

VOLUME XIV
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Potomac Valley Skiers, Inc.

APRIL 1978

WASHINGTON

MARYLAND

VIRGINIA

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

VOTING

Our Club has just had a very important vote (our first By-Law amendment); and we have another important vote coming up at our April meeting (our Annual election). April is our Annual Meeting and as such, repeats our annual election of officers. This year, the April meeting will also be a party meeting. We will meet at Kirk and Peggy Burns' house. **AFTER OUR VOTE**, we will have **FREE** refreshments (Beer, wine and setups; BYOB if you want anything stronger than that). We'll also have some disco-type dancing and maybe even some singing. With the possible exception of the Presidential candidate, our Nominating Committee has picked a fine slate of officers. I hope to see YOU ALL at our Annual Meeting.

At our March meeting, the members present and voting passed the first ever amendment to our By-Laws. The amendment raises our dues by \$2.50. However, the real purpose of the amendment, as I have previously explained, is to arrange the necessary funding to allow P V S to continue as a 100% Club in the United States Ski Association - Eastern Division. As expressed previously, I believe that, as THE local Club for skiers, it is essential that we remain active in organized skiing. For us, this means Eastern.

I further believe that many of us still have some false impressions about Eastern. It is not a group of nameless, faceless people in Vermont. **EASTERN IS US**. That's right - us! We in P V S can help make Eastern what we think it should be. Various committees and working groups are always in need of support and help. If you would like to help get our ideas across, contact me or any EXCOM member now. We'll put you in touch with the right people in Eastern. The best way to get our ideas and opinions through is by personal effort and follow through. And that can only be done by participation. Yours and Ours. So step up and volunteer now, so that the US in Eastern becomes a Southern Reality!

Ray McKinley

Ray McKinley
President

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ANNUAL MEETING

APRIL 18th, 1978

8:00 P.M.

Come and VOTE

for your Club

officers!

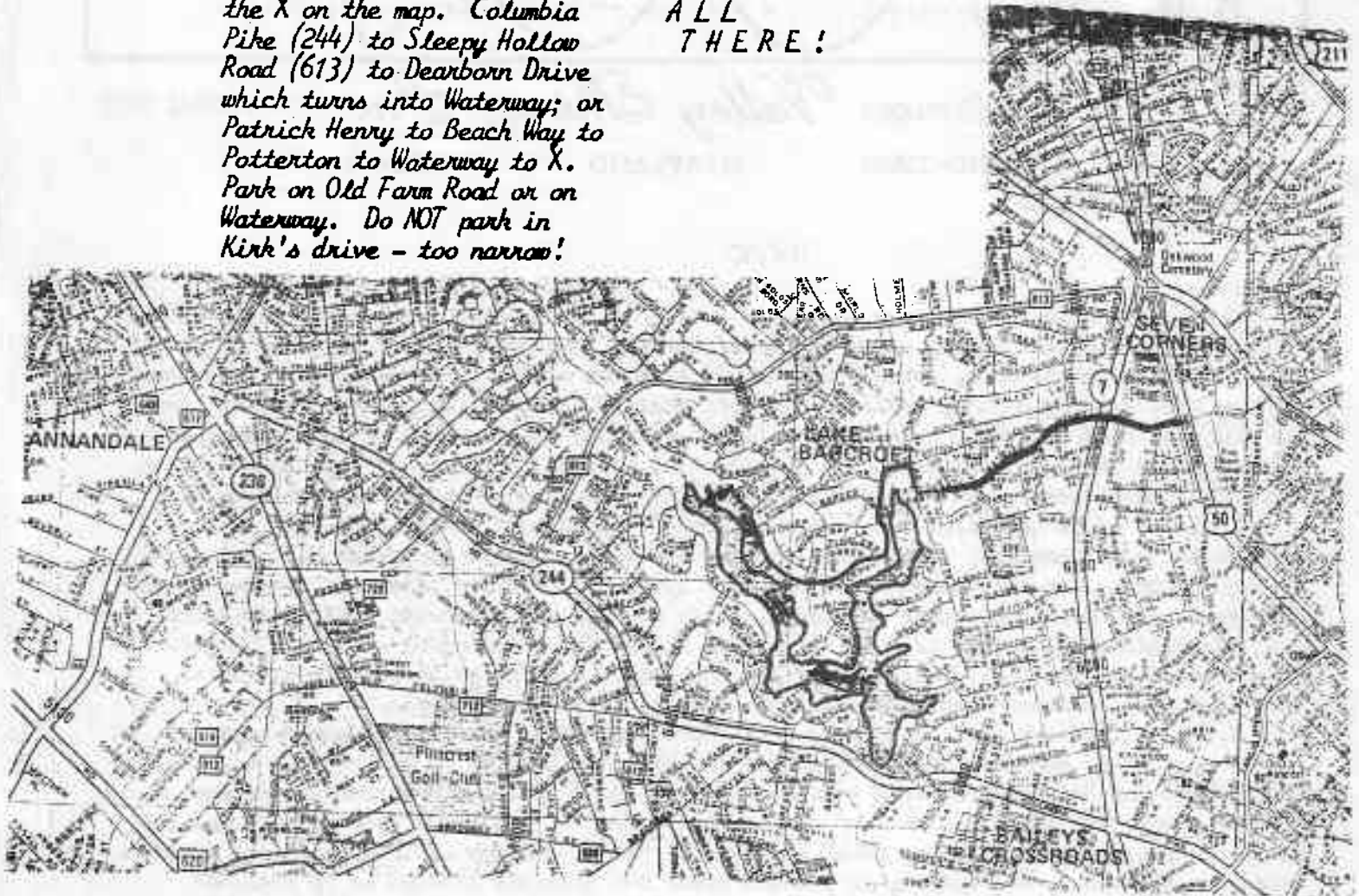
The April Meeting

When: April 18th at 8:00 P.M.

Where: Kirk and Peggy Burns' house at
6503 Waterway Drive in Falls
Church, Virginia (256-4443)

How To Get There: See Map. Drive to
the X on the map. Columbia
Pike (244) to Sleepy Hollow
Road (613) to Dearborn Drive
which turns into Waterway; or
Patrick Henry to Beach Way to
Potterton to Waterway to X.
Park on Old Farm Road or on
Waterway. Do NOT park in
Kirk's drive - too narrow!

SEE
YOU
ALL
THERE!



March Meeting Report

Our March meeting was held at its usual time, the third Tuesday of the month and our hostess for this month was Aase Berling and her steller (and starlit) 17th floor plus one Rec room! When Bob Marx showed up with the refreshments (which were free, by the way), the meeting was OFF and RUNNING. President Ray McKinley held the previously much announced vote on the proposed By-Law change for the purpose of remaining a 100% USSA-Eastern club. The vote was favorable by a wide margin: 24 For, 3 Against, and 6 Abstaining. Thus the dues increase was voted in and the Club will remain a 100% USSA-Eastern Club. The rest of the meeting was devoted to socializing, slide and movie showing. The socializing was done by EVERYONE; most there watched slides of Steamboat Springs, Colorado (by Geoff' Wade), movies of Mt. Sutton, Canada (by Bob Marx) and slides of his European trip (by Bob Wyckoff). The McKinley's had color prints of their adventures in Europe where they also skied with the Wyckoff European trippers. It was an interesting evening and was enjoyed by all. Eloise Neudorp passed out an interesting history of USSA-Eastern for the benefit of those interested in learning a bit about that organization. Interestingly, a current member of P V S (Penny Sayre Wiederhold) was recognizable thru the name of her father who was an early leader and contributor to the aims and success of the early Eastern organization.

EXCOM REPORT

The final meeting of the 1977-1978 P V S Executive Committee was held at the home of Don and Pat Cope. Ample refreshments were available from our genial hostess - who was attending her final EXCOM meeting during her current tenure on the Committee. Pat's dedication to the Club is well known thru her always constant and continuing active part in running Club affairs. Others present at this meeting were: President Ray McKinley, Vice President Marilyn Clark, EXCOM members Gail Gell, Julie King and Bob Marx; and TOOT editor Dick King. EXCOM members Gerry Deighton and Bill Hager did not attend due to a conflict in their schedules. Business discussed was:

1. Bob Wyckoff has requested P V S sponsorship for a European trip next year. He plans to go to two locales: Zurs, Austria and one other yet to be selected site. The EXCOM approved P V S sponsorship for this trip with the proviso: The trip is Self Supporting and P V S incurs no financial obligations, and all trip members be members of P V S or another Blue Ridge Ski Council Club.

2. P V S has named an organizer for the Third Annual Blue Ridge Tennis Tournament. Bob Crasley has agreed to take on the task. Bob has already reserved the Whitmarsh Recreation Park courts in Bowie, Maryland for this event. It will be held June 24th, 1978. Other details in TOOT when they develop. Any mixed doubles teams desiring to enter should get their games in shape NOW and look forward to registering for this outstanding combined event.

3. The Ninth International Dinner is now being planned. It will be Saturday, May 20th at Don and Pat Cope's house. The coordinator for reservations is Marilyn Clark. Call her right away (978-9435) since this has been a "sell-out" event since it has been in existence. Since Marilyn works, call her after 4:00 P.M. to be sure of making contact.

The business meeting was concluded at approximately 9:45 P.M.

IMPORTANT NOTICES

IMPORTANT NOTICE # 1 The first ever amendment to the P V S By-Laws has been voted by the Club membership. We have voted to increase the dues structure by \$2.50 to maintain our status as a 100% USSA-Eastern Club. This is a notably good and sensible decision by the Club since Eastern is our channel to organized skiing. And, in these days of rising costs and damaging law suits, the individual skier certainly needs a voice via organized skiing. The vote causes continuing hard work by our Membership Chairperson and for those efforts, we say Thanks to the incumbent. Future benefits from Eastern will be mostly derived from OUR input into OUR organization - USSA-Eastern!

IMPORTANT NOTICE # 2 Don't forget to come to our Annual Meeting and vote for your Club officers. Remember, these are the folks who keep your Club going. So come and give a vote (and a vote of confidence) to those persons who keep the Club going and contribute to your happy participation in Club activities. TOOT expresses its official appreciation for a job well done to those outgoing EXCOM members Pat Cope, Gerry Deighton and Penny Richards (just recently succeeded by Gail Gell).

MT. Sutton, Canada Trip Report

Another outstanding week long trip to this favorite ski resort was enjoyed by some 28 adults and 12 children. Blessed by 8 inches of new snow on Saturday of the weekend when we all arrived, it was a great week. The weather warmed up during the week and the snow held just right. P V Sers, P V S sons, and P V S quests were seen actively taking lessons and racing in the Ski School race on Thursday. Wherever you went on the hill (except Lift #4), one could find a P V S human stolon in some degree of progress. And the antiquers found time for their annual day trip to collect "ole things". All in all, another successful trip!

Anyone interested in attending the USSA-Eastern Annual Convention - May 5-7 at Lake Placid, New York - contact Ray McKinley for further details.

Club
pils available
\$1.00 each

O R:
two for \$3.00!
That's a bargain!?!

In early March, 23 skiers, under the leadership of PVSer Bob Grasley, set out on a Spanish Ski Safari.

"Skiing in Spain?" "Si, si!" insisted Grasley. "Just follow me."

We did, and he was right. Spain is the second highest country in Europe and the rain in the plain becomes snow in the mountains. It was all there waiting for us.

The Safari was structured not merely to ski but to see. Nine days of the 15 were set aside for skiing, the others for sightseeing and exploring.

Considerable stamina was required but no one faltered.

There were no casualties except for one lost suitcase and a rather large number of sore throats - (Roche are you okay now? And Mary Lee?)

We travelled from the Mediterranean Sea to the Pyrenees. We skied in Andorra, explored the landmarks of Barcelona and Granada, beachcombed on the Costa del Sol. We traversed majestic mountain ranges, visited ancient villages, sampled Spanish delicacies in exotic restaurants.

We exercised our school book Spanish (where would we have been without our Juanita?), traded addresses with new Spanish friends, and happily adapted to the "mañana" way of life. We arose late, skied late, ate late and went to bed at heaven-only-knows-the-hour.

We took siestas, drank wine from botas and learned to scream "Socorro!" at lazy T bar attendants (Duck, Marge, duck!). Wherever we were, we basked in the seemingly ever-present, all pervasive sun.

Our trip began with an overnight flight to Madrid and a connecting flight south to the palm trees of Malaga on the Costa del Sol. We boarded a waiting bus and headed for the Sierra Nevada mountains.

But, first, a stop for lunch at the Parador de Gibralfaro, high on a hill above Malaga. Here, as we sat on the wide veranda overlooking the sea and an ancient bull ring, lunching on paella and wine, we slipped gently under the spell of Spain.

Back on the bus, we continued northeasterly in our search for snow. As we began the last 20 mile tortuous climb up to Solynieve (sun and snow), the resort at the base of the 3,470 m pico del Veleta, we found it - snow so heavy, so deep even the plows couldn't get through. We turned back to spend the night in Granada, where we spent half the next day exploring the famed Alhambra and the Gardens of Generalife. In the afternoon we set out again to battle the snowdrifted road to Solynieve, arriving at last at the huge, elegant, rambling Melia Sierra Nevada Hotel.

We were told there had been only one day of skiing in the past 12 because of heavy snow and high winds. More storms were forecast. They did not come! We had 4 days of the kind of skiing most skiers can only dream about: fine powder under cloudless skies and a warm sun that never seemed to set. The new snow was packed on the pistes but there were miles of virgin powder to explore. From the top of the Veleta we could see (almost) the mountains of Africa across the Mediterranean Sea. For all our stay we luxuriated in this skier's paradise, our greatest concern being sunburn and overeating at the bountiful breakfast buffets and 4-course dinners.

For Bob Grasley the high point was skiing with his buddy Ramon Alonzo Valente (instructor of the Escuela Española de Esqui). After a two-hour warmup on the pistes, Ramon carefully sought out patches of mashed up powder, breakable crust and any available crud. The object of this lesson (conducted in French) was that if you do it right you can do it in ANYTHING!

We returned to the Costa del Sol by the scenic route - a spectacular drive through the mountains down to the sea. On the coast we stopped at the Parador Nerja where we strolled the tropical gardens and white pebbled beach before indulging in an incomparable lunch - (13 hors d'oeuvres on 13 separate plates for a first course for one!)

We arrived late at our luxurious hotel on the beach at Torremolinos, too weary to investigate the night life of this famed resort. The next day we flew to Barcelona and then on by bus to Andorra. The drive, as dramatic as the day before, was made even more memorable by Felix-the-Mad-Bus-Driver who did tap dances on the pedals and pounded the horn like a drummer as we hurtled a slalom course through the mountains.

Not to worry. In mid-afternoon we arrived safely for our 2-day stay in Andorra-la-Viella, prized for its tax free bargain goods as much as its splendid natural setting. We stocked up on fine liquors (at less than half the home price), skied the sunny slopes of nearby Grau Roig and Pas de la Casa, hiked in the greening mountains. We enjoyed!

Before we left Andorra, Felix got a good "talking to" and our journey to the Spanish Pyrenees was more sedate though the scenery was no less dramatic, the road no less precipitous. A few miles from Baqueira-Beret, the sun vanished and we arrived at the ski area in an ominous white out.

We checked into the 4-star Montarto where the King and Queen of Spain stay on their frequent skiing trips. Next day the whiteout lifted and there were the sundrenched slopes at the door. Baqueira-Beret, only 13 years old, has vast potential. Modeled on American resorts, 2 dozen well manicured trails wind down its 3200 foot vertical. Lower trails meander through the woods. At the summit are great bowls of untracked powder.

We skied our hearts out - and a good thing too, because the next day the fog returned, sending us off to explore time-worn villages nearby. The third day there was the sun again. Spanish Tourist officers gave us - the first American group to visit B-B - a picnic on the slopes and in the evening the area management hosted a dinner of rare Spanish dishes washed down with overflowing carafes of red wine.

Leader Grasley was presented with a red Barradine hat and made an honorary Catalan.

The next day we returned to Barcelona for an afternoon and evening of sightseeing and dining in this magnificent, wealthy, second largest city in Spain where our safari finally came to an end.

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COMING EVENTS

- April 16 - Blue Ridge Ski Council Annual Meeting. Begins at 10:00 A.M. at the Holiday Inn, Jessup, Maryland. Host Club is the Ski Club of Maryland. Sunday buffet lunch available by reservation (\$5.50). See our BRSC rep, Bob Wyckoff for details.
- April 16 - Southern Area Election Meeting for Election of USSA-Eastern Delegates from our area. To be held at, and in the same locale as, the BRSC Annual meeting in Jessup, Maryland. As a 100% member Club of USSA-Eastern, we are obliged to participate in this election process. Be sure our representative knows how YOU want him to vote.
- April 18 - P V S Annual Meeting. See separate notice. COME - and elect your Club officers.
- April 25 - EXCOM Meeting. At Dick and Julie King's house. Starting time is 7:30 P.M.
- May 20th - May Event - The Ninth Annual International Dinner. At Don and Pat Cope's home.
- May 23rd - EXCOM Meeting. At Bill Hager's house. Starting time is 7:30 P.M.
- June 17 - A summer Event (Second Annual!) at Jack Hadler's Cottage on Kent Island, just across the Bay Bridge and turn right for five miles! More later.
- Sept 23 - Hike In The Shenadoah, with Jinx and Dot Mason. More on this new Event later.

SKI THE RIVIERA

by Shirley Frucht

"SKI THE RIVIERA" took off on a high note when, as we gathered at 12:30 p.m., the Empress of Iran swept into Dulles in a cloud of mink and men, and into the VIP lounge of Air France. After she took off in the Concorde, Air France had a lovely cocktail party for the Peasants (that is, the Potomac Valley Skiers and their friends and relatives) and in a champagne glow off we went to Kennedy International. Here the bridge players discovered each other, the gin rummy contestants lined each other up and the rest of us wandered about till it was time to board our 747 (10 seats across and filled with music celebrities attending an international music conference in Nice). We got out just an hour or two before Kennedy International was closed to accommodate that first snowstorm that dumped over 1' of snow in New York City!

Arriving in Paris at 8 a.m. (2 a.m. our time) and changing to a 727, we arrived in Nice at 10 a.m. in the middle of a pouring-but warm rain. Weary but excited we bussed to the Plaza Hotel located on-the-beach facing the Mediterranean, but our rooms were not to be ready for 2 hours so on to Hotel Aston where comfortable rooms were ready! It was Mardi Gras time in Nice and electrical displays were strung way above the streets in cartoon arrangements of infamous world characters like Idi Amin, etc. Nice is a charming city blending the glorious Mediterranean colors of faded orange and pink with new colors of lavender and blue and a jumble of stately old villas and new highrises. All 33 voyagers managed to find individually "the best" cafes in town!

On Saturday the 21st, we enjoyed a bus trip to an 11th Century city, St. Paul de Vence, perched on a hilltop surrounded by a high stone wall to keep marauding enemies out. We also visited the Maeght Foundation museum, built to accommodate works of contemporary artists both inside and outside in beautiful grounds overlooking the sea. Returning to Nice, all of us were free to wander through the city until 4 p.m. when we took off for Isola 2000. As the bus climbed higher and higher into and beyond the foothills of the Maritime Alps, we saw snow, a little at first, then more and more and finally, when we got to the village of Isola our bus could go no further! What a sight in the village square! A dark dusk... a tangled mass of big busses bearing hundreds of skiers, dozens of small European cars, a jumble of children and dogs! Finally, after hearing that the very precipitous switchback road was closed to our bus because it was so wide and the oneway road was so narrow, we were transferred to many of these waiting small European cars; bags, baggage, skis and all! (I had my heart set on going with a smart looking Englishman -unmistakable- and his elegant and heavy Peugeot, so I planted myself at it's door and sure enough, my husband and I and 3 others rode in the Peugeot). Our fearless driver, Mr. Simpson (who was a stockholder in Isola 2000) took off passing other cars on the left on this towpath that could accommodate only one way traffic. It is 17 km from the village of Isola to Isola 2000, the ski resort. Normally it would take 20 or so minutes but in spite of Mr. Simpson's race car techniques, we arrived 1½ hours later, having had one of the hairiest rides of my life! The snowbanks flanking the road towered over the car, many cars were stalled on the right, chains had come off, motors had given out, etc. Our gorgeous chariot swung to the left, a hair between us and the stalled car on the right and 2 hairs between us and the snowbank on the left. Black night and the snow coming down all the time. Everytime we had to stop, Mr. Simpson would turn off the motor and lights to save the battery. I prayed we would start again and we did...none of the passengers said anything. We all did get there and enjoyed a waiting Sangria cocktail party at the Pas de Loup Hotel, a delicious dinner of coq au vin topped off with creme cake and fromage and fruit!

The 22nd found most of us having breakfast in bed (ah, lovely luxury) and raring to get out in the white snow sparkling under blue, blue skies and a bright hot sun ! There was something for everyone - from the Strauss Waltz Boulevard to the high scenic Lombard pass where the wind could blow you right down, and where the powder was packed by wind and skiing there gave you a slinky, swishy sensation. Of our 6 planned days at Isola, 4 were brilliant sunny days, 1 was scattered sunlight and 1 was grey with flat light. There was an outdoor heated pool...and some of the polar bears lay back in the snowdrifts surrounding the pool, rubbing themselves in the white stuff and then dove into the pool. For the ordinary plodders, we just swam our daily $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. Whether you were housed at the Pas du Loup or the St. Pierre, the food was wonderful and there was plenty of it. There were fantastic fireworks the night before our scheduled Saturday departure.. not because we were leaving but because the international European Airlines Special Races were over. The display began with a huge torchlight parade by the ski school instructors, one group coming from a high trail on the left and one from a lower trail on the right... and as the last of the skiers arrived at the foot of the mountain, a fabulous display of fireworks lit up the black sky with brilliant showers of multi-colors!

There were two dance happenings: one at the Beef Fondue party the St. Pierre had for all PVSers...we were first loosened up at a great Wine, Cheese and BYOB Cocktail party given by Gerry and Terry Geyer, then further loosened up with more wine at dinner and the dancing was great! Furious, wild and wonderful and even our "one-winged skiers, Bob Wycoff and Betty Walker (incidentally, Bob dislocated his shoulder but Betty chipped a bone in her arm) were more than sedately "participating!" Then, on Saturday night, our unexpected Isola overnight, at 11 p.m. when the European skiers had finished with their dinners and speeches, they burst forth into the lounge where a small dance floor had been installed and the disco music suddenly exploded with the most danceable music imaginable! This time there was clapping and stomping to flamenco, there was singing and winding snake dances weaving back and forth actually filling the entire room! All the hotel help joined the dancers and this joyous "happening" continued till 4 a.m.

29 Jan. Sunday dawned with a gorgeous blue sky, sparkling tons of new snow and the anticipation of a 10:30 a.m. departure! Having spent Saturday waiting for the blizzard to stop and our imminent departure until 4 p.m. (when we were booked back into our hotels) we were bursting to be away and on to Auron, our 2nd ski station. And so began the second long wait... incredible thought it may seem... we did not depart till 10:40 p.m. and at that, only the lucky 16 went at that time! Instead of one big bus, our transport provided us with 2 minibusses each holding only 8 passengers. So our leader arranged the straw drawing to see who went in the first load. Fortunately (?) Paddy and I were in the first load and in the lead bus (which had some heat and studded tires, but NO CHAINS unbeknownst to me or I would still be in Isola). Our bus wound its slow tortuous way down the one-lane road at about 6 miles an hour and in first gear all the way. Towering on either side were banks of snow 10-15' high, so it seemed we were traveling through a white maze and one's basic visibility was heavenward ! The black velvet night glittering with stars made it seem like an outer-space movie and even Henry Steece was finally silenced... and so at

1:30 a.m. we arrived at our Hotel de Pilon in Auron ! (The 50 minute trip had taken 3 times as long!) We were somewhat revived by delicious hot vegetable soup, cold cuts and bottled water (\$1 per bottle and it didn't taste as good as the tap water we later discovered) served by the owner himself. Then we fell into our bed in our long johns (in a way it was good not to be bothered by having our luggage and having to unpack to get out proper sleeping clothes).

30th January..the first of 4 bright, beautiful ski days in the delightful village of Auron, one of the oldest ski resorts in Europe. After the usual petit breakfast of divine croissants, cafe au lait and other wonderful "bread" (incidentally, though we all ate copious quantities of "it" most of us skied it right off!), we wandered down to the "reception" to see where people were going and ran right into the "second loaders" who were just finishing off their breakfasts after arriving at around 5:30 a.m. Charlotte went to bed and we forged ahead carrying our equipment through the town to the nearest way "up"! We joined forces with Tony and Rosemary Soler and after taking the Poma as far as it went, we found a way to catch the TeleBenne (bucket or cage) enroute to the top. Two are supposed to ride in this contraption, but after the attendant literally threw me in (the only injury I received on the entire trip was to my left shin bone...he must have thrown me in so hard that I wasn't aware it hit one of the two steel bars forming the cage effect) and handed me my skis and poles, there was no time for Paddy to get in with me! The scenery was magnificent with the precipitous Alps all sparkling white cutting a jagged edge against a fathomless blue sky. Arriving at the top $\frac{1}{2}$ hour later, I leaned my skis inside the turnabout, pulled out my heavy white turtleneck dickie and put it on...en route in the cage I had to delicately take off my hat and pull down the earflap piece for the wind had frozen my ears. By this time, Paddy's cage had arrived and we skied to a Poma which steeply took us to the very top where the wind was raging and the downward trail was really steep and not groomed a bit, which meant moguls hidden under the newly fallen snow perhaps? But with Tony (what a beautiful skier he is) leading, we managed to do the steep places and skied all the way down! This was quite a first run for Paddy after being "out of commission" and off skis for 4 days so we looked for an easier run and found the perfect slope, steep in places but mostly gentle and wide and reached by a good old chair lift and with a good restaurant at the bottom...suddenly, it seemed that all the PVSers had discovered "our slope"...Imagine little old me bumping into Norm Engleman on a slope! After a delicious dinner of braised beef and onions, we went downstairs to the Gypsy Room for free Sangria and disco dancing.

Tuesday we returned to the perfect slope and practised all day long...and I'm improving! A great dinner was enjoyed by all: ham in a crust, creamed spinach and a gorgeous raspberry tart. After our bridge game with the Geyers (now the worm has turned and they got the good cards), bed. Wednesday was a grey day but Paddy wanted to go to the top in the Teleferique (gondola). So, as we all piled in, a nice-looking frenchman asked in perfect English, "May I squeeze in next to you?" We started talking and without Alan Ligas, a Pan American Pilot who has lived in New York for 27 years, but was born in the Auron area and now owns a condo there, we might still be on the Mountain. There was absolutely no light! We took a Poma to the very top and, again, the wind was bad. We had to take a black trail down: very, very steep and new powder and it had not yet been groomed since the Saturday blizzard. We reached the top ridge at 10 a.m. and it took us 2 hours to ski down absolutely blind!

There was no point in watching the snow, I just watched where Alan went and tried to follow exactly the route he took. The trail down was a mix of black and red...these were the back bowls that we had heard so much talk about... but see them we did not..ski them we did! There was a wine-tasting party at Bill Peterman's, (former State Dept. man with a ~~Wisch~~ wife, a vineyard, places in St. Tropez and in Auron), followed by another great dinner of roast lamb, scalloped potatoes and a gorgeous lemon torte cake, then bridge and bed. On Thursday, Feb. 2, the Solers led our pack to the top via triple chair and Poma. Again, a terrible wind despite the brilliant blue skies and hot sun...but skiing was delicious! After a nap, there were several room parties to visit... Henry and Diane (who rose to the occasion despite a tummy bug) and Bernie and Sheila's and then, all too soon, came Friday...the last day of skiing this trip! Charlotte and I made for the perfect practice slope and it was warm, sunny, uncrowded and soon Margaret Wycoff joined us. We reluctantly left our slope and returned to the DuPilon shortly before noon. The head of the tourist bureau took us on a tour of the 11th century church whose interior was very impressive with glowing frescos, both early and late medieval.

And, at 2:30 we boarded the bus, this time a comfortable transport and so down the Maritimes. We passed many gushing waterfalls, several perched cities of centuries ago; St. Etienne, a thriving town, modern but basically medieval. And as we dropped lower and lower "below SKI-level" as Bernie put it, the temperature got warmer and warmer and soon we saw the vegetable gardens of swiss chard, bibb lettuce, lemon trees, etc. on the outskirts of Nice. This time the sun was brilliant and the Mediterranean was a glorious blend of blues and greens, and we saw Nice literally as a sparkling jewel. Then, taking the Moyenne Corniche to Monaco, we were treated to one magnificent vista after another.. castles perched amid stately cyprus trees, monolithic high-rises, gorgeous villas along the seaside, exquisite cyclamen, cacti, a chartreuse-flowering treet, banana and palm trees, cypress and pines all providing enchantment for us! And, our last "hostel" on the Riviera...Loew's Monte Carlo! Big-but-better than the usual Holiday Inn...really luxurious! All rooms were attractively decorated...the towels were thick terry with enormous drying capabilities. Here we took our breakfast in a large dining area overlooking the sea; then, depending on individual physical strength, the 33 PVSers were on their own for dinner. Those of us who like walking and mountain climbing, investigated the city and found wonderful places to dine: those who were tired or had "the bug" stayed in the posh Loew's and partook of their excellent restaurants. Gambling was enjoyed by some...most participants lost...Sheila claims she "broke even" and Rick had beginner's luck and was the only winner! The tour of the Ranier Palace was delightful...I especially enjoyed the attractive Aviary filled with brilliant canaries and tropical foliage and flanked by a stunning pool. Saturday afternoon saw me at the National Museum which has a fantastic collection of dolls, many of them automated, and some from as early as the 1730's!

Sunday went smoothly...we were blessed by gorgeous weather...had the easiest transatlantic flight imaginable...landed in New York where the Braniff clerk could not find our booking (she checked the wrong flight), but managed to get us all out in two shifts, $\frac{1}{2}$ hour apart.(We didn't need to draw straws this time). Both flights were safely into Dulles before the second big storm (which was just starting as the first load landed) closed both Kennedy International in New York and Dulles here!.

SKI THE RIVIERA was now a beautiful memory to be reminisced and enjoyed again and again!