

New Mexico Ski Hall of Fame

2008



John and Judy Miller



John and Judy Miller honeymooned in Red River in 1957 and decided to move there in 1963. John went to work as assistant manager at Red River Ski Area. With 4 children to feed, John soon got a job at the Molybdenum Mine down the road too. In 1970, with partners Gary and Fran Starbuck, John and Judy bought Powder Puff Mountain Ski Area in Red River from Jan and Lester Lewis who opened the area as a beginner area in 1965. It had a mere 700 vertical feet, but was one of the first western ski areas to feature snow-making. Gary was Powder Puff's ski school director, Fran it's business manager, John was the mountain manager and Judy was it's customer service and public relations department. During the 1970s, John bought some cross-country skis to rent and taught cross-country skiing in Red River's backcountry.

In 1979, the Millers sold Powder Puff to the Red River Ski Area next door. John started Miller's Cross Country Ski Tours and gave ski tours in the surrounding area.

In 1985, the Millers along with their daughter Ellen, opened the Enchanted Forest Cross Country Ski Area near Bobcat Pass east of Red River. John Miller and Quincy Lee built 10 kilometers of mostly groomed cross-country trails and offered rentals and lessons.

In 1986, more trails were opened and a small warming hut was built. During the 1990s, 15 kilometers of snowshoe trails were added and 5 kilometers of dog-friendly cross country and snowshoe trails were built. Snowshoe rentals were added to the rental fleet and the Millers opened a cross-country retail store in Red River named Miller's Crossing.

By the 2009 season, the Enchanted Forest Cross Country Ski and Snowshoe area boasted 42 kilometers of trails---27 kilometers of cross-country trails and 15 kilometers of snowshoe trails and a day lodge and a yurt overnight rental. A severe wind storm decimated the area in 2021, but lots of hard work has restored much of the trails and yurts.

In 2010, John and Judy retired, passing the reins to their daughter Ellen and her husband Geoff. Both Millers continued with their shared love of hiking and wildlife watching into their 80s.

John and Judy passed away within 4 days of each other in Nov. 2022.

