, Dawn Rodriguez and Gary Barrett playing in the bluebonnets on their way back from the BidFest in Austin.



**Debbie**  
DEBBIE ABADIE, CRS  
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For the latest ski club info, membership inquiries, and activities, visit the [SPACE CITY SKI CLUB WEB PAGE](http://www.spacecity.org)

<http://www.spacecity.org>

# HEAD OF THE LIFTLINE

Christine March, President



Has the low-altitude sea level atmosphere gotten you down? I know it has me. Sure springtime in Houston is nice, but when I look out at the horizon, there is just something missing. If you feel the same way, then you have a condition that I call "Bad Altitude." If you are already feeling symptoms of it now, I have to tell you

that it is going to get a lot worse before it gets better. The worse bout usually hits about August, usually in your car, usually at noon when your A/C is not quite able to keep up, and the surface of your car can fry an egg. But don't fret because there is a cure. I and the dedicated officers and volunteers of SCSC worked hard (and partied hard) over the TSC bid weekend. We did tons of research and even more

grueling paperwork. As I write this, our new V.P. of Trips is haggling with the airlines and resorts. We are going to continue to work tirelessly all summer. And, we are doing all this thankless work for you. Yes you! Yes, it seems crazy, why would we care so much to do all this? We give up our evenings and weekends with the end goal of extending the one and only cure for all this bad altitude. You guessed it, the cure is ski trips and more ski trips.

You are not going to believe the trips that are lined up so far. Even thinking of the cure is going to alleviate most of your worst symptoms through the next few months. Winter Park, Snowmass, Garmisch, Germany, Copper Mountain, and Lake Tahoe...yeah. There is even going to be a Summer trip in 2005 to Hawaii.

Geezers I am feeling better already, bad altitude and all!



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June through September:  
8 a.m. Workout Skate & 10 a.m. Social Skate  
For the weekly meeting place, check out  
[www.badblades.org](http://www.badblades.org)



April's YNM Mixer at the Velvet Melvin

**Be a Star!**

SCSC is always on the lookout for great volunteers to plan and help coordinate various activities for the upcoming year. Please contact **Marc Fellows** at (281) 286-0503 or [mjfreb@ev1.net](mailto:mjfreb@ev1.net) if you have ideas or are interested in running an activity.

It's time to sign up for the  
**Texas Ski Council 2004 Summer Cruise!**

**September 12 - 19**  
**Price begins at \$630**  
Final Payment Date: May 30  
Various rates for choices in cabins

**Features 7 days of cruising on Carnival "Elation" out of the Port of Galveston to Ports of call: Progresso, Merida, Cozumel & Belize!**

Contact AC Nancy Sarff  
(713) 862-3006 [nsarff@houston.rr.com](mailto:nsarff@houston.rr.com)

# SCSC'S CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

## MAY 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

1..... Cinco de Mayo Dance  
 6 ..... YNM Mixer-The Volcano  
 17..... SCSC General Meeting  
 27 ..... Happy Hour-Sambuca

## JUNE 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

4-6 ..... Beach Party (pg 10)  
 12..... Volunteer Pool Party (pg 8)  
 17... Happy Hour-The Standard (pg 12)  
 19..... Wine Tasting Party  
 24 ..YNM Mixer-Sam's Boat/Place (pg 12)

## JULY 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

7/15 ..... Comedy Club-TBA  
 17 ..... Ballooning/Sky Diving (pg 10)  
 23-25 ..... Water Weekend (pg 10)

### GENERAL MEETING

**NOTE: THIS IS THE 3RD MONDAY  
 Monday, May 17 @ 6:30 p.m.**



### Cadillac Bar

1802 Shepherd (@ I-10)  
 (713) 862-2020

**Laredo Room - Doors open 6:30 p.m.**

Located behind restaurant  
 (use separate entrance)

### AGENDA

**FOLLIES FEATURING COMEDY & SPORTS**

\*\*Audience interaction\*\*

\*\*Hilarious ski trip escapades\*\*

For more information contact Marsha Lutz  
 mlutz@erm.com

### TRIP AND ACTIVITY SIGN-UP

**Bring Cash if you can and be sure to tip your  
 bartenders!**

### YNM MIXER

**Thursday, May 6  
 5:30 p.m.**

### The Volcano

2359 Bissonnet  
 (713) 526-5383

**Happy Hour Specials!**



#### Mixer Guidelines:

1. All SCSC members 45 years of age or younger are encouraged to attend and bring at least one prospective new member age 45 or under.
2. SCSC members over 45 welcome, as long as you bring two prospective members age 45 or under.
3. No one will be carded. If your guest can pass for 45 or younger...bring them on!

### HAPPY HOUR

**Thursday, May 27 @ 5:30 p.m.**

### Sambuca Jazz Café

909 Texas Ave. (Downtown)  
 (713) 224-5299

**\$3 gourmet appetizers  
 Happy hour drink specials**





Greetings my fellow ski addicts and fanatics! Having just concluded yet another great SCSC ski season, it's time to give our skis a good Summer wax job and store them away in a dry, safe place so they are ready to go for next season. In early April, I and 34 other SCSC officers and members attended the annual **Texas Ski Council Bid**

**Meeting** held for the first time in Austin, Texas instead of San Antonio where it's been held since the early days. Twenty resorts presented an exciting selection of trip options for the 2004-2005 season. Just watching some of the resort's tempting ski videos gave me goose bumps and left me wanting more. We all had a great time! In addition to the resort presentations there was a ski show, several parties, dancing, food, drink, giveaways, a silent auction, a Presidential Suite and lots of FUN. If you have never had the opportunity to attend Bid Meeting, I highly recommend that you try to go sometime. You'll have a great time, learn a lot about the way the TSC works, you'll be able to give your input which can help in the selection of the best destinations to vote on for SCSC and, heck, you may even get psyched up and find yourself wanting to run a ski trip.

Speaking of running a trip, I plan on scheduling a lot of great trips for the 2004-2005 season, and I really need some experienced trip leaders to step up to the plate and run a trip. Here's how it goes ski friends, we can dream about going to many different ski resorts, but these trips ain't gonna run themselves, *we need leaders!* So, contact me ASAP and I'll make every attempt to assign you to the trip of your choice. If the TSC is not going to your favorite destination, let me know, I'd be happy to have you run a club trip just about anywhere that makes sense. My goal this year is to grow our skier numbers. I'm going to do my best to do my job in that effort by providing as many ski trips as possible so *"no skier is left*

*behind."* But, now I need **each of you** to help me by bringing at least ONE new skier or returning skier to join in on one of our ski trips. If we each bring one new SKIING MEMBER to our club, we would dramatically increase our skier numbers.

So, I, Lori "Speed Bunny" Gilliland, being of generally sound mind and skier body so hereby proclaim, and by the power vested in me by the Snow Gods and SCSC, the year 2004-2005 to be the "YEAR OF THE SKIER."

We're gonna get back to basics. Spend Thanksgiving with us in **Winter Park, Colorado** for the *TSC Fall Roundup* – November 23-28, 2004. We're also going to the place where my ski legs got their first taste of the white stuff and where the addiction began many many years ago...MY favorite place, **Snowmass, Colorado** for *TSC Traditional* – January 8-15, 2005. Visit Germany's premier winter sports center, **Garmisch, Germany** for *TSC Winter Expedition* – January 28-February 5, 2005. Join us at Summit County's largest ski area, **Copper Mountain, Colorado** for *TSC Winter Shootout* – February 12-19, 2005. Now, earlier I told you that my ski addiction began in Snowmass Colorado, so I thought no other resort could ever give me the thrill that Snowmass does. But, in 2001 on my third trip with SCSC, I discovered an experience that was a new kind of thrill. Imagine carving down a nice groomed cruiser, skiing up and over a rise and seeing the awe-inspiring beauty of Lake Tahoe reveal itself before you...Oh yeah, let me tell ya ski friends, it's a breathtaking view like no other. If this doesn't turn you on the first time you see it, you haven't got a pulse. So, get your heart rate up with us at **Heavenly-Lake Tahoe** for *TSC Final Showdown* – March 12-19, 2005. I guarantee you'll be begging for more.

We'll also be scheduling three to four awesome club trips with destinations to be announced, so stay tuned! Same Ski time, same Ski channel.



TSC Bid Meeting delegates Sue Bohnert, Dawn Rodriguez, John Rice, Lori Gilliland, Christine March, and Patti Maudsley



April's YNM Mixer at The Velvet Melvin



# Space City Ski Club 2004-2005 Ski Trip Schedule



**STAY TUNED...THE 2004-2005 TRIP SCHEDULE IS COMING IN  
NEXT MONTH'S SITZMARKE!**

### Vice President of Trips

Lori Gilliland (LG)  
(281) 493-3060  
lgilliland@att.net

### Director of Trips

Volunteer for this Appointed Position

### Director of Trips

Volunteer for this Appointed Position

## 2004-2005 Appointed Positions Available

*Candidates are needed for the following 2004-2005 positions.  
Contact the officer indicated below to apply and for further information.*

<u>Position</u>	<u>Officer to Contact</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
Board of Directors (4 positions)	Dawn Rodriguez	(281) 320-2040	dawn.c.rodriguez@aol.com
Director of Trips (2 positions)	Lori Gilliland	(281) 493-3060	lgilliland@att.net
Director of Programs	Marc Fellows	(281) 286-0503	mjfred@ev1.net
Director of Communications	Christine March	(281) 491-1129	christine.a.march@usdog.gov
Auditor	Dawn Rodriguez	(281) 320-2040	dawn.c.rodriguez@aol.com
TSC Representative & Alternative	Dawn Rodriguez	(281) 320-2040	dawn.c.rodriguez@aol.com

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donna7@aol.com



**Donna Kidwell, CRS, CRB**  
Broker Associate



As summer approaches and the infamous Texas heat takes over, some ski clubs might be tempted to take a siesta...not this ski club! Space City Ski Club will be turning up the heat with numerous exciting events.

We'll kick it off with our annual **Follies** on **May 17th**. **ComedySportz** will bring in their band of professional comedians

for a look at the amusing side of skiing...and we all know there is plenty of material on that topic! Your fellow SCSC members will be pulled into the routines for our added amusement. Plan on staying late for the post-Follies round of socializing that always accompanies this annual event. Remember, this is our last meeting until the Fall. It'll be a great one!

One way to beat the summer heat is to quench it with water activities. We've got that covered with three events!

The **Beach Party Weekend** on **June 4-6** will be held in Galveston, with the primary event being the big **AIA Sandcastle Competition** on Saturday at East Beach. You can volunteer to work or just attend the competition on Saturday, attend the night-time activities, and/or stay overnight in Galveston with SCSC group. The AC for this event is Ellen Eastham (281) 989-9935.

Our annual **Volunteer Party** (invitation only) will be a pool party on **June 12**. SCSC members who have served our club as volunteers in any of the various activities/trips throughout the past ski club year (2003-2004) will be rewarded with an

invitation to the party at SCSC expense. If you want to attend, check the official "volunteer list" published in this newsletter to make sure your name is on it. If your name is missing, contact your AC of the event of which you volunteered so we can add you to the list. If you haven't been a volunteer but would like to attend this event, you can easily get an invitation by serving as a volunteer for the volunteer party. Contact Cindy Moore (713) 984-1060 for information or to volunteer.

Come sail away with us at our **Second Annual "On the Water Spectacular" Weekend** in Clear Lake on **July 23-25**. We'll have sailing and motor boating, with a pool party at the beautiful Portofino Marina as our base of operations. Last year's event was a huge success with 75 people out on sails and 150 people at the pool party. Cindy Moore is the AC (713) 984-1060.

We've also got crewing for hot air ballooning, skydiving, wine tasting, mixers, happy hours, and more. Check our website for details.

As incoming V.P. of Programs, I look forward to our exciting year of activities. I've been pleased with the number of people who have already come to me with ideas and to volunteer to lead events. Contact me if you have an activity you would like to lead or if you have any other ideas or comments for activities.

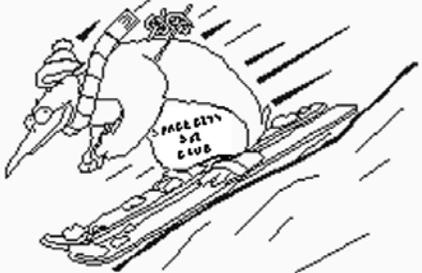
Selection of the new Director of Programs is ongoing. If you would like to assist in the planning of this exiting year of activities and programs, contact me at (281) 286-0503 [mjfreb@ev1.net](mailto:mjfreb@ev1.net).

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Houston, Texas 77055-4415

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Date	Event (Cost/Final Payment)	Coordinator	Phone	E-mail/Address
<b>MAY</b>				
5/1	Cinco de Mayo Dance Party (\$23/Apr. 19)	Vicki Faulkner	(713) 863-0470	Vicki.faulkner@shell.com
5/6	YNM Mixer-Under the Volcano		(713) 526-5383	2349 Bissonnet
5/17	SCSC Meeting-Cadillac Bar-The Follies by ComedySportz		(713) 862-2020	1802 Shepherd Dr.
5/27	SCSC Happy Hour-Sambuca Jazz Café		(713) 224-5299	909 Texas Avenue
<b>JUNE</b>				
6/4-6	Beach Party/AIA Sandcastle Competition (\$20/May 17)	Ellen Eastham	(281) 989-9935	eeeastham@panhandleenergy.com
6/12	SCSC Volunteer Pool Party (rain date 6/26)	Cindy Moore	(713) 984-1060	lucinda_moore@ev1.net
6/17	SCSC Happy Hour -The Standard		(832) 252-1400	2707 Fountainview
6/19	Wine Tasting Party	Dawn Rodriguez	(281) 320-2040	dawncrodriguez@aol.com
6/24	YNM Mixer-Sam's Boat/Sam's Place		(713) 781-BOAT	5720 Richmond
<b>JULY</b>				
7/17	Balloon Ascension (assist as crew, no fee)	Dick Carter	(832) 215-5125	rcarter10@houston.rr.com
	Tandem Sky Diving (\$169/July 8)	Chip Stokes	(281) 488-5778	cstokesscsc@houston.rr.com
7/15	HH/YNM Mixer-Comedy Club (TBA)			
7/23-25	"On the Water Spectacular Weekend"	Cindy Moore	(713) 984-1060	lucinda_moore@ev1.net

(FO) =Family Optional \* Subject to Approval, date tentative

If you have an idea for an activity or would like to volunteer to be an AC or AAC, contact VP-Programs, Marc Fellows (281) 286-0503 [mjfred@ev1.net](mailto:mjfred@ev1.net). For more information or to pass on ideas about the happy hours Young & New Member Mixers (YNM Mixers), contact Cindy Moore (713) 984-1060 [lucinda\\_moore@ev1.net](mailto:lucinda_moore@ev1.net).

# POOL FUN

## SCSC Volunteer Pool Party

**Saturday, June 12**  
**2 - 6:30 p.m.**

**Free for all on those volunteers listed on page 15 of this month's Sitzmarke.**

**Volunteer to work on the planning committee and YOU, too, can attend!**

**Secret Location with a great pool!**  
**Look for your invitation via email.**

**Rain Date: June 26**

Contact Cindy Moore (713) 984-1060 [Lucinda\\_moore@ev1.net](mailto:Lucinda_moore@ev1.net) for more information



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E-mail: [mike.dawson@att.net](mailto:mike.dawson@att.net)

11211 Richmond Avenue, B-111  
Houston, TX 77082

# MEET THE NEW VP OF PUBLICATIONS

Ross Baker, VP of Publications



I am **Ross Baker**, your new V.P. of Publications.

I am a native Houstonian, having attended Robert E. Lee High School, and hold undergraduate degrees from Rice University, University of Houston and an MBA from the University of St. Thomas.

I have been enjoying skiing since my days at Rice some 30 years ago. I am a fairly new member of SCSC, having not known of its existence until recently. And, I am glad I discovered this group! I met my beautiful and vivacious wife, Diane, through the people and activities of the club.

In the work world, I have worn many hats. These range widely from being a carpenter, IRS auditor, electrician, electrical designer, electrical engineer in the pollution control industry, broadcast radio engineer, broadcast radio sports producer (produced the first Spanish language Oilers games),

and commercial building contractor.

My present position is in our family-owned life insurance company in which I manage various commercial and residential properties.

My hobbies are similarly varied. Besides skiing, these include computers, Ebay, photography, RV camping, bicycling, boating, water skiing, bowling, amateur radio, gardening, scuba diving and raising two boys: not necessarily in order of importance!

My experience in desktop publishing began with my producing a wellness newsletter for our company insured's. Subsequently, through my past interest in raising and showing Tennessee Walking horses, I was editor of the Houston Walking Horse Association's monthly newsletter.

I am appreciative of your confidence to place me in this executive position with SCSC.

Should you need to contact me you can email me at **Ross@Rossbaker.com**.

## BECOME A MEMBER OF SCSC TODAY!

### Space City Ski Club Membership Information

**Space City Ski Club has two levels of membership: \$30 per year for an Individual and \$45 per year for a Couple. Check out our trip rates and you will see how much money you can save on your next trip just by becoming a member. With your membership you will also receive the club newsletter, the SITZMARKE, and free entrance to our monthly General Meetings.**

**Membership is required to attend club trips.**

**Our membership period runs from May 1st to April 30th**

**Download a membership application form at [www.spacecity.org](http://www.spacecity.org) or contact:**

**Penny Chancey**

**V.P. of Membership**

**(713) 686-4863**

**[vppennychancey@msn.com](mailto:vppennychancey@msn.com)**

**Make checks payable to: Space City Ski Club**

**Mail to: P.O. Box 22567, Houston, TX 77227**

#### Quick Form

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Trip Interests: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Activity Interests: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been a member before?

## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES...DON'T MISS OUT ON THESE EVENTS



"A chance to see the world as you have never seen it! Experience the thrill of a LIFETIME!"

### TANDEM SKYDIVING HOT AIR BALLOON ASCENSION

**Saturday, July 17**

- Arrive at Sunrise to participate as "crew member" in the Hot Air Balloon Ascension
- Arrive at 8:30 a.m. to attend Tandem Skydiving class, and then JUMP with an experienced instructor the same day
- Participate in both events or just come to watch

Join SCSC at SKYDIVE SPACELAND, located near Alvin.

For skydiving information and to request a video contact AC Chip Stokes (281) 485-5778  
cstokesscsc@houston.rr.com

For Balloon Ascension contact AC Dick Carter (832) 215-5125 rcarter10@houston.rr.com

### "On the Water Spectacular Weekend"

**July 23-25**

Friday

Festivities in Clear Lake

Saturday

Water Volleyball • Pool Party • BBQ at the Portofino Marina • Sailing with TASS and other watercraft rides

Sunday

Lakeside brunch



*Co-Sponsored by Space City Ski Club, Clear Lake Area Ski Club  
and Texas Association of Single Sailors*

To volunteer watercrafts and for more information contact  
AC Cindy Moore (713) 984-1060 Lucinda\_moore@ev1.net



### BEACH PARTY WEEKEND & AIA SANDCASTLE COMPETITION\*

**Friday-Sunday, June 4-6**

**Cost: \$20\***

**Final Payment: May 17**

**Sandcastle building competition begins at 10 a.m. Awards at 4:30 p.m. Volunteer for a 5-hour shift or just come to watch for the day.**

**Optional activities include staying the entire weekend, dinners, and Sunday at Moody Gardens. Family optional.**

Location: East Beach, Galveston

Check website information from 2003 competition at [www.aiasandcastle.com/2003/eventinfo.htm](http://www.aiasandcastle.com/2003/eventinfo.htm)

AC Ellen Eastham (281) 989-9935 eceastham@panhandleenergy.com



On our trip to Chamonix, we had some “early bird” travelers who got a head start when they flew to Nice, then toured for several days along the southern coastline of the French Riviera before joining the regular trip. **Gayle Bahler** flew in from Florida to vacation with her sister, **Pat Daugherty**. **Millie Jude**, **Donna Berglund**, **Sylvia Hudspeth**, **Ellen Eastham**, **Bill Lodato**, **Bob Tripp** and **Marda Waters** were given a first-class tour by their guide, who knew the area and history well. They toured Nice, Eze, Cannes and Monte Carlo. The group visited the palace in Monaco, saw the route of the Grand Prix race and won some coins at the casino in Monte Carlo. **Christie Burke**, **Pat** and **Gayle** even earned a tiger tail from the adventurous Los Amigos ski group that was also staying at the same hotel. As the second group of skiers started out from Houston, **Joe Kulpinsky** and **Patricia McKechnie** took the dress standard up a notch by arriving at the airport in truly elegant attire.



Ready to go skiing

After a hassle-free flight into Geneva followed by a scenic bus trip through the French Alps, we arrived Saturday afternoon at the Hotel Alpina. We were greeted by **Cheryl Mershon**,

the TSC Winter Expedition Coordinator, and invited to the orientation meeting that evening. When we gathered for our meeting, **Brenda Soileau** already had a story to tell about the bidet that came on by itself and flooded the bathroom while she and **Penny Chancey** were rearranging the furniture in the other section of their room...French ghost?

Sunday morning as we had breakfast in the hotel restaurant, everyone was discussing their plans for the day while enjoying the beautiful panoramic view of the mountain range. Some of our guided skiers were whisked off to different mountain areas to enjoy incredible scenery and different levels of difficulty. **Mike Montgomery**, **Bob Debell**, **Ellen**, and **Diane Baker** skied along the gorgeous and world-famous Vallée Blanche glacier. (Be sure to read Ellen's story about the experience). **Yolanda Fusilier** got a bit squeamish about having to wear an avalanche control beeper and decided that this was perhaps not what she had in mind when she signed up for guided skiing. While **Andrea Meltzer** enjoyed a private lesson with her very own French ski instructor, **Charles Albright** ended up skiing with **Chip Stokes** instead of his first choice, Carmen Electra. On this trip we also had people like **Davis Tucker** and **Margaret Walker**, who spent so much time on the slopes that we rarely saw them in town, and novice, **Nora Montgomery**, who reported that she enjoyed skiing for the first time.

Since we were in Chamonix during Super Bowl weekend, we had the French version of a football party in the hotel bar with a “super” bowl that was full of potato chips and an all-night bartender. Our passionate and enthusiastic viewers, **Ron Rodriguez**, **Christina Anderson**, **Sean O'Brien**, **Chip Brenda**, and others partied through the Monday a.m. to the last quarter. **Tor Lileng** was present at the football gathering, but I don't think he saw many first downs.

Skiing was not the only way to enjoy the Mont Blanc region. **Shirley James** and **Rosa Fusilier** did a great job walking around the top of the Aiguille du Midi peak after riding the gondola to a height of 11,500 ft. The thin air was making even the youngest of our group catch their breath, but the unique panorama view of the Mont Blanc terrace and the summits make the trip up worth it. **Shirley Debell** and **Ellen** had an adventurous experience learning how to drive a dog sled. It is uncertain if either will be ready for the next Iditarod race in Alaska. It is also doubtful that Shirley and Ellen could get as lost as the group who tried to find the entrance to the ice hockey area. A local hockey team was playing against an amateur group from Boston so a few people from our club wanted to cheer for the USA team as well as purchase some hockey shirts. The directions given by the hotel front desk sounded simple but by the time this wandering group had walked around back alleys and through snow piles, the first period was over. When the group finally did get inside the area, they found out from Sean and Bill there was a shorter and better route. Oh well, the Boston team did win and the group got to cheer for them, so all was not lost.

We had daily opportunities to explore the Alpine regions as well as other countries. Our first tour took us into Aosta, Italy, where

monuments from the Roman period are still standing in the center of town. After a guided tour through the cobblestoned streets of the old town, a relaxing lunch



Augustus Arch in Aosta Italy Founded by Romans 25 AD

was enjoyed by **Gloria Lopez** and **Carmen Mikhail** where they were able to practice their Italian to the delight of the restaurateur owner. Tuesday we had the opportunity to travel to the Chillon Castle, on the shore of Lake Geneva, in Switzerland. The castle was dated from the 13th century and immortalized by the English poet Lord Byron. **Jose Araujo**

*(Continued on page 12)*

(Continued from page 11)

was seen waving his arm out of the opening in watch tower while **Larry** and **Deborah Christie** were checking out the dungeon where Lord Bryon carved his name into the stone. Lyon was the Wednesday excursion for the people who wanted to visit the gourmet capital of France. Thursday we traveled a short distance to Megeve, where “the rich and famous” live and play. After a traditional French lunch, the group split up and the shopping began. Penny found a fur shop first, then gave directions to **Camille LaRoe**, Carmen and others in our club as well as some people from the other ski clubs. **Ann Rogers** was the perfect size for French clothing and was able to purchase a beautiful outfit.

On our last excursion, we traveled to the beautiful town of Annecy, located between the lake and the mountains in the Haute-Savoie district of France. Annecy has canals that flow through the center of the old town, somewhat reminiscent of Venice. When we arrived in Annecy, it was market day. The local vendors were selling everything from cheese and fruit to herbal soap and leather purses. **Carolyn McGinnis** browsed the different stalls but was drawn to the shop with the cashmere sweaters. **Dawn Rodriquez** and **Julie Ostistaya** were on their own special shopping spree for French lingerie in Geneva. Others like **Patty Finch**, **Laurie Ravkind**, **Ray Villarreal** and **Caryn Brewer** rented a car and toured the area under the guidance of **Suzan Brice**, who had previously lived in Geneva. **Brett** and **Cathey Littell** made special arrangements through the Chamonix tourist information center and toured on their own.

With our days filling up with skiing and excursions, our nightlife wasn't lacking either. Besides the Super Bowl party on Sunday, we had a SCSC party on Monday night with hors d'oeuvres made with avocado and prawn mousse, curry duck foie gras and Roquefort mousse with apple and walnut, just to name a few. Nearly everyone attended our little get together so we were able to pose for our group picture.

The casino in Chamonix had slot machines that were tested by a few members of our group and **Darrell Mayfield** seemed to be the one with the loudest machine. Could it be that Darrell's machine was paying off? The midweek disco party was another test of endurance among the dancers in our group.

With the dine-around plan available, different groups tried out different restaurants in Chamonix. While experiencing the art of fine dining at the Hotel Mont Blanc, **David George** was able to enjoy a Peking duck dinner that the staff sliced especially for him. That was some kind of service, having your meat cut for you. The desserts were such a work of art that pictures had to be taken.

A farewell party and dinner was given on Friday night by the Texas Ski Council and dancing was enjoyed by all. After the music stopped at the TSC party, Charles, Tor, Brenda, Jose and others moved to The Garage and danced until it was time to load the bus and head to the airport.

On one of the post trips, Bill, Diane, and Ross went to Sicily to join the TSC group for a few days. They were able to visit an open air living museum, tour Greek ruins where remnants of previous societies were uncovered and visit a Roman theater located by Mount Etna. Bill was able to locate information about his family history and get copies of the records. Ann was able to visit with her son who has been stationed in Sicily since August. Another group went to Geneva for a few days then flew to Paris. While in Geneva, some people toured the International Red Cross Museum and the United Nations building. We also found a great Chinese restaurant around the corner from our hotel. The days in Paris were spent going to the Louvre Museum, Museum d'Orsay, Champs-Elysees, the catacombs, Napoleon's Tomb, Eiffel Tower and too many others to mention. A great time was had by all and we can't wait to do it again next year.



Enjoying the beach in Cannes on the French Riviera



Group enjoying the welcome to Chamonix Party

# Skiing Vallée Blanche in Chamonix, France

By Ellen Eastham



Aiguille du Midi elevation 12600 and the ice walk

To some who seek a challenge in skiing, it does not necessarily mean skiing a black diamond, or an advanced ski run. Five SCSC members skied twenty kilometers on the “ultimate” glaciers of Vallée Blanche. When skiing the first ridge and over the glaciers, it is recommended to hire an experienced guide to avoid the dangers of out-of-bounds skiing.

**Mike Montgomery** and **Charles Albright**, each with a different ski guide

for several days, enjoyed the diversity of the various ski areas around Chamonix. Finally their guide said they were ready for Vallée Blanche (White Valley). **Diane Baker**, **Bob Debell**, **Ellen Eastham**, and **Los Amigos Rob Lowry** hired a ski guide, Fabian, to take the four of them to advanced section of Vallée Blanche. They each had different experiences, but on the same spectacular mountain.

A visual of the journey first begins riding the two trams to the top of Mont-Blanc at Aiguille du Midi, an elevation of 12600'. The group is instructed how to put on the body harness and monitor equipment. “Is this in case we fall and you have to locate us?” we wonder. After a short walk through an ice tunnel, there is a spectacular panoramic view of Chamonix spread out across the valley below. The challenge initiates with an ice walk down a narrow pathway, for over 100' four skiers are roped together, testing the “teamwork” concept as they pass skies down to each other, and make their way slowly

along the icy path. If someone had slipped from the path on the mountain crest, a serious injury could have occurred. The ski guide wearing crampons, walks by the skiers with ease, and while wearing all of their ski poles on his backpack!

Now on the summit, the group dons their skies while viewing the Alps' mountaintops of three countries, Switzerland, Italy, and France. The three borders meet at the summit of Mont Dolent, also called “peak of the three frontiers.” The adventure is an awesome experience as they ski on the “Glacier du Géant Vallée Blanche” and “Mer de Glace” (Sea of Ice). La Mer de Glace is eleven km long from its origin in Glacier du Géant and 400 meters at the thickest point. It is the second largest glacier in the Alps after Aletsch Glacier (Switzerland). Various observations have determined the speed of advance of the Mer de Glace to be 90 m/yr, or 1 cm/hr.

It was a heart throbbing experience to ski on a narrow ridge between two drop-offs, which required meticulous skill to avoid the danger of the hidden, bottomless crevasses. Often there was no room for error. Some runs were so steep that the group was taught the “jump turn” to change directions. Without formal ski runs, all along the journey were new experiences, through a narrow ice alley, past blue ice formations that were huge, majestic, and unique creations of nature. The end of the journey was strenuous as the group trekked up the steep incline on the side of a mountain, by stepping where others' boots have been. Finally arriving at the warming hut on the summit, Rob was the first to arrive, waiting with a tray of drinks and a smile of encouragement for the group. As a finale in the picturesque sunset, was the last venture of descent. The entire expedition was a true test of a physical skiing challenge. This was one of the most awesome, yet technical and demanding experiences never to be duplicated. The group all earned their bragging rights, that they skied the unforgettable trip down the glacier “Vallée Blanche.”



Rob, Diane and Fabian overlooking Glacier du Géant Vallée Blanche



Bob Debell by Argentiere Glacier at Grands Montets

# DOWNHILL KREWE FREEZES ON FLAT LAND! GALVESTON MARDI GRAS 2004

By Shirley Lang



Downhill Krewe Party Gang

SCSC's Downhill Krewe returned to Galveston on February 13 to 15 for a weekend of Mardi Gras festivities, which included a range from a Barn Bash to Z Procession, throwing lots of beads to rock-n-rolling with

Herman Hermits, Zestival-partying-till-we-drop to volunteering at the Special Peoples' Ball.

Friday the 13th, 33 fun-loving Downhill Krewe members joined Krewe of Aquarius for their annual Barn Bash. Thanks to **Joe Cannata** for making the Barn Bash festivities possible. Inside the Barn were the Krewe of Aquarius' floats with Krewe members in costume throwing beads. There was a live band with lots of dancing and libations. This year's Galveston Mardi Gras theme was "Let's Rock 'N Roll." **Greg Botard** walked away with the most beads of the evening, along with the coveted Surfboard beads.

On Saturday, February 14 we were in beautiful Galveston, Mardi Gras 2004 and also Valentine's Day. Can it really be this cold? You bet your frozen butt it is! Saturday morning started out at the Z Krewe Tailgate Party. **Milton** and **Janice Lazarone** braved the cold by drinking coffee while **Shirley Lang**, **Barb Ehrlich**, **Dana Wardell** and others survived with flasks of Hot Nuts. Once well lubricated, the 50+ members of the Downhill Krewe gathered for the Z Procession into the Strand. All were dressed in their Rock 'N Roll attire, crazy hats and ready to Have Fun! **Ellen Eastham**, **Sue Radoff** and **Debbie McDonald** really rocked in their poodle skirts.

A Special Salute to SCSC's Downhill Krewe Royalty for 2004: King Slalom II-**Bill Simmons**; Queen Moguls II-**Sandy Perry**; Black-**Ted Bergeron** and **Ellen Eastham**; White-**Marc Fellows** and **Diane Stotz**; Purple-**Chip Stokes** and **Cindy Moore**; Green-**Jeff Warren** and **Barbara Rossetti**.

SCSC's 2003 Downhill Krewe Royalty were: King Slalom I-**Sean O'Brien** and Queen Moguls I-**Patti Maudslay**. Plans for our King Bill and Queen Sandy to ride in the Royal Bicycle Surrey proved a challenge. To the rescue, were the loyal servants **Bill Cockrell**, **Joan Osbourn**, **Mary Kay Kitchens**, **Becky Hall** and **Julie Raley**, who pushed the surrey throughout the parade route and then to the rental return.

The Downhill Krewe had beads, beads, and more beads. We threw as many beads as possible to procession watchers along

the 10 block route. However, at the end many of us still had beads. A very special THANKS to **Bill** and **Julie Raley**, who made our fabulous Downhill Krewe banner.

When the procession was over, folks went their own way. Ellen led a group of 15 to Zestival, which was Z Krewe's balcony party with bead throwing, food, bands and libations. **Ted** and **Debbie Bergeron**, **Sharon** and **Merril Smith**, **Lisa Smith**, **John Rice**, **Kayleen Kill** and **Sean O'Brien** wandered the streets performing for and catching beads. Ted walked away with the most beads for the day, along with the coveted dolphin beads.

Costumes of all kinds were seen. Most of us were in warm skiwear; after all we are the Downhill Krewe. **Walter** and **Cheryl May**, **Vicki Faulkner**, **Marianne Pearce** and others were rocking and rolling and moving and shaking, really to keep warm, between shots of Hot Nuts. The highlight for **Debbie** and **Jeff Warren** was watching Herman Hermits perform and remembering all the words. With the clouds growing darker, it was time to wander back to our Holiday Inn Party Central for — MORE FUN.

Saturday evening, **Glenn** and **Gonul Youngblood** and the rest of the Downhill Krewe gathered in Party Central for the Gambrinus Parade Watching Party. Barb made Jello shots that she passed around, and some takers just passed...out. We had a great view of the Krewe of Gambrinus Parade from Party Central. There was good food, good drinks, good shots, and the Krewe — who knew how to have a good time. As the party wound down in Party Central and Zestival, several tireless revelers headed to the hotel bar for more dancing.

Sunday was a beautiful day and much warmer. The Downhill Krewe folks were on the last run by now. Special kudos to those who helped with the Special Peoples' Mardi Gras Ball on Sunday at Moody Center: **Greg**, **Debbie**, **Ellen**, **Chip**, **Becky**, **Linda Licarione**, **Bill & Julie**, **Jeff & Debbie**, **Sue**, and **Don Macken**. For those volunteering, it was a Special Day.

SCSC's Downhill Krewe wishes to thank ALL of the Z Krewe Zanies for graciously allowing us to participate in their numerous activities.

Mark your calendar now and make plans to join the Downhill Krewe and attend Z Procession on January 29, 2005.



Downhill Krewe

# 2003-2004 VOLUNTEERS

A round of applause to our Volunteers this year! It takes many dedicated persons in order to run ski trips, local activities, happy hours, meetings, and be officers to run the ski club. This year's volunteers listed below will be honored at the Volunteer Party to be held June 12. If you are not on the list below and should be, contact Cindy Moore (713) 984-1060 lucinda\_moore@ev1.net. If you would like to volunteer at the party, then you, too, can attend!

Debbie Abadie	Joe Daleo	Lee Holsenbeck	Nicky Minear	Paige Sarff
Chuck Albright	Samantha Davidson	Roger Holzman	Jerry Montgomery	Peter Sarff
Steve Amy	Mike Dawson	Bob Horan	Mike Montgomery	Janet Schafer
Christina Anderson	Judy Dexter	Jeannine Jiral	Nora Montgomery	Peggy Schillinger
Jose Araujo	Ann Dorn	Millie Jude	Peggy Montgomery	Judy Schiro
Al Austin	Ellen Eastham	Kayleen Kill	Cindy Moore	Leona Schroeder
Diane Baker	Brianna Edwards	Keith Kirkman	Melanie Morin	Clint Sepolio
Ross Baker	Jim Edwards	Mary Kay Kitchens	Mike Murphy	Sharon Simandl
Gary Barrett	David Eickhoff	Randy Kratz	Laura Naisdadt	Gerry Simpson
Linda Beebe	Cheryl Eickhoff	Brenda Kuciemba	Natalia Nouel	Nives Stanfelj
Debbie Bergeron	Cheryl Esposito	Marnie Lamb	Sean O'Brien	Chip Stokes
Ted Bergeron	Vicki Faulkner	Shirley Lang	Jane Orr	David Stotz
Donna Berglund	Marc Fellows	Linda Licarione	Joanie Osborne	Diane Stotz
Pat Blair Huntington	Jan Ferrell	Brett Littell	Leyla Ozkardesh	Steven Teoh
Susan Blome	Hope Flynn	Laura Longbottom	Marianne Pearce	Lisa Thomas
Sue Bohnert	Ladye Freitag	Bruce Lowther	Pat Peich	Heather Tonnessen
Bill Bomberger	Ed Freiter	Alfred Luaces	Dan Petersen	Scott Tonnessen
Bill Brown	Lori Gilliland	Marsha Lutz	Ina Picarello	Thuy Tran
Christie Burke	Sara Green	Cheryl Mae	Bill Raley	John Tulloss
Charles Butler	Eric Guldenzopf	Mike Magnum	Pat Reinhardt	Nelson Turner
Gary Butler	Yvonne Guy	Rebecca Maitland	Sue Radoff	Marti Turner
Carol Cain	Rebecca Hall	Ellen Manhard	John Rice	Manolo Valle
Leslie Caldwell	Richard Hall	Christine March	Richard Rocque	Ray Villarreal
Craig Campbell	Jessica Halter	Lori Matthews	Brenda Rodriguez	Joe Walker
Penny Chancey	Mary Ann Harrell	Patti Maudslay	Dawn Rodriguez	Dana Wardell
Kate Charvel	Jeri Hartman	Brook McClain	Ron Rodriguez	Debbie Warren
Deb Cini	Ron Hayes	JoAnn McClain	Laura Rowley	Susan Wicker
David Cone	Suzanne Hegemier	Janet McKenzie	Sue Salvage	Jeri Wilson
Carol Conner	Darlene Hirasaki	Carmen Mikhail	Jeff Sarff	Bob Wray
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