

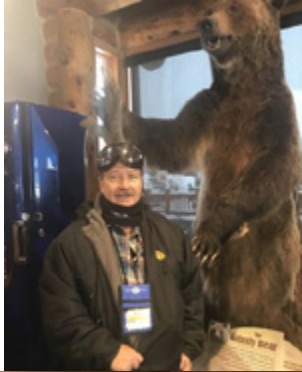
# BANFF 2020 TRIP REPORT

## by Ali Pethick TC and Joan Waddill ATC

Many of our travelers posted their pictures on the SCSC website photo album so I encourage everyone to go there as they are truly interesting and show what a great trip we all had.

After an uneventful plane trip to Calgary (not to be under appreciated) we were met by our bus to take us to the town of Banff. We traveled past ski jumping venues from previous Olympics and enjoyed our bus driver's discussion of the area. We arrived at the picturesque town of Banff and our hotel, the Ptarmigan Inn. Our hotel was small and centrally located with fabulous accommodations and an outstanding staff.

That first evening our tour operator, Sports America Tours, treated us to a great welcome party at a nearby restaurant and pub. The subs, pizza and wraps just kept coming and we were all more than satisfied. We



shared this event with the Austin Ski Club.

Sunday night we enjoyed our Space City Welcome party downstairs at Meatballs in our Ptarmigan Hotel. We had many types of pizza and a glass of wine or beer for all. There was much more to drink at the lobby bar. The Ptarmigan Inn was a wonderful place in general and we enjoyed many opportunities for socializing. Breakfasts every morning were fabulous and great way to start the day.

On Tuesday we shared another event with the Austin Ski Club, "the midweek dinner". That was another event in which the food was non-stop. We were served one course after another. We were also serenaded by Bil Cusak with

his new toy which he was kind enough to bring with him. The melodica is described as a contraption that looks like a small hand keyboard with a mouthpiece and sounds like a harmonica. I first saw it on Stephen Colbert's late show played by his band leader, Jon Baptiste—so cool.

The weekend we arrived we were greeted with a celebration in Banff called Snow Days. The main street was packed with activities. Vendors offered S'mores to help people to get into the spirit. Ice and snow sculptures decorated the streets. Snow transformed into art and carvers turned blocks of snow into magnificent sculptures that we all marveled at. Skijoring went on for most of the weekend. Skijoring is a winter sport in which a person on skis is pulled by a horse, a dog (or dogs) or a motor vehicle. It is derived from the Norwegian word skikjøring, meaning "ski driving". No SCSC members participated in this but we met plenty of people who did. It seemed that anyone who wanted to, could "just get in line" and wait their turn. I didn't.



Banff is located between three ski resorts called the Big Three—Norquay, Sunshine and Lake Louise. We had planned days that we skied as a club at each resort with designated lunch locations. Lunches were well attended and





most participated in them.

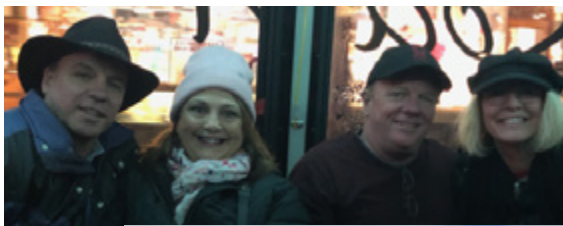
Connie and Diane had many opportunities to shop: at the many souvenir shops, jewelry shops and ski apparel shops.



Banff has many types of cuisine: Vietnamese, Thai, American (Steak Restaurants) as well as the old standbys like McDonalds.

Connie, David and Diane took a local bus to see Chateau Lake Louise and saw large, creative and beautiful Ice Sculptures. They also booked a tour to hike 3 miles at Johnston Canyon Ice Walk. They were equipped with ice cleats and hiking poles. In the winter the falls freeze solid to create Ice Sculptures.

Happy hours were scheduled every night which most attended and afterwards many ultimately



ended up at the Ptarmigan Inn bar which was located near the entrance of the hotel. When you walked in the door of the hotel you were right in the midst of "where everybody knows your name" It was hard to resist stopping before going up to your room when the gang called your name. We re-capped and reviewed the day and planned for the next adventure.



The Banff Grizzly House is known for their fondue and steaks, and history. Telephones are located at each table in case someone would like to call you. Ric, Pete Mathieu Sr and Jr. enjoyed an evening there as well as Frank Yu, Karen and Bil Cusak. I hear that they did not receive any phone calls.

Gordan Boulger's daughter, Lauren, joined us for the first time and agreed



that good snow and lots of challenging terrain was on the daily menu at Banff. Their favorites were the Paradise Cornice, Cowboy and the A-G Gullies at Lake Louise. At Sunshine Valley the wide open snow fields were great, while Delirium Dive was definitely challenging for any level skier. And Norquay's North American and Lone Pine were good mogul runs, but had iffy snow. Gordon said that beyond the skiing, their favorite lunch place was the Whitehorn Bistro, where Gordon said he had possibly the best burger he ever had.

Conditions were picture gorgeous but sometimes changing.



David Klaus, Angela and Robert rode Great Divide to the top and enjoyed beautiful conditions, then on the very next ride up we were socked in with zero visibility as we got to the top. It was like night and day and we struggled forever getting down to tree line where at least there was some contrast with the whiteness.

David Klaus skied with Andy Smith, Craig Campbell, and Angela Zumwalt for several days at each resort. When not skiing, David and Hope Klaus did a lot of dining and sight-seeing with Robert Riley and Angela Zumwalt, including tours of the Fairmont Banff Springs and the Fairmont Chateau at Lake Louise.

Bernie and Kate took a little walk along the river. They took the Voodoo trail at the recommendation of the visitors center. A ways into the Voodoo trail it got steep. They wished for cleats or snow shoes but kept going. When encountering a road one of them took the bus back and one walked. Although beautiful, Kate acknowledged it was not one of her brightest ideas. All in all it was a 10 mile journey. We were so glad they made it back.

We had several newcomers such as Ursula who said that as a newcomer to the SCSC she felt immediately included in the camaraderie and friendship. She appreciated the great accommodations, hot tub, and the spectacular Canadian Rockies, great weather and amazing ski conditions, the Banff Springs Hotel and walking out on to the middle of frozen Lake Louise. We were all so happy to meet her and enjoyed her company.

This was Karen Cusak's 11th day skiing. She was skiing blues at Sunshine and then Lake Louise!!!!

It was a great group of people and I thank my Assistant Trip Coordinator, Joan Waddell for her all her help along the way. I greatly appreciate all of her assistance to help to make this trip the success that it was. I also appreciate everyone's co-operation during the trip and hope to see everyone again at another event. I also thank Frank Yu for being the Sargent at Arms at every gathering.

