

MOUNTAIN EAR

Monthly Newsletter of the Rocky Mountaineers

The Rocky Mountaineers is organized as a nonprofit Club for the mutual benefit of its members to promote all phases of recreational use of mountainous areas.

February 2004

Springtime in the Southwest

We have a special treat for the meeting in February. The survivors of charter member and former club president David Line have found his bound complete set of *Mountain Ears*, and have donated them. We will have them on display at the meeting. See page 2 for more details. Then we are thinking of donating them

to the Mansfield Library for safekeeping, before any get lost or damaged. Or should volunteers scan them first? Help us decide what we should do with these precious documents.

This will be followed by a slide show about the Great Basin and deserts of the Southwest. Steve Schombel, your editor, has been making springtime trips down there since the late 1960's. He has some slides from early visits, and several from more recent ones.

Steve's first introduction to this dry part of the USA came in 1968, while a student at Colorado Mountain College. Some of his classmates told him about a "must see" area nearby, Colorado National Monument. In spite of its magnificent scenery this area is not as well known as the National Parks and Monuments in Utah and Arizona. During the 1990's he and Julia Warner took a trip when the mountains of the Southwest were really stormed in, and waterfalls were cascading down the cliffs of Zion. They also found some good ski touring and some very deep slush amid magnificent scenery. A few years later he and Charles

Tree saw what locals called a "once in 20 year" wildflower bloom in Arizona. Additionally, there are some slides of lesser known areas, such as a State Park in Nevada and a backpack in the mid elevations of Arizona. In conclusion there are slides from last spring's trip to Capitol Reef and a backpack in one of

our newest National Monuments, the Escalante-Grand Staircase.

The meeting will be on February 11th at 7:00 PM in the second floor meeting room of the Courthouse Annex, room #201. Use the Pine Street entrance. Rocky Mountaineers monthly meetings are free and open to all. Interested persons are welcome to stay and ask questions or to take a



Goblin Valley, Utah by Steve Schombel

closer look at the old newsletters.

David Pengelly Remembered

Last December the Glacier Mountaineering Society mailed out a notice that they posthumously added David Pengelly to their list of people who have successfully climbed the five technical peaks in Glacier National Park.

We are very happy to see a former club president receive this recognition, especially from such a highly regarded organization.

Trip Reports

January 3rd Rattlesnake Ski trail: The forecast was for bitterly cold weather on Sunday, so instead of going to the Lubrecht area Steve Schombel, Cathy Burleson, Michael Bowles, Michelle Jensen and Will Innes skied the newly groomed Rattlesnake trail Saturday, the last mild day. We had great snow and a fine time for several miles. Steve Niday also gave this trail high marks all the way to the Franklin Bridge, and it was featured in the *Missoulian Outdoors* Section, so check it out. - Steve

January 10th Moonlight Ski/sledding was on the University golf course. We had a good turn out of adults and kids. Our son Joe and his wife Valerie and kids Allison, Jack, and our step grandson Luke, Our daughter Michelle, and son Jerimy, her fiance Bryan and our future step kids Patrick, Anna and Preston, Julie Warner, David Kahl, Fred Schwanemann, Steve and Cathy Schombel and son Mike Bowles had a great time skiing and sledding. Later we all went to our house for hot chocolate and goodies which my husband had put together for us. It was a fun evening. Lois Crepeau.

Sunday, January 18th Glacier Park: Fred and Eileen Schwanemann skied a portion of Going to the Sun Road from Lake McDonald Lodge to just past the Dancing Cascades and then back again. This was about six miles round trip. All the way to Dancing Cascades and part way back we did not see anyone else. The snow was 2 1/2 to 3 feet deep, frosty and fast, but very good ski conditions. Although the skies were mostly cloudy and there was some fog, it was a surprisingly good day to ski in Glacier. - Fred

Sunday, January 25th Pack Creek Road: Fred Schwanemann, Julie Warner, David Kahl, John Wolverton, Bret Doucett, and Steve Schombel shuttled four cars and skied Pack Creek Road at Lolo Pass. The temperature was in the high teens, skies were overcast, it was snowing, and visibility was one mile or less.

We didn't need to wedge or snow plow down the grade. The trail was hard pack covered by one to four inches of new snow We were lucky with the weather. - Fred

Sunday, February 1st Family Day at Lolo Pass: Once the kids got to the sledding hill they did not want to leave, and spent happy hours in the snow. Fred Schwanemann took off skiing and did about 11 miles total. Steve Schombel and David Kahl skied the short loop. Julie Warner, Cathy Burleson and John Wolverton spent a fine afternoon playing with the youngsters, Gharrett and Hannah Warner and Michael Bowles. Another great day for all. - Steve

Early Issues of the Mountain Ear

The complete set of *Mountain Ears* is a wonderful gift to the club. There are many questions about its early days, the typical who, what, why and when. It was believed that a set existed in the Mansfield Library, but volunteers were unable to find the first several years of issues. It appears that the late David Line was the only original member who saved all of his issues up into the 1990's.

The first issue, volume I number 1 is dated October, 1961. But there is more. There is a set of original bylaws, followed by an amended set that David Line noted was apparently adopted in 1963. There was an executive board, a list of charter members, duplicate lists of the first several years of officers, and an index followed by the newsletters themselves.

The man who is credited with the idea behind the Rocky Mountaineers is Thad Lowery. The first group of officers, 1960-61, were: president Gardner Miller, vice president Tom Collins and secretary-treasurer Luann Layman. Mary Millers is credited with the name of the publication, "Mountain Ear", and Lou Jordan created the clever logo, which remains unchanged from volume one number one. The mission statement in our masthead has only been slightly modified, to reflect the fact that we are no longer a joint venture club. The phrase "with primary emphasis on rock and snow-ice climbing" was also dropped.

The activities of this early group were impressive, with back country skiing in the bowls and ridges above nearby ski areas and in the Bitterroots. In summer they worked on clearing trails to favorite areas, and did some routes that are still considered very difficult. But they also had some easier days. Interesting examples are route finding to McCloud Peak when one could drive way up the Rattlesnake, and a hike to Murphy Peak when the road was open to the top of Point Six. If only time would allow a thorough reading.

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND LIABILITY WAVIER

Family Yearly Membership: \$13.00

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I have read this release and indemnity agreement and have fully informed myself of its contents before I have signed it.

Print Name _____

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Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian if Participant is Under 18 Years of Age _____

I, (print name) _____ hereby state that I wish to participate in courses and/or activities offered by The Rocky Mountaineers, a non-profit organization. I recognize any outdoors activity may involve certain dangers, including but not limited to the hazards of traveling in mountainous terrain, accidents or illness in remote places, forces of nature, and the actions of participants and other persons. I further understand and agree that without some program providing protection of its assets and its leaders, the Rocky Mountaineers would not be able to offer its courses and activities. In consideration of and as part payment for the right to participate in the activities offered by The Rocky Mountaineers, I agree to RELEASE, HOLD HARMLESS, AND INDEMNIFY The Rocky Mountaineers and its members from any and all liability, claims and causes of action arising out of or in any way connected with my participation, or the participation of any minor that I am signing on behalf of, in any activities offered by The Rocky Mountaineers. I personally assume all risks in connection with these activities. If I am signing on behalf of a minor, I further agree to RELEASE, HOLD HARMLESS, AND INDEMNIFY The Rocky Mountaineers and its members from any liability, claims and cause of action, which the minor may have arising from the minor's participation in activities. The terms of this agreement shall serve as a release and indemnity agreement for my heirs, personal representative, and for all members of my family, including any minors. (Parents or Legal Guardians must sign for all persons under eighteen (18) years of age).



We now have scanners

Anyone who wishes to submit a photo, we can scan it into the newsletter, and return it unharmed (computer gods willing)

Photos of recent ski trips by John Wolverton

Left: West Fork of Fish Creek

Below: Family Day at Lolo Pass



Upcoming Trips

February 6th: Ski the Rattlesnake trail under the full moon. There won't be much light in the trees, so headlamps or flashlights are recommended. We'll also take it slow and watch for ice or rocks and will stick to the main route. Meet at the main Rattlesnake parking lot at 6:30 Friday evening, or call Steve Schombel at 721-4686 for more information.

February 15th Chief Joseph Pass: Cathy Burleson and Steve Schombel will spend Saturday night in the Sula area. Meet us in the warming hut on Sunday for lunch and ski the trails of the Chief Joseph area. Or call us at 721-4686 for another meeting time and place.

February 18th Moose Pass Loop: This 14 mile loop with its ups and downs takes some ski conditioning. It is usually groomed during the week, and motorized traffic is rare at mid week, or traffic of any kind. The snow is deep and the skiing has been great at the pass recently, except right after storms. Fred Schwanemann is the leader at 542-7372.

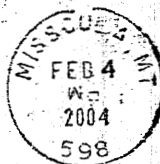
February 22nd Blind Canyon: This is a long but gentle ski tour in the Seeley Lake area. It gets more rugged and steep the farther one goes, but the scenery gets better. We usually turn around at a large avalanche chute. Call Bret Doucett at 728-6461 to participate.

February 29th Lee Creek "A" trail: We are doing this annual favorite with members of the local Sierra Club. It is about 7½ miles total, 6 miles ungroomed. There are a few miles of gentle uphill, then a long glide to the Lee Creek Campground. Sierra Club members will be along to explain why this trail is no longer signed or maintained, to talk about future Lolo Trail land purchases, and to answer other questions. Snow and weather conditions can vary, so call the leader, Steve Schombel at 721-4686 for an update.

March 13th Kids Day in Butte: Take your family to explore the interesting mineral museum on the campus of Montana Tech. There are many other fun things to do. Call Julie Warner at 543-6508 for carpool, food and other information.



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FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

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Membership Renewal 04/2004