

FEBRUARY 2007

THE MOUNTAIN EAR

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The Monthly Newsletter of The Rocky Mountaineers

The Rocky Mountaineers



Climb. Hike. Ski. Bike. Paddle.
Dedicated to the Enjoyment and Promotion of
Responsible Outdoor Adventure.

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The Mountain Ear is the club newsletter of The Rocky Mountaineers and is published near the beginning of every month. Anyone wishing to contribute articles of interest are welcomed and encouraged to do so- contact the editor.

Membership application can be found at the end of the newsletter.

ABOUT THE CLUB:

Mission Statement:

The Rocky Mountaineers is a non-profit club dedicated to the enjoyment and promotion of responsible outdoor adventures.

Meetings and Presentations:

Meetings are held the second Wednesday, September through May, at 6:00 PM at Pipestone Mountaineering. Each meeting is followed by a featured presentation or speaker at 7:00 PM.

Activities:

- ☐ Hiking
- ☐ Backpacking
- ☐ Alpine Climbing & Scrambling
- ☐ Peak Bagging
- ☐ Backcountry Skiing
- ☐ Winter Mountaineering
- ☐ Track Skiing
- ☐ Snowshoeing
- ☐ Snowboarding
- ☐ Mountain Biking
- ☐ Rock Climbing
- ☐ Canoeing & Kayaking
- ☐ Rafting
- ☐ Kids Trips
- ☐ Terracaching/Geocaching

February Meeting & Presentation



This month's speaker can make the vast majority of us feel like neophytes to the world of mountaineering. Paul Jensen is a lifelong Missoulian who has been scaling peaks since his teenage years. Ask him about nearly any western Montana peak and he will tell you several ways he has climbed it, skied it and then done it again. He has been a Rocky Mountaineer's member since the 1970's.

Although Paul calls this area his home and spends the majority of his time recreating in the nearby mountains, he has certainly ventured out over his career to exotic places such as Alaska, Europe and South America. One of his beloved areas to climb is not all that far distant, however, and the subject of his presentation: **"Mountaineering in the Canadian Rockies"**. Join us as Paul shares some of his slides, stories, trip details and general knowledge on these amazing mountains just north of the border.

The show will take place on **Wednesday, February 14th at 7:00 PM at Pipestone Mountaineering**. It is free and open to everyone. Our monthly business mtg. preceeds this at 6:00 PM—anyone interested in getting involved in the business affairs and direction of the club is also encouraged to attend this.

Above photo courtesy of Steven Gnam.

President's Message



Movies have the Oscar, music has the Grammy, and Glacier Mountaineering Society has its 10,000-Foot Peaks and Technical Peaks awards, along with three other achievement awards. I have been thinking The Rocky Mountaineers needs it's own awards. I would like to ask the membership for suggestions and offer a few of my own. We would need to decide which achievements to honor and how to honor them. The awards could be as simple as a mention in the newsletter, a list on our website, or something more like a certificate, patch, plaque, or pin. Once we decide on which awards to adopt, we will try to get the most accurate peak list posted on our website. For summitting all the peaks in a given list I offer the following suggestions:

9000' Selway-Bitterroots

8500' Selway-Bitterroots

9000' Mission Mountains

8500' Mission Mountains

9000' Swan Range

8500' Swan Range

10000' Glacier National Park- Cleveland, Stimson, Kintla, Jackson, Siyeh, Merrit

9500' Glacier National Park

9000' Glacier National Park

Montana's 10,000' Range High Points- Granite, Hilgard, Crazy, Cowan, Tweedy, Eighteenmile, Electric, W Goat, Jefferson, Sunset, Cleveland, Table, Powell
Montana's Mountain Range High Points- ask Steve Schombel

Western States Summits- AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NM, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY

Missoula Horizon Peaks- Stuart Pk, Sheep Mtn, Woody Mtn, University Mtn, Miller Pk, Mitten Mtn, Lolo Pk, Blue Mtn, Black Mtn, Ch-paa-qn, Point Six

Send us your suggestions and comments.

Steve Niday

Classic Places

Gash Point



Gash Point. Photo by Don Gisselbeck

This month's Classic Series trip takes us once again into the Bitterroots- this time to Gash Point. Although at 8886 feet in elevation it qualifies as a nice 8500'+ Bitterroot summit, it isn't a real popular destination for the masses as it really amounts to little more than a high point along a ridge. However, for winter recreation enthusiasts- particularly skiers- Gash is a fabulous destination and the choice spot for many a Rocky Mountaineer winter trip (see evidence in the Trip Report section).

This past summer brought a big change to this area. One of Montana's larger forest fires burned here and certainly changed the landscape. The following is a report on that fire and the new condition of the area. This is courtesy of member Michael Hoyt who originally created and wrote this on [Summitpost.org](http://www.summitpost.org) :

2006 Gash Creek Fire

On 24aug06 at 4:01 pm, a fire in the Gash Creek area was reported to the Forest Service. The fire eventually grew to cover more than 8,500 acres.

The fire had been determined to be human caused and was under investigation until early September when a Bitterroot Valley youth was arrested for starting this and several other fires during 2006.

The fire was easily visible from many points in the Bitterroot Valley and was at times rather spectacular. This was especially true one night when a huge abandoned slash pile near the Glen Lake Trailhead ignited. As this took place in a shallow cirque, after dark that night, the mountain looked like a volcano.

Impact of the 2006 Gash Creek Fire

Amazingly enough, the 8,500 acre fire seems to have improved the route to Gash Point, at least in my opinion.

Granted, a lot of trees and other plants have been killed or damaged, but many more survived and will likely flourish with the lessening of competition. The "look" of the area has certainly changed, but to state categorically that "things are worse" is taking a short-term view. Things always "change, something which is not necessarily bad.

On October 8, 2006, when I visited, animals were already returning to the area. Rodents and birds were in abundance, and the ungulates had re-established their trails. Interestingly, humans seem to feel more threatened by wildfires than the "animal" inhabitants.

Anyway, with the burning of some of the dense undergrowth which had previously choked the area around Gash Point, it is now easier to reach the summit unmolested by twigs and branches. I, for one, am grateful for the easier passage and willing to put up with a bit of soot for the next couple of years. I know many burned trees will be falling on the route in the near future, but I doubt their number will exceed the amount of deadfall which had cluttered the ground before the fire.

<http://www.summitpost.org/mountain/rock/205774/gash-point.html>

Created/Edited: Jul 8, 2006 / Jan 7, 2007



A burned area on the ridge crest. Photo by Michael Hoyt.

UPCOMING TRIPS AND ADVENTURES

Trip Notes:

Please contact the trip leader for more information regarding any listed trips.

Mileage listed is round trip mileage. Elevation listed is gain only. For information on Class Rating see below:

Class Rating System

CLASS 1 – HIKING Mostly on trails, but may also include some easy cross country travel.

CLASS 2 – EASY SCRAMBLING Rugged off trail hiking, no hands required.

CLASS 3 – SCRAMBLING Use of hand to ascend some sections of rock. Little to no exposure; a fall would not likely cause serious injury.

CLASS 4 – CLIMBING Easy climbing, great exposure; a fall would quite possibly cause serious injury. Use of a rope and protection at times possible.

CLASS 5 – TECHNICAL CLIMBING Use of rope, protection and belay are a must.

CLASS 6 – AID CLIMBING Use of equipment to support your weight as you climb.

Friday evening, February 2 – LUBRECHT MOONLIGHT SKI.

Description: I had proposed a moonlight ski up the Blue Mountain Road on February 2nd. Unfortunately, we have not had much snow for weeks, and from a distance it looks like that section of the road must be melted off. So I am thinking of moving the trip to the Lubrecht Forest ski area. This area is about 30 miles east on Highway 200. Although the snow isn't real deep there, the area is well groomed; they have made a lot out of what snow is there. There are three short loops rated "easy" which have gentle grades, and, with the grooming, they should be easy to follow by moonlight. There is a shelter hut along one of these loops. I'm not planning to stop for any long meals. Eat something light after work and bring some snacks. We will ski a few hours and head home before 10. Please call the day before for the latest on the meeting time and place. This will be a joint outing with the Mission-Bitterroot Group of the Sierra Club, and will be an opportunity to join a larger group and meet new people.

Leader: Steve Schombel--721-4686.

Friday-Sunday, February 2-4 – LITTLE ST. JOSEPH / ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS CABIN (Classic Series Trip).

Rating: Class 2 terrain, *Mileage:* 11.0 miles RT to summit, 7.0 RT to cabin, *Elevation:* 5300' to summit

Description: Ski up to the cabin on Friday. Ski to the top of Little St. Joseph Peak on Saturday. Participants can make as many ski runs as they wish then head back to the cabin for another night, or ski back out if they choose. Ski out on Sunday (possibly make some more runs first). Contact Paul for more details or alternatives.

Special Equipment: Ski's with skins.

Leader: Paul Jensen, H: 728-6881.

Saturday, February 10 – KIDS SLED DAY AT LOLO PASS

Traditionally this family day involves sledding, skiing, snowshowing (what ever participants want to do) and picnicing at Lolo Pass, with some participants going to Lolo Hot Springs afterwards.

Leader: Julie Kahl at 543-6508

Saturday, February 17 – GASH POINT (Classic Series Trip)

Rating: Class 2 terrain, *Mileage:* 8.5 miles, *Elevation:* up to 4000' gain

Description: Meet and leave from Bernice's Bakery about 7:30 am and will probably do the standard route to the main bowl.

Special Equipment: Ski's, skins, and avalanche gear.

Leader: Don Gisselbeck- 546-3892, email: dongisselbeck@yahoo.com

Thursday-Sunday, February 15-18 – MOUNT JACKSON (Glacier National Park)

Rating: Class 3 (4 possible), *Mileage:* 29 (from Rising Sun), *Elevation:* 5570'

Description: I have rescheduled this attempt from last month. This climb and trip will be conditions dependent and subject to change. Plan is to drive up to Glacier on Thursday morning and then ski in as far as desired. Friday would be spent skiing up to a higher camp. Do the actual climb on Saturday, then ski out on Sunday. An extra day for unforeseen. Jackson is one of 6 Glacier peaks over 10,000' (10,052'). If conditions look poor (weather or snow stability) I plan to head to a different location: possibilities include – other Glacier NP peaks (Apikuni Mtn, Piegan Mtn), southern Madison range, Sawtooth's, or Beartooth's.

Special Equipment: Ski's, avalanche gear, cold weather sleeping bag, adequate clothing, ice ax, crampons, some climbing gear possibly.

Leader: Forest Dean, H: 721-6384, C: 240-7612, email: fdean@midlandimplement.com

Monday, February 19 – LOLO PASS (MOOSE RIDGE LOOP)

Mileage: 14 miles, *Elevation:* 1000'

Description: This will be a Cross Country Ski around Moose Ridge Loop at Lolo Pass, conditions permitting.

Special Equipment: Cross country ski's

Leader: Fred Schwanemann, 542-7372

Saturday, February 24 - BOBCAT CREEK - CROSS COUNTRY SKI

Description: Just five miles below Lolo Pass, Bobcat Creek trails wind around the scenic Bobcat Creek drainage, and if followed far enough join with trails on the divide between Lolo Creek & Granite Creek. We'll ski as far as we want to and come back on our own tracks. Beginners may find some sections challenging but doable. This is listed as a joint outing with the Sierra Club.

Special Equipment: Cross country ski's

Leader: Julie Kahl, 543-6508

2007 CLASSIC SERIES

*Details about these trips will be listed in the newsletter as the times get closer.
January's trip is listed above.*

<u>Month</u>	<u>Destination</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Leader</u>
Jan	Little St. Joseph Peak	Bitterroots	Ski/Cabin stay	Paul Jensen
Feb	Gash Point	Bitterroots	Ski	Don Gisselbeck
Mar	East St. Mary's Peak	Missions	Ski/Snowshoe	Forest Dean
Apr	Trapper Peak	Bitterroots	Ski/Snowshoe	Alden Wright
May	Grey Wolf Peak	Missions	Snow Climb	Forest Dean
Jun	Burnt Fork Pinnacle	Reservation Divide	Hike	Alden Wright
Jul	Lolo Peak	Bitterroots	Hike/Scramble	Steve Schombel
Aug	3 rd Glacier Classic	Waterton NP	Various	Steve Niday
Sep	Warren Peak	Pintlers	Scramble	Jim Wilson
Oct	McDonald Peak	Missions	Climb	Forest Dean
Nov	Chief Joseph Pass	Bitterroots	Ski	Steve Schombel
Dec	Sweeney Peak	Bitterroots	Hike/Ski/Snowshoe	<i>Need volunteer</i>

Trip Forum

Thinking about a trip this coming summer, but no definite dates yet? Looking for partners to plan some big adventure? Well here is the place to do it! The Trip Forum section serves as a “bulletin board” for those grand plans circling around in your head. Once you firm up dates and details, the trip can then be moved into the “Upcoming Trips and Adventures” section, if you so choose. Feel free to submit your ideas! The following is a sampling:

Eagle Cap Odyssey – late July or early August (will postpone if rain likely)
Explore/Climb in the Eagle Cap Wilderness of northeastern Oregon, with peaks to 9838 feet. Four to eight day options, which include 5-hour drive from Missoula via Lolo Pass. Format is to pack into a centralized camp high in these scenic mountains, then everyone does what strikes their fancy for 1 to 5 days. Traverse possible. The large peaks are mostly scrambles, but technical formations are also available. Details in June. Pat Caffrey, ph 677-2661.



Photo from Pat Caffrey.

Square Butte, Round Butte (E of Great Falls) and maybe Haystack Butte.

Bag the Central Mountain. Trio Baker Monument is also in the area. If interested contact Julie Kahl 543-6508

Grand Teton- I am planning to climb the Grand on one of the first two weekends in July. Will be a three day trip and will do one of the easier standard routes. If things go well and time permits, we could climb something else in Cathedral Group or Garnet Canyon as well. This would be my first climb in the Tetons, i.e. I am not a guide. I always like to stop at the Snake River Brewing Company when finished (here I can guide!). Forest Dean, 240-7612 or fdean@midlandimplement.com



The Grand Teton in Winter from Jackson Hole. Photo courtesy National Park Service.

Bob Marshall Backpack

Enter via Pyramid Pass, exit via Youngs Pass. 3 day trip, Payramid Lake (5 mi.) 1st day, Youngs Creek to Jenny Creek 2nd day (6-8 mi. ?) Jenny Creek to Youngs Pass and out - 6-8 Mi. We also need to recruit drop off (and maybe camp over night) drivers for this trip. If interested call Julie Kahl 543-6508

Eiger (Switzerland) - I am planning a trip to Hungary to attend my brothers wedding in August. Since it will be my first trip to Europe I sort of figure I need to tie a nice climb in with it. What could be more classic than the Eiger in Switzerland? This 13,024 foot peak is a legend-particularly its North Face routes. My idea would be to do the West Flank and West Ridge route which is how the mountain was first ascended in 1858- this is the easiest route. Anyone with trip plans to Europe around that time would be welcome to start a dialogue regarding meeting up and tackling this together. Forest Dean, 240-7612 or fdean@midlandimplement.com

TRIP REPORTS

January 6- Gash Point (Bitterroots)

In a raging snowstorm, Nadia White and I drove to the trailhead at 4800'. I have rarely seen it snow that hard in the Bitterroots. It continued snowing and blowing most of the morning. As we got higher there were many times we had to stop and turn our backs to the blowing snow. By the time we were nearing tree line we had both had enough and headed down. In the time it took to de-skin, our tracks were obliterated. It was a tough ski down, lots of new snow, but the base was marginal. *Steve Niday*



Snowy day in the Roots. Photo by Nadia White.

January 13 – Downing Mountain (Bitterroots)

This was sort of a spur of the moment ski/climb I decided to do. I list it here mostly for info for others wanting to do it. Arrived at the Canyon Creek trailhead (5000' – was able to drive to it) and started at 9:15 am- quite cold- 8 below! Skied up the trail for about two miles. Just past the Wilderness Boundary a noticeable drainage (and Downing Mtn. itself) are visible if you climb up on the boulders to the north of the trail. From this point I crossed the creek and then ascended the fairly steep south side of the canyon. After about a thousand feet of climbing it leveled out and I decided to ski around the east side of the large basin below Downing Mtn. On the south end of this basin I ascended again through open forest up the east/SE ridge. The snow seemed to be fairly stable- I crossed a couple of open slopes, but there is pretty

good tree protection in most areas. The summit ridge threw me for a big surprise. It is quite broken with what I determined to be three false summits. Being unskiable, I had to do a lot of postholing, backtracking, rock climbing and swearing until at last I found the true summit block. Because there was no way I was going to backtrack once again to the SE side of this block, I took my life into my hands and climbed the NW side of it. Not a big deal in summer (low 5th class), but my holds were all packed with snow. Finally got up it (8690') at 2:00pm. Good views of Canyon Peak to the west and Ward Mtn. to the south. I descended via the north ridge and drainage and back down into the basin. Here I crossed a small stream and while trying to punch in for some water, managed to punch both feet and one arm in as well. Nothing like wet boots and clothes when it is zero degrees out! Anyway, with iced up skins I descended back to the trail and skied out arriving back at my truck at 5:00pm. Round trip mileage is 8.5 miles with 3700' of gain. The skiing terrain on Downing is quite good coming off both ridges- good open forest. This should make for a good summer trip as well- doesn't appear to be much bushwacking. *Forest Dean*

January 14- Ski Trip to Lolo Pass

We arrived at the Lolo Pass Ski Area on a bright beautiful blue sky day. We decided to ski on the ungroomed Lee Creek Trail. The snow was very picturesque and unmarked. No snowcats or noise. We had lunch at the top of Lee Creek Pass. Later, we finished the day with deluxe hamburgers at Lochsa Lodge. It was a fun day. The participants were Mary Dalton and Ron Pierson. *Ron Pierson*

January 14- Gash Point (Bitterroots)

During the summer of 2006, a firebug started a number of forest fires, the largest of which was the Gash Point fire near Victor. The fire reduced a large percentage of the trees on Gash Point and the mountain above Glen Lake to black sticks. But sometimes good things come from bad things: the fires definitely improved the skiing in the Gash Point area. Art Gidel and I (Peter Dayton) headed into the South Bowl on Gash Point in search of uncut powder, and found some. But sometimes bad things come from good things: we also found uncut trailbreaking. Before long we started wishing that some ambitious young skiers had beat us to the

mountain and laid down a nice trail. Low clouds hung over the the Bitterroot Valley, but as we gained altitude we broke out into bright sunshine. Our route finding was unimpressive, as we got a bit disoriented by all the burned areas, but we eventually blundered our way up to the South Bowl. The ridge on the southwest side of Gash Creek got burned off, and now offers an excellent route to and from the base of the bowl. The South Bowl offers 1,200 vertical feet of open slope skiing. After switchbacking halfway up the bowl, we traversed onto the ridge to the south of the bowl for the rest of the climb to the ridgetop. This ridge and the slopes to the south of it got toasted, and now offer excellent skiing through the burned trees. On days when the avalanche danger is high, these slopes would be safer than the South Bowl. After taking in the views of Sky Pilot mountain and other peaks to the north and south, we skied out. The snow conditions were outstanding. I'm going to return to Gash Point to explore the burned areas to the south of the South Bowl, and on the mountain above Glen Lake, which is located between Gash Point and St. Marys. But when I return, I'll wear older or darker clothing. My gear got heavily marked up with charcoal from all the burned trees. *Peter Dayton*



Art Gidel in a burned area on Gash Point. Photo by Peter Dayton.

January 17 – Lubrecht

We really lucked out on the weather. It was snowing lightly in the morning, but about the time we passed Gold Creek it started to clear. It was calm when we left the car, and the afternoon was mostly sunny and it felt warm after the frigid weather we had been having. We were on our way

back and almost to Gold Creek when it started to snow again. The rest of the drive home was slow, but it never snowed real hard. Steve Schombel and Fred Schwanemann skied the groomed portion of the E trail. There were icy stretches on the way up, especially on the steeper portions. The top part was in fine shape with plenty of snow. The way down also had some icy portions, but we were able to snowplow most of it. Then, for good measure we did the ungroomed loop of the D trail, instead of taking the shortest way back. This had thin snow, quite a bit of ice, ruts and rough surfaces. Plus it drops a lot, so there is a long, tiring climb at the end of the day. We had a great time and only saw one person away from the parking area. She stopped and said she had skied in from the Garnet Range Road. There was a branch headed in that direction, so this would be something to explore some other day.

Steve Schombel

January 20 – Lolo Pass to Lee Creek Divide (Bitterroots)

Five of us were lucky enough to be at Lolo Pass on one of the best ski days of the season. On Saturday, January 20, 2007. Fred & Eileen Schwanemann, Steve Schombel, Tomas Toner, and Norman Singley skied from Lolo Pass to the Lee Creek Divide. We started early and with five inches plus of new snow, we broke trail most of the way up to the Divide. It was chilly at the top with wind and snow. After lunch we skied a little further towards Wagon Mountain before returning to Lolo Pass. There was not a parking spot to be found in the early afternoon. *Fred Schwanemann*

January 20-21 – Oregon Peak (Bitterroots)

Art Gidel, Greg Zlock, and I (Peter Dayton) spent the weekend skiing on the north ridge of Oregon Peak. Oregon Peak and Missoula Lake are located to the southwest of Superior, adjacent to the Idaho-Montana border. The mountains in this area contain a lot of open slopes and bowls which provide good backcountry skiing. Access to the area is gained via a road which runs up Cedar Creek. A string of long narrow privately-owned placer claims runs up Cedar Creek. Five Valleys Land Trust recently acquired these claims, and is in the process of transferring them to the Forest Service, so this section of the stream bottom is now protected from development.

Send a donation to Five Valleys so they can continue their good work.

We parked our vehicles at the Cedar Creek-Oregon Gulch confluence, where the county stops plowing the Cedar Creek Road, and continued by snowmobile for about 20 miles to the Oregon Peak area. Art and I hauled camping gear behind our snowmobiles in trailers. About a mile from Missoula Lake the road becomes drifted in and impassible where it crosses an avalanche gully which runs down the north side of Oregon Peak. We spent Saturday skiing this gully. The first section of the gully below the road is fairly steep, the middle section has mild slopes, and the end of the gully is moderately steep. It snowed and the wind blew most of the day, but the skiing was quite good.



Photos courtesy of Peter Dayton

At the end of the day Greg headed back to Missoula, and Art and I set up camp at the point where the road crosses the north ridge of Oregon Peak. Our camping accommodations consisted of an eight-person four-season dome tent with a heater, a two-burner stove, and a lantern which are fueled by a propane tank. It's quite warm and comfortable, and tall enough to walk around in. Art cooked steaks and mashed potatoes for dinner. On Sunday it was clear and sunny, and we skied a large steep 800-foot bowl on the east side of the north ridge of Oregon Peak. As you approach Oregon Gulch on the road, you can see this bowl across the drainage. The top of the bowl is pretty steep, so you should avoid it unless the snow conditions are stable. We set off a number of surface snow sluffs as we skied down the top of the bowl. The north and south sides of the bowl are the steepest, but there's a swell in the middle of the

bowl where the angle of the slope is slightly lower, and where the drop off the lip isn't too precipitous. The snow conditions were fantastic, and we had a great day.

The road passes a couple hundred feet below this bowl, heads north and climbs up the east side of the ridge, makes a switchback where we camped on the ridge, and then heads south and continues to climb up the west side of the ridge. We did repeated snowmobile shuttles from the bottom of the bowl to a point on the west side of the ridge which is opposite the bowl. Then we climbed on our skis a short distance up the west side of the ridge to the ridgetop, and skied down the east side of the ridge through the bowl to the snowmobile. Art had as much fun going uphill as he did going downhill. When I was towing him up the road on his skis, he started climbing up the road cut and diving down below the road, like a water skier cutting across the wake of a motorboat. Each time he dug into a turn I could feel the strain increase on the tow rope, and the back of the snowmobile would shift around a bit.



At the end of the afternoon we returned to camp, packed up the "portable yurt," and headed back to our vehicles. But we'll be back - there's other slopes and bowls in this area which we want to try out.

Peter Dayton

January 27-28 – Chick Trip -(Georgetown Lake)

Becky Good, Angie Dean, Season Hollaway, Tami Aronson, Jennifer Hall, Lynda Dale and Lorraine Riedl headed out in two cars early Saturday morning. One car headed for Discovery Basin for downhill skiing (Tami, Becky and Lorraine), the other car aiming for a day of snowshoeing (Jennifer, Season, Angie, Lynda). The downhillers had a spectacular day at Discovery, with bright sun, warm temps, and no broken bones. The snowshoers enjoyed a morning snowshoeing around Jim Wilson's cabin followed by lunch at the Seven Gables and a scenic tour of Anaconda which included finding an outrageously-exciting ice sculpture of a local resident.



Lorraine, Becky and Tami at Discovery. Tami Aronson photo.

The downhillers returned to the cabin at days end, and we hiked to the car for a few pitchers of BudLight at each of the local watering holes. Beer-glass curls were followed by an extravagant spaghetti dinner back at the cabin. Lots of stimulating conversation, laughter and Beringers White Zin took us into the very weeeeeee hours of the morning.

Sunday morning was gorgeous and sunny. The thermometer on the enclosed back deck read 80 degrees. Despite bringing enough food for double our number, we decided to let someone else do the cooking and headed back to the Brown Derby for a fine meal that, I'm sure, had no hydrogenated oil or high-fructose corn syrup. Jennifer, Season, Angie and Lynda headed back to Missoula, Tami and Becky enjoyed some snowshoeing in the back forty

of the Wilson estate, and Lorraine buttoned down the hatches at the cabin getting ready to leave. The weather, the scenery, and the fellowship were awesome! ~Lorraine Riedl



The real reason for The Rocky Mountaineers – The Brown Derby. Tami Aronson photo.



Jennifer, Season and Angie on snowshoe trek. Photo by Season Hollaway.

Definitions

Artificial climbing: knack of appearing to climb by talking about it. This technique is best employed far from actual climbing areas, which tend to be hazardous. Small taverns and pizza parlors with an impressionable clientele are excellent sites for artificial climbing.

Blood /n./ substance commonly used to mark a climbing route.

El Capitan /prop. n./ expedition leader in a spanish speaking country.

Foot jam /n./ offensive accumulation between the toes, caused by wearing the same socks for several days.

Gorp /interj./ mealtime sound made by a hungry alpinist.

Layback /n./ what a climber looks forward to at the end of a day.

Line of weakness: long involved explanation for not attempting a route.

Mountaineering /n./ slow walking uphill while not feeling very well.

Boulder /n./ place close to the ground to practice falling. When climbers aren't climbing, they like to sharpen their skills by bouldering on large rocks located in places frequented by impressionable tourists. Because bouldering is done without protection, the rule is never to climb higher than you'd like to fall. That is why so many climbers stand around discussing boulder problems instead of climbing them."

Fall (to) /v./ AKA free-solo rappel. A dynamic retreat from a climb. Note: it is never the fall that kills — it's the sudden stop at the end.

Unzip (to) /v./ simple yet spectacular way to remove protection.

Webbing /n./ rope that has been stepped on so many times it is flat.

Deep thinking.....

*"I suggest going out to the nearest pub and getting completely, and utterly, wasted. Make sure you smoke at least 1 pack of unfiltered Camel's. Get the full ashtray, pour a drink in it and then pour the mixture into a water bottle. When you get home (ideally around 3:30am) stick the vile mixture into your freezer. Put on your best goretex and thermal layer. Climb in. At 5:30am, get out, drink (chew?) the mixture and go run the biggest flight of stairs you can find. Run until your heart threatens to explode. Your dehydration caused by the alcohol should adequately simulate what you may experience at higher altitudes. Your lung capacity should be sufficiently impaired by the smokes to simulate an oxygen poor environment. The freezer episode should adequately replicate a bivy. Drinking the booze/butt mixture should simulate your lack of appetite..... Oh — once your finished your workout, go to work (to replicate the long walk out)." **Greg Hamilton – (suggesting the feeling of climbing at altitude)***

*Mountains have a way of dealing with overconfidence. **Hermann Buhl***

*Those who say it can't be done should get out of the way of those who are doing it. **Unknown***

Note:

Sudden urge to go do something this weekend and want some fellow club members to do it with? Anyone wishing to submit last minute trips can do so by either calling or emailing the editor. A mass email can then be sent out to the membership. Call Forest @ 240-7612, 721-6384 or email: fdean@midlandimplement.com

Editor's Corner

Hopefully you all found the January issue of The Mountain Ear to your liking. It was my first as the editor, and I wanted to implement some changes and additions. For those receiving electronic letters, the file size increased from the past due to more pictures. Those with a dial-up connection can experience some long download times with this. I heard very few complaints, so hope this isn't a big issue. I believe pictures are a real must for this newsletter. Very few of us are great writers, but a nice picture can really inspire others to get off the couch and go explore. This is my intention with trying to include more pics.

Again, I ask for contributors! Feel free to submit pictures, trip reports or articles of general interest. Lets make this a bigger, better newsletter!

One final note: I failed to credit new member Michael Hoyt for his picture of Little St. Joe Peak in the last issue. Thanks, Mike!

Forest Dean



Mt. Jackson in Glacier National Park as viewed from Lincoln Mountain. Photo by Steven Gnam

THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Annual Membership Fee: _____ \$20.00 for paper newsletter
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Note: Membership includes all members of a family or household.

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Cover photo of the Como Peaks by Steven Gnam.



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