POOL REPORT, December 24, 1975, Vail, Colo.

Meandering through the snow, your pool assembled outside Ted Kindel's house shortly after 7 p.m. to await the arrival of the president and family. A small crowd, maybe 15 or 20 folk, stood around and watched. Preceded, at brief intervals, by Susan and Steven, The President and Mrs. Ford arrived at 7:31, in a brief motorcade.

Easily returning the crowd's greetings, Mr. Ford first waved his pipe and then his hand at them. He and the crowd exchanged "Merry Christmas" and he said "have a nice dayter tomorrow."

Reporters asked the President and Mrs. Ford, who was wearing a black coat trimmed with black fur, about what they wanted for Christmas. At one point the President said "just being here." Mrs. Ford said no presents had yet been opened.

Ringing through the air came the determined shouts of "Merry Christmas" from an upstairs window of a house near the Kindel residence. A group was gathered at the window, and they succeeded **absormer** after a time in attracting the President's attention and a returned shout of "Merry Christmas."

Yea, and as the dinner hour had been reached for the President, it had also arrived for the pool, which adjourned to Cyrano's at approximately 7:40, where the friendly management seated us at 8:30. The food was fine.

at 9:45

Caroling was in progress when the pool returned to the Kindel residence and the President's tenant, both. He hash known about 75 persons were singing, carrying and songbooks. They sang loudest when the television lights went on, perhaps because it was then easiest to read the words. They sand Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer, Oh, Come All Ye Faithful, and White Christmas. After a time Mr. Bass left, and with him most of the group. But perhaps some 25 persons remained, and when, at 10:05 p.m., a voice with a Brooklyn accent called from an upstairs window "Silent Night," they sould sang it.

Happily dancing a jum jig, or perhaps a hornpipe, Santa Claus emerged from the shouse a few minutes later. As he leaped about, the President and Mrs. Ford also came out on the front steps. The crowd sang "We Wish You a Merry Green Christmas" and the President smiled and swayed with the singing. He joined in for a bit, and plainly en joyed himself.

Responding them to their good wishes, he said "Thankyou all, nice to see you."

In the course of the drive to the church, the pool was advised that Santa was none other than the ubiquitous Mr. Kindel.

Snow was falling, noticeably enough to keep the windshield wipers going on the drive to the Vail Interfaith Chapel. And when the president got out of his car there, he was come once again greeted with "We Wish You a Merry Christmas." He replied "Thank you very much....God Bless You."

The church sections is a simple wooden building, with a small balcony where the musicians sat and performed. It was crowded quite a bit beyond its normal seating capacity, which seemed to be 240. I would estimate the crowd at about four hundred. The securic was furtheran.

Mrs. Ford sat to the **Paris** President's left, about four rows from the back. Susan was on his right. Mike and Gail to her right. S_t eve and Jack and Dr ukash in the row behind. With his tan topcoat off, it was possible to see the president attired in a red blazer and a white turtleneck. He wore his glasses through much of the service, and had a couple of spots of windburn on cheeks and upper lip.

After assorted carols, and the Revised Standard Version (I'm pretty sure, and know it wasn't King James) account from Luke **Constant** 2:1-20 of the birth of Jesus, the sermon was preached by Don Simonton, pastor of the Church of the Holy Cross, High Country Lutheran Parish.

Skiing figured prominently in the sermon, as he talked about ski trail design and a prominent local designer Max (Sorry, couldn't catch last name). The designer's main point was to design trails that would have an appeal when a skier looked "back up the trail." And the designer, said, according to pastor Si monton "I design trails for looking up."

And, he said, "Skiing and Christmas have something in common -- the need to look up if you want to appreciate them fully."

New Mexico, he said, was the place where he first appreciated this fact. A few years ago, walking to church on Christmas Eve interstations under a star-bright sky, Rev. Simonton himself looked up and heard angels singing ... "Iwas transported back through the years.... For the first time I was feeling the spirit of that first Christmas."

Drawing on that experience, he observed that the shepards were the only one aware at the nativity that anything special was happening. The rest, he said, were'preoccupied with accommodating and entertaining crowds of visitors...merry-making in the innum ... the kinds of things that are apt to preoccupy us in a place like **this**."

A true appreciation of Christmas, he urged, requires looking up. "you may see stars, or, hopefully, snowflakes." (that line got a chuckle.)

He emphasized that it was necessary to do more than look up physically, but spiritually, too.

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Additional for a time, to continue following the star in the east to Bethlehem, or Podunkiville, as he called it, but to stop in the capital of Jerusalem

Bropurlyss Podunkville was not the place, is however, and they learned this when they ment to Bethlemen. The lesson of that is that "the truly significant areast events originate not in capitols or palaces, but in heaven, with God."

Broodorm An an faway Thus furnished that

Pastor Simulation Simonton said that sometimes the "spirit of Christmas" doesn't last much longer than the wrappings and the hangover. " μ e said that was because the focus was to narrow.

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Yet again he returned to the skiing theme and he spoke of the great moment in the course of **term** learning to ski when **marrie** skiers "can take their eyes off the tips of their skies and look a little further."

Numbering the advantages of this condition, he said it much more facilitates a better feel for the snow, reduces accidents, and, most important, broadens the skiër's vision.

Even more important than in skiing, though, was the fact that looking up can promote a better lifestyle, in which a person can be "tuned in to h:s creator and renewer."

When the worshipers left, he urged, they should "lift up your heads tonight...let your life be more heavenward focused."

(Yesterday is now the day of these **m** events and I will try **t** o wind this up briefly while maintaining its basic scheme.)

Exiting from the church after the 42-minute service -- a copy of the program is posted -- the President and Mrs. Ford were again applauded. He stopped and shook a few hands, including one of a 6 year-old boy whose name sounded like John **Armit Arunda**e, who said he came from Virginia. "Virginia -- that's quite close to the Capitol and the White House," the president said.

Arundek A<u>rundale</u>, or minim whoever, then asked if the president remembered him from a press conference, and the president seemed to say yes.

Regrettably, your pool was by now tearing off with the motorcade, and cannot explain there this last exchange ignorphicately. We could not in terview the young man to find out what press conference he meant, or how he came to be there. Good night.

Adam Clymer -- Baltimore Sun