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Slopes 'tame' for these seniors

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About 150 people from area retirement communities visited Ski Roundtop.

By TERESA McMINN
For the Daily Record/Sunday News
Article Launched: 02/27/2007 06:01:55 AM EST

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Feb 27, 2007 — As he slid to the bottom of the hill, Paul Wilson appeared to be just another kid on a snow tube. He came down laughing, jumped up and was ready for another go.

From a distance, there would have been no reason to suspect he wasn't an average kid. But several local television news cameras that were pointed in his direction suggested otherwise.



Wilson, 86, was one of about 150 senior citizens - from about ages 65 to mid-90s - who played in the snow Monday at Ski Roundtop. People from nine retirement communities in Adams, Cumberland, Franklin and Lancaster counties participated in the event, which included snow tubing, building a snowman and trying to knock its head off with a Frisbee, and other games. Board games were available at the snow tubing lodge for those who didn't want to slide down the mountain.

The event was to promote wellness among seniors. But to many of those who attended, having fun wasn't anything new.

"I've just always been active," said Wilson, who resides with his wife, Miriam, 84, at Cross Keys Village-The Brethren Home Community in New Oxford. The couple has four children, nine grandchildren, six great-grandchildren and two more great-grandchildren on the way.

Wilson, a retired pastor, had gone snow tubing at Ski Roundtop a couple of times before.

"It's a little slow today," he said of the slopes because of above-freezing temperatures. "This is tame."

Wilson is also an avid bicyclist and experienced skier, and he enjoys swimming, hang gliding and other sports. He advised other seniors to also get out and have fun.

"Don't sit at home. Get out here and enjoy yourself," he said. "Sitting down and doing nothing is the hardest job."

His neighbors, Annie and Bob Bradley, who are in their late 60s, agreed.

"That's the joy of being in retirement," Annie Bradley said.

"It's always fun to meet new people ... and do these activities," Bob Bradley said. He also said the slopes were much faster on a recent trip than they were Monday.

"They were slick. We really went flying," he said.

Mechanicsburg resident Jean Bink and her husband, Harry, snow tubed for the first time Monday after their grandson suggested the sport.

"It's fun," she said. "But ... It's very tame."

HEALTHY SENIORS

Frank Buhrman, director of communications and public relations for Cross Keys Village-The Brethren Home Community, accompanied about 30 senior residents to Ski Roundtop Monday. Buhrman said older people say they feel well when they stay active.

"We see people doing just about anything," he said.

Kristin Orwick, the community's wellness director, said activities such as tubing help keep seniors happy and healthy.

"This is going back to their childlike thoughts and attitudes," she said of the seniors who were sliding down the hill.

For more information about the retirement community, visit <http://www.crosskeysvillage.org>.

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