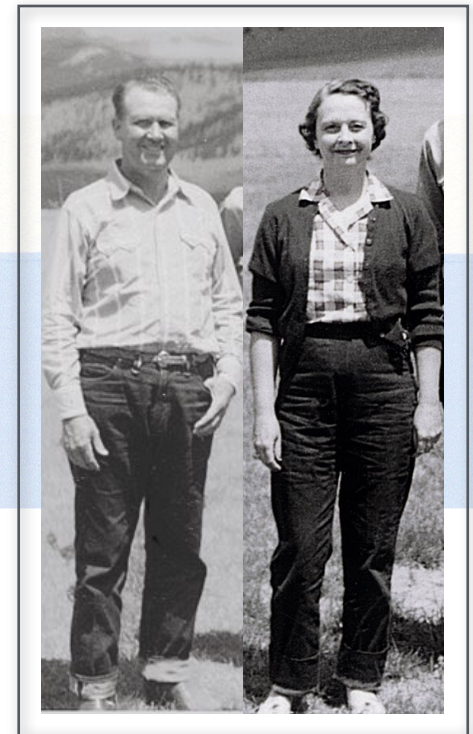


# New Mexico Ski Hall of Fame

2018



## Roy & LaVena LeBus



Angel Fire Resort traces its beginnings to 1954, when brothers Roy and George LeBus of Wichita Falls, Texas, bought the 9,000 acre Monte Verde Ranch and two years later bought the Cieneguilla Ranch, another 14,000 acres from the Maxwell Land Grant Company. The land was used for cattle ranching, logging and a pole-treating plant for telephone poles and fence posts.

The Family had been enjoying skiing at Red River and Taos and in the early 1960s, when the cattle business was declining, Roy envisioned building a year-round resort with a ski area, country club and golf course on the ranch land. They hired a prominent engineer, Jim Woods, from Albuquerque as their general manager and traveled around the western United States researching resorts and preparing their own ideas for the resort. The resort needed a name and that fell to George. He suggested Angel Fire, a name the Ute Indians called the mountain. LaVena agreed and Angel Fire was born.

In 1965, George and Jim Woods walked the mountain and laid out trails. By winter 1965, 3 Riblet chairlifts were built and the slopes groomed. Monte Verde Lake and a 9-hole golf course were installed and a dirt airstrip was created.

Sally LeBus has said the first few years were a struggle. “My folks would say they ‘poor boy’d it.’ The winter they opened, it didn’t snow and didn’t snow much the following year either. And that was long before snowmaking equipment. It was just such a gamble. You never knew whether you were going to have good snow or not.”

Word spread and as the resort continued to grow, the demand for new capital for expansion was required and the LeBus family took on additional investors in 1969.

New accommodations were needed to house the many visitors and the first condominiums were completed in 1971. In 1972, the LeBus family sold the resort to the Baca Grande Angel Fire Corp, but retained 1,000 acres of the original ranch and members of the LeBus family have lived in Angel Fire ever since.

Roy LeBus passed away in 2000 and LaVena passed away in 2002.

