

At 91, Darrell Price Preps for Another Ski Season

By Ted Pease

Retired? Darrell Price doesn't know the word.

At 91, Price isn't thinking about retirement — he's eager for ski season to start. This will be Price's 39th year on the slopes. The former Eureka contractor started skiing in 1979, and he hasn't missed a season since.

"I could have been a professional skier," Price said, but he was a bit of a late-bloomer when he took up the sport with his son at age 53, and he had a family to support.

But from that first experience, he never lost his love of the slopes.

"It's a challenge," Price said. That's what he likes about it. "I still go fast. I like the speed."

Price is the star of various YouTube videos that show him being interviewed on the chairlift, and then zip-

ping down the slopes at Mt. Bachelor, his "home mountain" 22 miles outside of Bend, Oregon, where he owns a home and spends half the year.

In one online video, Price schusses smoothly down the slope as the interviewer follows with the video camera, whooping, "Look at him go! 90 years old and he's like a little kid out here!" (Search for "Darrell Price ski" on Google to find the videos.)

Last year, he skied more than 100 days on Mt. Bachelor, and he plans to better that record this season.

Price is a very active member of the 90+ Ski Club, an elite designation of the 70+ Ski Club, headquartered in Rhode Island. As 70+ Club president Richard Lambert explains, active members kept getting older.

"We have about 125 members in

their 90s (and 1 over 100)," Lambert said. "When I first became involved in the organization, I figured that most of them were social members. But as I got to meet them, I realized many are very much active skiers."

"Darrell is a great inspiration to skiers of all ages," Lambert said. "He demonstrates that skiing can be a lifetime sport."

At Mt. Bachelor, Price skis with a group in their 60s and 70s. "We keep an eye on each other," he said.

But he has trouble holding onto regular ski buddies. "I used to ski with a really good friend, but he got Alzheimer's," Price said, shaking his head. "I skied with him I suppose 15 years, but something just took his mind away."

The 2018 ski season begins in No-

vember, and Price follows a daunting exercise regimen to stay in shape.

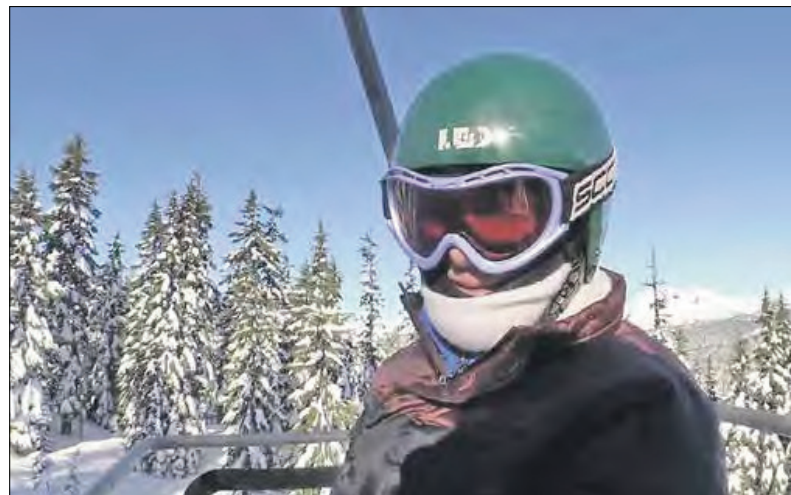
"Exercise," he said. "That's what makes the difference." Every morning starts with warm-up exercises and stretches, then 200 pushups during stops along a 2.5-mile loop around his Redwood Acres neighborhood.

It keeps him fit enough to stay with the sport he loves.

"I come down the hill pretty fast," he said. "You can get hurt pretty bad. You've got to learn how to turn, how to stop."

But after almost 40 years skiing, stopping isn't something Darrell Price is ready to do yet.

Ted Pease is a retired cross-country skier with bad knees.



'AN INSPIRATION' — That's what the president of the 70+ Ski Club calls Darrell Price, a serious downhill skier who will turn 92 in November as he starts another ski season at Oregon's Mt. Bachelor. Here he holds a photo of himself and his ski buddies celebrating his 100-day season last year. Above, Darrell is interviewed on the chair lift before starting a run featured in a YouTube video. Ted Pease photos.