

## Snowbirds Return



This is the ninth year that Ted Caldwell and Joanne Graham have ventured from the cold and ice of Barrie, Canada to winter in Destin. They heard about the warmth and beauty of the Emerald Shores from friends. “We came here predominantly for the weather, Ted said. “But we joined the snowbird club to take advantage of all the golf specials.” While they have nested in several of Destin’s finest accommodations, they are enjoying the hospitality of the Inland Reef this year.

Diane DeVincent and Jim Demers usually wait until January to travel south but decided to come a little earlier this year. They are happy that they did. Diane is from Commerce, and Jim is from Northville, both in Michigan. They have made the Tops’l Beach & Racquet Resort their winter home for the past eight years. Like Ted and Joanne, they heard about Destin and the snowbird club from friends. Both enjoy the golfing opportunities afforded by the club. In fact, Diane has taken over as chair of the popular “Nine and Wine and Whine” events. She has already organized outings at Bluewater Bay, every other Thursday, beginning on January 12. More information will be available soon. “We joined the club for more than just golf,” Diane said. “We enjoy playing euchre and I’m part of the quilting club. And, of course, we always attend the T.G.I.T. parties.”



Ruth Beckett is the snowbird club’s president this season. She and her husband Dave have traveled from Grand Rapids, Michigan, to Destin for six years now, but it is the first time they’ve rented at The Inn at Crystal Beach. “We love our condo here,” Ruth said. “It’s convenient to all the activities we enjoy.” Those activities include the T.G.I.T. parties held at Lulu’s Seafood Restaurant on the Bay, The Party Boat Cruises at the Harbor, and the Valentine Dinner Dances which will be held at Lucille’s Kitchen in Seascape again this year. They are also looking forward to the planned bus trips that include going to The Todd Herendeen Dinner Theater in Panama City, the Mardi Gras trip in New Orleans, and, of course, the Good Time Tour casino trips. How did they hear about Destin and the snowbird club? Through friends, of course!

Ted and Andrea Spring enjoyed coming to Destin so much that they decided to build a permanent home here. Both are originally from New York State; Ted from Indian Lake and Andrea from Schenectady. “My aunt was a snowbird back before there was even a snowbird club,” Ted said. He remembers visiting her in the 1960’s. In fact, the house they built is on the land his aunt once owned on Calhoun Avenue. Ted and Andrea became involved with the snowbird club about six or seven years ago. They were vacationing in Navarre and heard talk about the beauty of Destin. “Our favorite activity is volunteering,” Ted said. They proved it by volunteering for the various committees in the club. In fact, Ted wound up serving as the club president for the 2019-2020 season. Of course, he added that they’ve always enjoyed the Harbor Party Boat Cruises and the popular T.G.I.T. parties.





Duane Hall is the Destin snowbird club's official photographer and has been for the past four to five years. He and his wife Phyllis have been visiting from Hudsonville, Michigan, for seven years and have always made their nest at Capri by the Gulf on Scenic 98. "We used to have a motor home," Phyllis said. "That's how we discovered Destin." Their favorite snowbird activity is golf, but they also enjoy the Harbor Party Boat cruises, and Phyllis is chairing the Quilting Club again this season.

By the time this is published, the Big Registration will have concluded. Hopefully, I will have hundreds, if not thousands, more snowbirds to introduce in future articles. (I believe the record is 3,017 members in the 2001-2002 season, but our goal is now just over, or shy of 2,000.)

If you missed the Big Registration, you can sign up before each Tuesday morning meeting from 8:30 to 9:45 a.m.

For those who have recently arrived, you can pick up your stored items any Saturday morning from 8 to 9 a.m. Please bring your receipt with your box number on it.

As usual, updates can be found on our website at [www.thedestinsnowbirds.com](http://www.thedestinsnowbirds.com). And please check out our Facebook group page at "The Destin Snowbirds."

I hope to see you all at the 10:00 a.m. meeting this coming Tuesday morning and/or at the T.G.I.T. party from 3 to 6 p.m. Tuesday afternoon at Lulu's. Don't forget to bring your membership card!