

## Crested Butte FSC Trip - Feb. 21-28, 2015

Thirty four members of the Jacksonville Ski Club traveled to Crested Butte Colorado for a Florida Ski Council Ski Week. Numerous other FSC clubs were also attending Ski Week.

Thirty members flew out on American Airlines to Dallas and then on to Gunnison, Colorado. Twenty eight of us were then bussed to the Plaza Hotel and two to the Grand Lodge Hotel; all via Alpine Express. Four others chose to determine their own travel plans and meet us in either Gunnison or at the Plaza Hotel. The check in process was very efficient and all baggage was delivered to our respective room door steps.

The check in process was also handled very efficiently and members who had rental ski gear had sufficient time to get their rental gear/skis and/or snow boards. The rental shop was located in the base area near the Red Lady Express Lift. Later at 6PM to 7:30PM the FSC had organized the Orientation and Registration for special events (mountain tours, FSC Fun Race, etc.) in the Lodge Mountain Square, located in the Grand Ballroom. This was also a great time to enjoy pizza and meet and greet members from some of the other Florida Ski Clubs.

The Plaza is located about 150 yards from the ski base area; not too hard to get to and very easy to ski almost all the way back to the Plaza Hotel. The Plaza had indoor and outdoor hot tubs with a very cool bar/restaurant near the reception area desk. Many members spent some time enjoying shuffle board game and socializing on site. The rooms were very spacious and decorated authentic Colorado ski town style. The hotel services were top of the line in timeliness and accessibility.

We had a week of snow conditions to dream for with snow almost every skiing hour. Just when the visibility was getting questionable, the blue sky would appear again. Powder, we had it on many a trails and groomed where you wanted it. Just awesome skiing conditions all week long (A ski bums dream week.).

Monday morning we had first tracks and Trip Leader Breakfast. The first tracks were some of the most powder I have skied proficiently in in quite some time (Due to the exceptional instructions from one of the ski instructors.). Directly afterwards we meet with numerous Ski Club member's, at the Red Lady Express Lift for mountain tours which everyone seemed to enjoy. It is so important to know the mountain trails and conditions for maximum fun and safety. Later that evening in the Grand Ball Room at the Lodge Mtn. Square, the FSC had a get acquainted party/Buffer Dinner with DJ and dancing.

Tuesday was Crazy Hat and Boxer shorts Day and the FSC Fun Race. After the race, we had a lunch on the mountain at the Paradise Warming Hut located at the bottom of the Paradise Lift. During the week, Mountain Express supplied local transportation to crested Butte and surrounding communities. We also had numerous Après ski get together including Butte 66 and Django's/European cuisine. Wednesday was a free day to enjoy as you wished. Thursday FSC had a Theme mix-match Party/Buffer Dinner in the Grand Ball Room. Prizes for mix-match dress and awards for Fun Race were announced. Friday was another great snow day with rumors of snow storms coming. We had perhaps one of the best group club dinners at Le Bosquet Restaurant. Thirty nine of us enjoyed a wonderful meal, ambience, and

impeccable service. I would recommend it to all who have the opportunity to visit a true Colorado ski town.

Crested Butte is and has always been a very unique ski town with numerous shops, bars, restaurants and towns people who really treat you special. Mountain Express with its uniquely painted busses offer free public transportation nearly all day and all night (not all night). With 121 trails (27% beginners, 57% intermediate and 16% advanced) and 15 lifts, there is enough skiing for everyone: even if your ski like a hooligan (a bit wild but safe)/ski bum.

Along with our departure day came the snow storms to many air destination from Colorado, including Dallas/our planned arrival from Gunnison. Once we found out that Dallas AP was closed and many others, the only part of our return per our original plan were being bussed to Gunnison. Basically most of us and one trip leader were bussed to Denver and stayed at the Residence Inn Marriott. One trip leader travelled by car with Linda Walker / 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President / Florida Ski Council and during their travel, they arranged for all of us to have rooms or shared rooms when we got to the Residence Inn. Next they worked throughout the day and evening to assure we had connecting flights the next day to Jacksonville. Some skiers got their own transportation at their cost. We meet some of these skiers at the baggage claim in Jacksonville. The moral to this adventure is "stay with the group" you will get there safe, less costly and probably about the same time or better if you did it on your own. We had a big assistance in getting the bus from Gunnison to Denver by Laurie Vest of ski.com. Also, not enough can be said about the talented work and skill of Linda Walker and our trip leader Victoria Dye (even with a fractured arm from her snow board adventure) in tirelessly working to help us all get back to Jacksonville. LW is the best.

By: Anthony C. Martinez – Co-trip leader