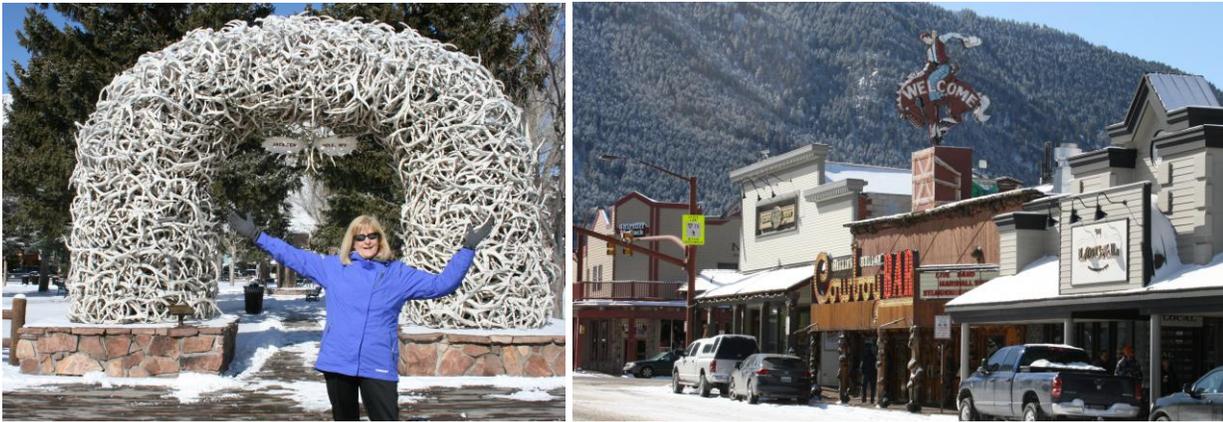


Jackson Hole 2015 - SJSC

The Jackson trip from Philly to Jackson via Chicago on Sunday, March 1st, started smoothly enough (if you don't count all the confusion at the self-check kiosks) except that we were minus two – John S. and Pat D. Hoping that by the time this article is published your health woes are a thing of the past. We actually felt like Pat was with us since most of the people kept calling his twin brother (Tim), Pat all week.

Just as our plane landed in Jackson, I received a text that one of my 3 pieces would not be arriving; turns out it was my suitcase – which after traveling from Philly, to Denver, to Atlanta to Salt Lake City, finally arrived in Jackson two days later. A nice touch for the group was being offered free mimosas in the baggage claim area - what a nice way to say, "Welcome to Jackson".

For all others it was a smooth arrival and time to get settled and explore the town a bit before our 4 pm Welcome Party. The crew from the mountain was there to answer questions for our extended group of 48. After the party, folks headed to sites all over town for drinks and eats and classic photos posing under the antler arches on each corner of the town square.



Monday, after a nice hot continental breakfast buffet at the Lexington, most of the group took part in the complimentary mountain tours. Conditions were firm, as snow had been a bit lacking, but that didn't hold any of the South Jersey crew back. With a bright sunny day it was a great introduction to the slopes. Après ski on Monday we had a great happy hour at the Town Square Tavern. Our waitress was from Allentown PA and spent many summers in Sea Isle City, NJ; we bonded immediately. They did a phenomenal job with the food spread – bison sliders, Sante Fe wraps, 3 kinds of wings, tomato and mozzarella skewers and yummy desserts – mini cheesecakes, lemon bars, brownies, etc.





The younger members... the 20 some-things, Alex, Eric, Tom, Ryan, Christian, Dale and Julia got the whole place involved in the mega-Jenga game – they were amply rewarded by the over 20 some-things sending shots of Fireball & Jaegermeister their way. As we left the happy hour the snow was coming down – a good omen for the next day. And in the snow – a small search party headed to the Snake River Brewery to find Diane’s un-lost camera (which was actually hiding under the lining in her handbag the whole time).



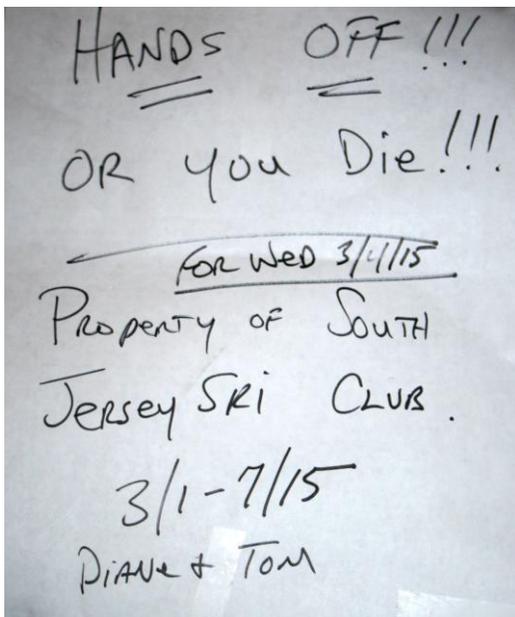
Tuesday morning it was snowing like a Banshee. Several decided to get a later start when visibility improved – which it did early on. About 9:30 the sun came out bright and strong. Those that skied reported a couple of inches of fresh powder hiding the hard pack below. Jim W. and Marge H. were exhausted after a full day lesson at the mountain.

Jim & Linda S. and Linda H. joined me as we explored the Wildlife Art Museum which had been recommended by Mitch R. We then did the National Elk Refuge tour where we got up close to a huge herd of elk and also saw coyotes and eagles – a must do if you are in Jackson during the winter.



Wednesday was our Targhee Day. On the bus at 7:30 am with our friendly driver Jeff, we enjoyed his ipod music mix for the hour drive there. We adopted a new potential member - Mike H. He and his wife Noreen tried to get on the trip after it was full. Unable to officially be on the trip, they went to Jackson on their own and stayed at the Lexington. I was able to get Mike a space on our Targhee day. Targhee had great snow, bright sun, stunning views and no people – it was a skier's dream. The SJSC skiers were so jazzed by the Targhee experience they were already making plans on the ride home to return the next day. Wearing my devil horns, it was only appropriate (with the help and generosity of Becky L) to offer shots of Fireball to all to toast our great day at Targhee.

Shortly after getting back we had our group pizza party in the breakfast area of the Lexington. Thanks to Ramon – our friendly intern at the Lexington, our beer & wine stash was safely guarded by the sign he created:





Noreen and Mike along with Scott W and his son Dale joined our group events - out there on their own, they were add – ons to our festivities. We had plenty of beer, wine and gourmet pizzas from Pinky G's to feast on – our favorite was the pulled pork pizza with barb-b-q sauce and peppers. Pinky's was featured on the show Diners, Drive-in, and Dives. We were having such a good time that 2 guys from NJ who were also staying at the Lexington came up to check out what was going on. They ended up skiing with our group that kept returning to Targhee and were heavily being recruited to join our club.

Thursday, while our new friend Noreen skied Jackson, when the Apres Vous lift broke down; she, along with all the others on the lift, had to be belayed down with ropes! Taking a day off, about a dozen of the group opted to go snowmobiling in Yellowstone including the Ripkin and Stimeck families, Marie & Don and Renata and Slawomir. As her husband Charlie stayed back fighting a flu bug, another group returned to Targhee headed by Lisa F. including Fred S., Becky L., Eileen G., Steve & Diane C., Earl & Donna J., Janis B. and Virginia S. They skied Mother Earth – in and out of the trees and had a blast – in fact so much of a blast that several went back to Targhee again on Friday! – including Fred, Rich K. and Joe B. By popular vote – the group expressed that future Jackson trips should have at least 2 Targhee days as they preferred Targhee to Jackson.



Friday was another gorgeous day as was Saturday. On Saturday, Mitch R., Jim T. & Steve R. rented a car and explored back roads on a sightseeing expedition. They were rewarded with being able to get great photos of big horn sheep and bison. Early evening on Saturday we had a leftover party back up in the mezzanine at the Lexington – which accomplished the goal of polishing off our leftover snacks and beverages and lively conversation was again in full swing.



And Sunday brought the end to a great week of skiing, adventures, new friendships and exploring all that the town and mountain of Jackson had to offer. On the short ride back to the airport, our driver Russell, told his version of the parable about stone soup and gave each person a small stone to remember to share and reflect on the memories of Jackson. A smooth flight home, a bit of a wait to get our luggage in Philly (wow, what a surprise) and our week had come to an end. No major injuries, lots of sun, great skiing, quality time with old friends and new friends, lots to eat, drink and see – all made possible by the great people on this trip – THANK YOU!

I'll let you know where I'm leading a group next season – hope to see you all on that trip wherever it us!

Thanks,

Diane (da Devil, da Queen)