

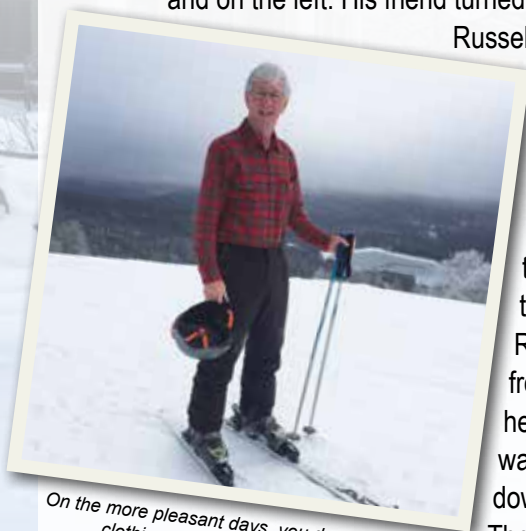
BLACK, BLUE

and Green all over
– LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #175 –

Downhill skiing is a lot like running a business, from the moment you start planning the trip there are risks, and once on the slopes, you must constantly pay attention and make decisions. The risks can be as simple as travel irregularities, weather patterns or booking problems; but these risks go with any kind of travel. Of course, the snow and the temperature can also be risks for skiers – depending on the time of year and location.

Obviously, the real risk in downhill skiing is injury to yourself or others, based your own decisions or those of other skiers on the mountain. Son Russell seriously injured a knee getting off the lift. He and a friend continued talking as they slowly skied away, with Russell a little behind and on the left. His friend turned slightly toward

Russell to speak and inadvertently got his left ski over Russell's right. Then traffic in front required them to split and the friend pulled Russell's ski out from under him as he turned the other way. Big problem; down went Russell. They had to sled him down the mountain.



On the more pleasant days, you don't need a lot of clothing, to be comfortable on the ski slope.

The injury required surgery, rehab and 12 months of inconvenience. Many years ago, I had a friend who was a commercial plumber. He took on a big job, and had a lot of money on the line when his customer declared bankruptcy. It also bankrupted my friend's business.

My buddy Courtney Olson, a serious black run skier, hit a bad patch of ice, lost control and fell; the bindings



Grandson Jay is on the left and granddaughter Eliza and her mother Sara on the right. Skiing can be a family affair.

released from one boot, but not the other. He tore up a knee and missed the rest of that season and the next. In business also, sometimes you run into quick or not so quick surprises that seriously impede the health of your business – financing, litigation, regulations and human resources are a few.

One of the things that instructors teach beginners is the fastest way to stop, if necessary to

**"...slow down
and don't presume
anything..."**

avoid contact with other skiers. Lay down! Don't try to be graceful about it, just lay down quick. My strategy, when approaching others on the trail, is slow down and don't presume anything; that's a good strategy for everyone. Of course, the slopes are all labeled black, blue and green, to indicate the level of difficulty. All skiers quickly learn their limitations and their preferences. Yes, downhill skiing is a lot like running a business!



Larry Potterfield
Snowshoe Mountain
West Virginia
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Every skier knows to look at the trail maps to identify the runs and the lifts. In the case of Snowshoe Mountain, the village is on the top of the mountain and the lifts on the bottom. Elevation is just under 5,000 feet.