

## Betsy Morgenthaler

### Flash forward 30+ years, December 25 - 31, 1994

In December 1994 David, my son, was 9, and he and I paid Jo & Don a visit that spanned Christmas night to New Year's Eve. At the airport we rented a 4 wheel drive and arrived at Jo & Don's toasty Teton cabin to find Jo on a ladder decorating the tree. She'd been busy with other's needs before then and now had time to make festive at home. The scene impressed me as much as the Teton winter. It was truly cold. Jo and Don kept us snug in their cabin or I'm sure I'd have frozen to death walking to the company cabin. By day, the temperature struggled to climb to minus -23, and that cold snap lasted days. What visions I had of skiing with David were frozen on arrival, but David was determined. Don knew just when to jump in the conversation and offered, "I happen to know an "extreme skier", an all-weather guy; son of a friend of Dave's. Don had the most humble way of seeing a need and meeting it with the right words. David was extremely delighted by the idea, Don made a single call, and a young 20-year-old answered the phone on Christmas night. Don's snow angel and David were ski buddies all week, 7 hours every day of our stay. Each afternoon when I drove to the slopes for pick-up, I asked, so what did you two talk about on all those chair lifts? The response, "how cold we were".

In the in between hours I explored the endlessly picturesque backroads as I'd never have done without that time to fill. And on a couple occasions I returned midday for lunch with Jo and Don. Once Jo left us to the dishes for her catnap, the tenor of conversation changed. One afternoon I recall clearly, Don reflected on marriage in general, giving thanks for his happy one. "You know Bets, when there's a disagreement and we go our separate ways for a while, I think to myself, "my 'everything' is upstairs, what am I doing nursing a small resentment in the face of a big love?" It was easy see and to hear how Don's humility graced Jo's life and all those around him.