

# Schweitzer Prime Timer's History

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# 1 January 1991 Snow News Article



## Skier Profiles

The focus of this issue's Schweitzer Skier Profile is on long-time Schweitzerites George and Virginia Castle.

With Virginia playing straight man (woman) to George's constant barrage of good humored quips and barbs, they are a regular Burns and Allen comedy team of North Idaho.

Comment to George that it's a great day for skiing and he'll come back with "Every day is a good day!" And that pretty well sums up the attitude of this delightful couple.

Here's the Castle facts; or at least as close as one can get to the facts when George is involved.

### **GEORGE and VIRGINIA CASTLE**

**Where From:** Originally from the Midwest. Met at the University of Michigan in 210 B.C. or thereabouts.

**Married:** 113 years says George. 48 years in Virginia's more precise estimation.

**Schweitzer:** George and Virginia moved to Boise after the war (Number II that is, not the Civil one) where George joined with some old flying buddies in founding Empire Airlines. The couple moved around the Northwest fairly frequently in conjunction with George's career as an airline pilot.

They discovered Schweitzer through George and Shirley Creighton, old neighbors from Spokane, while living in Seattle and

standing in weekend lines at Crystal. After checking out Schweitzer's uncrowded slopes in '76, they bought a Red Cricket condo in '77 and have been enjoying their Schweitzer ski home ever since.

**Age:** Yes.

**Children:** Yes, 5.

**Career:** No, retired. George is the Grand Pooba and cold weather savior extraordinaire of the Red Cricket condos.

**Off Season:** Live on Mercer Island in Seattle. "Lately, I babysit my wife," quips George. Virginia had successful back surgery last summer.

**Biggest Thrill Lately:** George — "Jumping Big Red (Red Cricket neighbor Dorothy Foulkes) in the bushes over on chair 6 last week!" Virginia explains that George and Dorothy both inadvertently ended up crashing into the same bush at the same time somewhere off chair 6.

**Schweitzer Development:** "Great. Wonderful. They couldn't survive without it. The grooming has improved tremendously," says George. "That's what I like best."

**Future Plans:** Take it one day at a time and enjoy!

Thanks, George and Virginia. It's our pleasure to enjoy your presence at Schweitzer.

## 2 February 1991 Inception of Prime Timers

2-91



Schweitzer Inc. • P.O. Box 815 • Sandpoint, Idaho 83864 • (208) 263-9555

Schweitzer seniors have formed an organization. We are now "Schweitzer Prime Timers Ski Club". Officers were selected and dues were set at \$25.00 per couple and \$15.00 for a single. Meetings are held the first Thursday of the month at about 3:00 in Jimmie's Lounge in The Green Gables Lodge.

We are off to a good start! Volunteers assisted in mountain tours for a group from Canada and the Over The Hill Gang from Portland on February 6th & 7th. On the Thursday, there was a very successful Wine & Cheese Party held in Taps Quiet Lounge! It was alot of fun for everyone!

Plans have been made for a mountain top picnic, Febraury 20, 1991. Bring a sack lunch and come along and join us. Beverages and some goodies will be provided. Also planned is a closing "Pot Luck" dinner, March 21 st. It will be held in The Quiet Lounge after the wine and cheese party in Jimmie's.

Tentative plans for a golf game and picnic in the summer are being discussed. All ideas are welcome.

We have purchased and installed three new bullitin boards. George Creighton brought them to us and Jack Armstrong installed them in some very good places. Please check them out often to see what we are up to!

Merritt Weiss designed a very handsome logo for the name tags and other uses.

The club is not exclusive for downhill skiers. There are three couples who cross country and we are looking for more. Anyone who enjoys playing in and out of the snow is welcome to join in on the fun. Come be a Prime Timer. It's a great way to meet new and old friends.

Happy Skiing,

Deloris Dreisbach

Officers: George Castle  
Don Papineau  
Deloris Dreisbach  
George Creighton

President  
Vice President  
Sec/ Treas.  
Race master

265-4279  
263-7883  
265-5762  
509-747-1166

▲ A Pack River Company

### 3 February 1991 Snow News Article



President George, left, confers with "Prime Timers" cabinet members Bob and Deloris Dreisback.

Look out, Schweitzer! There's a brand new club on campus and its members are known to be a dangerously fun-loving bunch. They've seen it all, done it all, and probably invented most of it. A seasoned worldly outfit, they've earned their stripes honorably in the battle of life. They are the "Schweitzer Prime Timers," a club for those veterans of life who consider themselves to be not over the hill, but right at the top of it.

The Prime Timers are accepting members 55 years (plus or minus a few) and up, who want to get together with like-minded folks for fun, frolics, skiing, après skiing, trips, dinners, breakfasts, and more. The group meets every Thursday about 3 p.m. for complimentary wine and cheese at Jimmy's in the Green Gables Hotel. Official group business meetings will be on the first Thursday of each month after wine and cheese.

Yearly dues have been set at \$15 for individuals and \$25 per couple and will cover name tags, administrative, mailing and other miscellaneous expenses.

The club's first two meetings attracted 35-40 folks and a great time was had by all.

Club officers were elected at the most recent meeting with world famous brown trout fisherman, gorgeous George Castle, being elected president. Don Papineau will act as George's Dan Quayle, and Deloris Dreisbach will handle the money and administrative stuff.

As an example of the group's activities, during the first week of February, the Prime Timers will get together with the visiting "Over The Hill Gang" from Portland, Oregon, as well as act as guides and hosts during a visit of over 100 seniors from Canada.

President George says that Schweitzer has encouraged formation of the group and that many specials and activities are already happening or are in the works. George Creighton has been designated as "Senior NASTAR Coordinator" and as such and will be organizing teams, clinics and races to be held Thursdays from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. on Schweitzer's NASTAR race course.

For more information call any club officer, or just stop in at the group's wine and cheese next Thursday. George is looking for a few good men ... and ladies.

## 4 February 1991 Snow News Article

PAGE 2—SNOW NEWS, FEBRUARY 22, 1991



### Employee of the Week

Imagine, if you will, the following help wanted ad:

"Help Wanted: Day Supervisor for the B-1 level of the Headquarters Daylodge (otherwise known as Hormone Hall.)

Main duties will be to man an information booth, rent day lockers, operate lost and found, and generally to maintain a semblance of law and order among anywhere from 50-150 teenage mutant ninja skiers. The prospective employee must be extremely patient and understanding, and be able to answer the phone, provide video game change and redirect lost, dazed adults to the bar, while understanding endless 200 decibel eardrum-rupturing repeats of Vanilla Ice's 'Rap Ice.'

"Must be able to tolerate extensive and prolonged exposure to dangerous levels of estrogen and testosterone that would send most adults into potentially fatal anaphalactic shock. This employee will accomplish all of the above and more while maintaining a positive, upbeat, 'Ask me, I can help' attitude of customer service.

"Homicide is strictly forbidden, but a little assault and battery here and there will be understood."

Now, picture a 74-year-old mother of seven and grandmother of 10 handling such a position. Impossible? Not at all.

Employee of the Week Helen Thompson says she "thrives on the energy" of the B-1 level. Her only complaint is "The extremely loud rock music." Helen has a volume control at her information booth, but somehow the inmates of B-1 always figure out a way to bypass the control as they seek sensory overload.

Watching Helen operate among the chaos as she handles five things at once is inspiring. Says supervisor Jake Leedy, "Besides Helen's sweet disposition and positive attitude, she is able to remain unbelievably helpful and courteous in the Video Arcade."

In her eighth year at Schweitzer, Helen grew up on a ranch in Burrstead, North Dakota, near Bismarck. She earned a degree in English — minor in math and commerce —

from the University of Wyoming in 1940. Married to James Thompson in 1942, Helen was a professional mom with seven kids when Jim accepted the Head Principal job at Sagle School in 1957. Tragically, Jim passed away in 1960 and Helen was left to raise a family on her own and start a new career. She worked for the U.S. Forest Service as a district clerk from 1961 until retiring in 1962. During those years Helen and her family developed a love for skiing and Schweitzer. In the fall of 1963, Helen decided to earn a season pass at the Resort by working in Schweitzer's Lost and Found and Season Pass office.

Until this season, Helen operated in relative obscurity from a small office next to the General Store. Things have certainly changed with the completion of the new daylodge.

But Helen says she loves working with people, even teenage ones. And Mr. Vanilla Ice could learn some lessons in "cool" from this Grandma Ice with the nerves of cold steel.

Helen currently lives just off Wrenco Loop on Helen Thompson Road where she raises horses. Her children are mostly spread out now but they visit often and Helen, who loves to travel, visits them. She's looking forward to traveling to Thailand soon to see her daughter Mary.

If the youngsters on B-1 sometimes feel overmatched by Helen, they should realize they are dealing with the 1982 national Mother of the Year! So, don't fret kids; she's a real pro. And don't be surprised if the video games, T.V., pool tables and juke box are someday replaced by books and a quiet area. Helen is a 17-year member of the Library Board!

In closing, Helen says, "We run this facility as a courtesy to the kids, and I hope they realize the privilege they have in using it and I hope they appreciate it."

Spoken like a true mom. Congratulations, Helen. You're a wonderful person doing a tough job in a very professional manner. By the way, what's the number of that Vanilla Ice song? And could you turn up the volume? A lot?

## 5 January 1992 Snow News Article

PAGE 4 - SNOW NEWS, JANUARY 3, 1992



### Happy Birthday

**Jim** Toomey, who purchased Schweitzer tickets Number 1 and 2 some 28 years ago, recently celebrated his 69th birthday at Schweitzer. He was riding on a pair of stainless steel Volant skis commemorative of the 50th anniversary of the renowned 10th Mountain Division.

Look for a follow-up on ~~Fun~~ and the 10th Mountain in the next issue of Snow News.

10 BONNER COUNTY DAILY BEE Friday, March 25, 1994

## SKIING THE NORTHWEST

# Prime Timers help Compton and many others

## Festival Cup races this weekend

Last Tuesday, I was back on the sticks, finally, after a two-week layoff with a twisted knee. The sun was shining, and the deck at the Outback was aswarm with people. I was feeling a little wimpy, because the knee was giving me advice on how much longer I could stay, and a little sorry for myself, because the advice was "Stop now, ski later." But, as I looked around me, I got an attitude adjustment, from the Prime Timers.

Prime Timers are a loosely-knit organization of folks over 55 who ski Schweitzer. According to Prime Timer president Dev Driesbach, their main stated purpose is to "have fun." That they do, and plenty of it. They average more days per year than many younger ski bums.

Dr. Stiles, whose name is lent to one of our favorite runs, would have fit right in with this bunch. He was a skiing advocate, a Schweitzer devotee, and spent as many of his days after 55 on the slopes. He would have made a

fine Prime Timer ... if he had grandkids.

They get together every week for an après ski wine and cheese party. (Thursdays at 3:30 in the Caribou Room in Headquarters.) They discuss typical skiing stuff: the snow, the best run, the worst fall, the grandkids. They have a dinner social about once a month, November through April, and they take an annual spring ski trip.

This is Prime Timers' fourth season. They began with about 45 members after Helen Thompson, Our Venerable Lady of Lost and Found, put a bug in the ear of Diane Allen of Marketing. Diane sent out letters to people she thought might qualify for a group like Prime Timers, the first wine and cheese party was held and it stuck. This year, there are about 105 members who pay the astronomical annual fee of \$15 to get a name-tag and a lot of work thrust at them in the guise of volunteerism.

Prime Timers helped out with

Jimmy Heuga this year, from ringing bells to chopping ice to shoveling snow. Special Olympics came to town in March, the Prime Timers were prime movers. The people on the float in the Sandpoint Winter Carnival Parade were ... you guessed it ... Prime



**SANDY COMPTON**  
Schweitzer Peaks

Timers.

And, if you want a free, fun and informative mountain tour, look for a person with a blue "Host" badge on. Odds are, they will be a Prime Timer, too. They will gladly spend an hour or a day with you, showing you around the runs and telling you how things are now, how they used to be, and how

well their grandchildren can or will be able to ski. And, I think, knowing this group, the grandkids will be able to ski.

Are grandkids a requirement for membership?

No, but I know of one couple who has qualified for membership for several years who have resisted joining because they didn't have grandkids. The baby was born last year. They're Prime Timers this year.

I would say 90 per cent of the people around me last Tuesday on the deck of the Outback were Prime Timers. There were some truly seasoned citizens among them. All that gathered wisdom seemed to sink in a little bit. I took my sore-knee up Chair 5 and down the cat track and home. Behind me, Upper Stiles beckoned, and it was with regret that I turned my back on it, but I also had a good idea that if I did what I was doing now, when it was time, I would still have a reason, and the ability, to join Prime Timers.

Remember, this weekend is the Festival Cup, a race benefiting the Festival at Sandpoint, with

racing on both Saturday and Sunday. And, shortly after the Festival Cup awards Sunday afternoon, the Unptocoth Annual

Gong Show will be unleashed in Taps in Headquarters Day Lodge. Come join us for fun in the sun at Schweitzer Mountain Resort.

# Prime Time(rs) at Schweitzer

The 55-plus bunch is finding fun times with club for young at heart

**S**ANDPOINT — A five-year-old club is keeping the 55-plus crowd at Schweitzer feeling young at heart.

"Prime Timers," a group of local seniors who get together for skiing trips and plain old fun at Schweitzer Mountain Resort has grown to 150 members from its initial membership of 30.

"It's been growing like gang-busters," said Miriam Weiss, Sandpoint resident and club president.

Prime Timers formed with the idea of just being a fun club, said Weiss.

She noted there were plenty of older Sandpoint skiers, as well as visitors to the area, who might like a way to get together.

Soon, Prime Timers was born.

The club's popularity in its early years caught the attention of management at Schweitzer. It wasn't long before resort officials were asking Prime Timers to join their team.

Prime Timers act as hosts who provide guided tours of the mountain. They also act as volunteers for charity events and ski races that bring the crowds to the resort.

Through the ski season, club

**"Prime Timers started growing because people found out how much fun we were having."**

— Miriam Weiss

members meet each Thursday afternoon. Formal meeting, however, don't begin until the New Year.

They ski, of course, ("Some of us are very good skiers," said Weiss. "Both downhill and cross country.") but they also hold social and business meetings, wine and cheese tasting, as well as preparing to fill two roles at the resort.

Members don't just gather at Schweitzer, either. They take trips around the region, besides meeting for dinners and picnics.

A special event is set this year for the Prime Timers.

The "Snowmasters Classic" at Schweitzer is slated from March 3-8.

The week of fun and frolic is expected to create plenty of heat and energy for the 55-plus skiers.

The 'Classic' is should draw people from throughout North Idaho.

Activities will include a reception, a "kinder and gen-



Above, members of the Prime Timers act as hosts on the ski hill. Right, Prime Timers meet at the resort for an evening of fun and laughter.



tle" NASTAR race, wine tasting, guided mountain tours, and guided cross country tours.

Hot coffee, sweet pastries and warm receptions will be offered daily from 7:30-9 a.m. at the Snowmaster Hospitality Room.

On March 5, an evening shut-

tle will depart for a scenic 11-mile trip to Sandpoint where people can stroll in the area's unique downtown of unique shops and restaurants.

On March 7, the Thursday Prime Time Dinner will be hosted by the Prime Timers in their

own warm and merry way.

One thing for sure that will be going on — this group will be having fun.

"Prime Timers started growing because people found out how much fun we were having," Weiss said.



## SCHWEITZER MOUNTAIN PEOPLE

**Schweitzer's Prime Timers** -- Their average age is over 60 and a handful are in their 80s. When Schweitzer's Prime Timers gets together though, they don't talk about aches and pains or bemoan their senior years. They're too busy deciding which run to ski first.

Prime Timers is a group of seniors with a shared passion for skiing and a commitment to Schweitzer Mountain. Their simple, straightforward mission is to get together with fellow seniors who want to ski. You won't hear any complaints about aching body parts. These folks are all about how great life is.

The Prime Timers was officially founded in 1991 with 24 members. In 1989, Phil and Millie Cole and a few other senior skiers were gathering casually every week to have lunch at The Babes, the restaurant in the original day lodge that overlooked the valley. Over bowls of steaming soup they discussed the idea of putting together a club with Bobbie Heuga. The Seniors Club was founded and soon after was renamed Prime Timers. Today the membership roster numbers 162.

Not only do they ski together, the Prime Timers have formed quite the social group. There are the all-important weekly meetings (complete with wine and cheese), a pizza day, Valentine's Day chocolate party (which they tell us gets quite a good turnout) and picnics each spring, summer and fall. The September picnic raises money for the Jimmie Heuga Snow Express.

Most of the Prime Timers have been skiing all their lives and they manage an enviable 40 to 60 ski days a year. They share a commitment to Schweitzer Resort and many own homes on the mountain. They meet weekly with General Manager Tom Fortune to offer sage advice and to discuss what is happening at the resort as well as possible improvements. They are true mountain ambassadors.

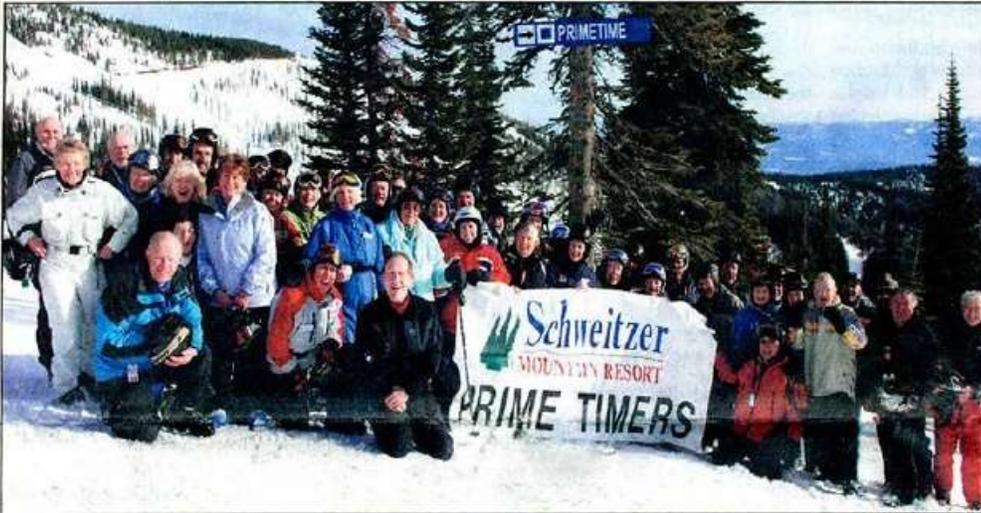
Take Darrell Albert for example, the current president of the Prime Timers. He's been skiing longer than some of us have been alive. Fifty-five years, to be exact. In 1947 Darrell started skiing at Big Mountain on wooden skis with strap bindings and leather boots. No chair lifts in those days, Darrell remembers hanging onto the rope tow or the t-bar and pushing through a foot of powder.

Jim Toomey is another Prime Timer. Name sound familiar? Maybe that's because you have skied Toomey's Run. Jim helped encourage Jack Fowler to start Schweitzer Mountain Resort and he and his wife purchased the first two lift tickets from Schweitzer in 1963.

When this group gets together to rub shoulders, a few are actually replacements shoulders. One Prime Timer's hat reads: "Replacement parts turn better." With an attitude like that, it's no wonder they're still on the mountain. Let's just hope all of us are skiing like this into the prime of our lives.

## 9 February 2009 Daily Bee Article

### Schweitzer dedicates run to local skiers



Nearly 100 members of Schweitzer's Prime Timers Ski Club were on hand Thursday for a ceremony dedicating the Primetime run to the popular 55 and over ski club. The group, which debuted in 1989, is known for its high spirit and having a great time on the slopes. "I just want to say how grateful and appreciative we are of Schweitzer for naming a run in our honor," said Bill Brill, president of the Prime Timers. "We love Schweitzer and hopefully they love us." Primetime is an intermediate run accessed by the Basin Express, located to skier's left of Midway, Starfish and Lower Sam's Alley. For more information on the Schweitzer Prime Timers and to become a member, visit their website at "[www.schweitzerprimetimers.org](http://www.schweitzerprimetimers.org)."

—Courtesy photos