

Trip Report – President's Week in Taos

By Chris Bryan

Be honest - who among us has not prayed for snow?

One week before our scheduled arrival Taos' much publicized major new attraction still had not yet opened due to lack of snow. True to form, Taos Ski Valley would not disappoint the SCSC loyalists. Two days before our arrival Kachina Peak received its final touches of powder and at long last the newest lift opened up access to the 12,450' peak previously accessible only via hiking. Everyone was anticipating enjoying the

spectacular view of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado from this iconic peak! During our Saturday night reception at the ski-in ski-out Snakedance Lodge we were given an orientation to the new lift along with an update of the various mountain conditions, as well as strategies for negotiating the intimidating descent from Kachina Peak. The Taos Ski Valley Sales Manager kindly but firmly informed us that the only way down was on skis - the new lift could not be used as a way down so if you were not comfortable with a double black diamond, you should not ride up! The next morning Charles Albright went three for three - he made it down Kachina three times on the third day of its operations. Congratulations "Big Dog!"

Sunday night's pizza party turned into an



Jim Walker; Linda Krupps; Bill Reilly; Meera Raghavendra; Craig Campbell; Brenda Lacombe; Sid Lacombe; Charles Albright; Steve Slade; David Klaus; Chris Bryan; Debbie Abadie; Joan Waddill; Marianne Pearce; Ehud Barak; Chris Urbanczyk

awards night after only one day of skiing. The slopes were very crowded on Sunday and Sid Lacombe was able to thin out the crowd by successfully taking out two boarders. For his service above and beyond the call of duty he was nominated and unanimously proclaimed the 2015 Slope Sniper. Congratulations to our former Bull Rider!

Monday night was our feast at the Snakedance GM's elaborate New Mexican style hacienda. Not only were there generous appetizers including smoked salmon, the BBQ brisket and the tilapia were delicious. The food was complimented by the predominately French wine from the GMs impressive wine cellar and a bottomless tower of margaritas which several people unsuccessfully tried to empty. We traveled to his home via the Rio Grande Gorge Bridge which had limited visibility due to the really cold wind blowing the snow that made skiing excellent for the next couple of days.

We were kept up to date regarding the concerts, bands, technical lectures, yoga classes and all other special President's Week events by Meera Raghavendra who somehow had the energy and stamina to be everywhere there was some action.

Most experienced skiers are aware of the occasional phantom member of a group. During the Taos trip, we all knew Ehud Barak was on the mountain but no one could actually remember where they had skied with him. Many saw him out of the corner of their eye or thought he had been just ahead or behind them on a run. However, he was rarely where he was supposed to be at any appointed time except for dinner!

Several people distinguished themselves by their ability to either prepare or consume both food and beverage. Brenda Lacombe not only prepared a delicious spaghetti dinner for

all but she also served a breakfast of champions for her condo mates. Most appreciated was the pancake syrup comprised of 3 parts Makers Mark and one part Log Cabin. Please feel free to contact Brenda directly for more of her mood altering recipes.

Half the group took three to six days of lessons and rated their instructors as excellent. Some will tell you that on the last day of the lessons they were escorted to a secluded area hidden by trees where a beverage tasting remarkably like a gin martini was available for sampling. This turned out to be a great way to end a memorable return to Taos.