



FEBRUARY 2008

THE MOUNTAIN EAR

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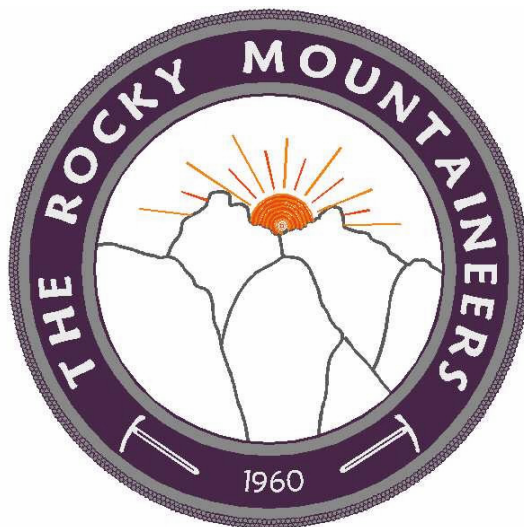
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The Monthly Newsletter of The Rocky Mountaineers



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 and Feature Presentation

The Rajalta Rajalle-hiihto: a Border-to-Border Cross-Country Ski Across Finland

By John Bardsley

Please join us this month for our meeting and feature presentation by John Bardsley, a mathematics professor at the University of Montana. John recently spent a year in Finland as part of a faculty exchange and will relate the following experience of The Rajalta Rajalle-hiihto:

“Finland’s Rajalta Rajalle-hiihto, which translates from Finnish to “from border to border cross country ski”, is an event that knows no peer. Over seven days and 440 km participants ski from Finland’s border with Russia near Kuusamo to its border with Sweden at Tornio. What distinguishes the event is its accessibility; while it’s true that the distances are long (the longest day is 90 km), it’s organization is such that a novice with sufficient fitness, such as I was, can participate. In particular, the food is good and plenty, the lodging surprisingly nice, the scenery wonderful, and the company – the best part – is top notch; such a week of skiing has a way of bringing people together. In my presentation, I will show some photos from my trip, talk about Finland – where I lived from August 2006 to August 2007 – and hopefully encourage a few folks to participate, or at least dream to, in a future RR.”

The presentation begins at **7:00 PM at Pipestone Mountaineering on Wednesday, February 13th**. The club business meeting precedes this at 6:00 PM- we welcome your attendance for this as well!

Looking Ahead....

At our meeting on **Wednesday, March 12th** we will have a program by Scott Johnson on the month he spent working with wild Argali Sheep and Ibex in the wilds of Mongolia. As usual, the meeting will start at **7 PM at Pipestone**. Here, in his own words, is how it began:

One beautiful sunny fall afternoon I was offered the invitation to assist my friend, Gana Wingard in the capture of argali sheep and ibex in Mongolia. Initially I thought I had heard wrong and asked her if I had heard correctly, she assured me I had. Now, working from dawn till dusk in the way out countryside, wrestling with large wild ungulates with sharp horns and hoofs may not be everyone’s idea of a great vacation (including my partners) I was shaking with excitement and knew immediately it was an opportunity of a life time and the rest of my plans (work) would have to adjust. In the coming months additional plans for a fishing trip were made, plane tickets purchased, gear packed and repacked. I cleared my schedule for 27 days and left for the other side of the world.

What a great trip, beyond any expectation I may have had, beautiful country (surprisingly similar to Montana in places) beautiful and very friendly people, adventures and yes wrestling with large ungulates, we put telemetry collars on 6 ibex and 3 argali sheep. We also tagged small mammals, cinereous vultures, and a corsac fox. The interesting thing is, I will tell you how you can experience this adventure, including the fishing, and assisting in the ongoing wildlife research work of Mongolia. Be prepared for a great story and beautiful images of a very uninhabited country.

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.

Thursday, February 7 – LOLO PASS SKI (Bitterroots)

Description: This will be a X country ski at Packer Meadow /Glade Creek Loop at Lolo Pass. We will take two runs around the loop (14 miles). This is in preparation for the annual Moose Ridge Loop ski.

Leader: Fred Schwanemann- 542-7372

Sunday, February 10 – LEE CREEK “A” TRAIL (Bitterroots)

Description: Ski trip. This trail runs seven miles from Lolo Pass to the Lee Creek Campground. The first three miles are level, then there is a gradual climb to a saddle a little above 5400'. The last four miles descend about 1200' to the campground. The route is mostly on ungroomed roads, and it is sometimes necessary to break trail through the upper portion. If conditions are fast one can gain a lot of speed on the downhill portion. Moderate skiing skills are recommended. This is a joint trip with the Bitterroot-Mission Group of the Sierra Club, and we are going to try to limit group size to 12.

Leader: Steve Schombel - 721-4686

Saturday, February 16 – RUNT MOUNTAIN RUNAROUND (Lookout Pass Area)

Description: Join Jim Goss for a wild day of cross country skiing at and around Runt Mountain, where Lookout Pass ski area is located. After meeting at the lodge at 10:00 AM Montana time, we will each purchase two single lift tickets @ \$5.00 each and ski west on the railroad right of way down into Idaho one mile to the new ski lift #3 at Lookout. From the top we will ski down a rather steep, unmaintained cross country ski trail on the backside and depending on desire and snow conditions, proceed at least part way into the St. Regis basin. Because there is a high avalanche probability in the basin itself, it is unlikely we will go further. After turning around, we will take Chair #2 back to the top of the mountain, and ski down the slopes to the lodge. Time permitting, some may choose to take lift #1 back to the top for another run on the mountain. This trip promises over 3,000 feet of downhill, and minimal climbing. However, this trip is recommended only for cross country skiers who are comfortable riding chair lifts, under a variety of challenging conditions.

Leader: Jim Goss - 822-5000 or email jgossorcreich@blackfoot.net

Thursday, February 22 – LOLO PASS SKI (Bitterroots)

Description: The annual Moose Ridge Loop ski at Lolo Pass will take place, conditions permitting. This is a 14 mile ski which gains about 1000 feet.

Leader: Fred Schwanemann- 542-7372

Weds-Sun, March 12-16 – TETON CREST SKI TRIP & SOUTH TETON (Grand Teton NP)

Rating: Class 2-4; *Mileage:* 25-30; *Elevation:* TBD

Description: Listed as one of the classic backcountry ski trips in North America, this will be a multi-day trip through the crest of the fabulous Teton Range. Additionally, I propose to attempt a climb of the South Teton (12,514'). The plan may change slightly depending on local conditions and participant interest, but here is the tentative plan: head down to Jackson early on Wednesday morning- obtain a permit, then start at Teton Pass. Over the next couple days we will ski north to the Park and then along the Teton Crest to Alaska Basin. From here we can hopefully take a side trip over to the South Teton and attempt a climb via the West Ridge Route (Class 4) or the South Ridge Route (Class 3). Then we will ski out to Teton Canyon and shuttle back to Teton Pass. Winter camping experience and gear are necessary. The South Teton climb is optional.

Special Equipment: Ski's/skins, avalanche gear, winter camping gear and clothing, harness, belay device, crampons, ice ax.

Leader: Forest Dean- C: 240-7612, H: 721-6384, email: mtnear1@gmail.com



A stellar winter's day on Wisherd Ridge. Peter Dayton photo.

2008 Classic Series

<u>Month</u>	<u>Destination</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Leader</u>
March	McDONALD PEAK (Missions)	Snow Climb	Joshua Phillips
April	TRAPPER PEAK (Bitterroots)	Ski	Alden Wright
May	EL CAPITAN (Bitterroots)	Snow Climb	Joshua Phillips
June	McLEOD PEAK (Rattlesnake)	Scramble	Steve Niday
July	GRAY WOLF PEAK (Missions)	Scramble/Climb	Lewis Kogan
August	4th Annual GLACIER CLASSIC	<i>Various</i>	S. Niday/F. Dean
September	SWAN PEAK (Swans)	Scramble/Climb	Lewis Kogan
October	LOLO PEAK (Bitterroots)	Scramble	Lewis Kogan
November	MT. CALOWAHCAN (Missions)	Scramble/Climb	Forest Dean
December	LOLO PASS (Bitterroots)	Backcountry Ski	Steve Schombel

TRIP FORUM

Mount Rainier- Memorial Day Weekend

I would like to head out to climb Rainier once again. My intention is to keep the route options open and climb something that the conditions dictate giving us the best chance of succeeding. I have started looking at some options and would like to concentrate on a route either on the south or north side of the mountain. The climbing party will be limited to no more than 4 people. I will not be serving as a guide to anyone in the party- participants should have a decent level of glaciated mountain travel aptitude. If interested, give me a call or email. *Forest Dean* 240-7612, mtnear1@gmail.com



Mt. Rainier as viewed from Kautz Creek.

"Bob Marshall Wilderness" Backpack

For next summer I am thinking of going up the North Fork Of The Blackfoot into what is actually the Scapegoat Wilderness. I've never been there but looking at a map it looks like a 6-7 mile hike to the North Fork Cabin, North Fork waterfall is another 1/2 mile or so. We could set up a base camp in that area and do some day hikes like to Falls Point, or there are two 25-30 mile loops that would bring us back to the same trailhead. I'd like to hear from people who have been in this area for suggestions of destinations etc. I'm planning on mid July 2008 that still seems like the best window between -still frozen in and -the start of fire season. *Julie Kahl 543-6508*

Wind River Range Climbing Trip – July 18th or 19th through July 27th, 2008

Description: The tentative plan is for at least a week long climbing trip to Titcomb Basin. This would involve driving to Elkhart Park Trailhead outside of Pinedale, Wyoming (approx. 470 miles and roughly 8 hours of driving) followed by a 15 mile hike to establish a base camp near upper Titcomb Lake. The potential objectives are many: Mt. Helen (13,620'), Mt. Sacagawea (13,569') and Fremont Peak (13,745') to name a few. There is a high concentration of scrambles, snow climbs, and fifth class multi-pitch routes in this stunning alpine setting. The eastern wall of Titcomb Basin (formed by the above named peaks) was described in 1842 by John C. Fremont as "a nearly perpendicular wall of granite, terminating 2,000 to 3,000 feet above our heads in a serrated line of broken, jagged cones." I'd like to see a cohesive group of supportive, team-minded climbers develop for this committing trip. Various skill levels are welcome. *Joshua Phillips – 543-0898*



Looking north into Titcomb Basin across the two Titcomb Lakes.

TRIP REPORTS

January 12 - Lubrecht ski tour

In spite of the fact that the weather forecast had called for high winds and an extreme winter storm warning we had a nice day skiing. We left late enough to miss any ice on the highways, and found that Lubrecht had quite a bit of snow, with a couple of inches of new fluffy snow on top. It was a bit sticky, but some Maxiglide made the day better for several of us. It was very pleasant to be out in the woods when the flurries did fall off and on, and the winds never did blow hard, at least not at Lubrecht. We did an easy ski of the A, B and C loops, and spent a long break in the shelter chatting and snacking. Everyone enjoyed it so much that they hoped I'd repeat the moonlight ski which I did last year. The drive home also wasn't too bad, except a bad squall hit just as I got to town. The worst weather of the day was the last few miles to home. Participants were:



Genevieve Andrus, Amy Gordon, Michael Bowles, Trevor VanVirt and *Steve Schombel*.

January 13- Bob Cat Creek (Bitterroots)

Back Country Skiing 101 went great at Bob Cat Creek. New skiers Amy Gordon and Cary Davis, joined more experienced skiers Genny Andrus & Roberta Kline for an almost perfect day (we had some problems with sticky snow). More experienced skiers, Fred Schwanemann, Steve Schombel, David Kahl, Brett Doucette and Trevor Van Vleit broke a trail in the 6 in" or so of new snow while we went about 1 1/2 miles up "the Left Trail." The less experienced skiers got to ski in the two track trench, navigate downed trees, cross stream channels with some moderate up and down hill runs. All under a blue sky in a beautiful setting. It was a great day to learn. *Julie Kahl*

January 19- Stuart Peak (Rattlesnake)

Joshua Phillips was to lead this trip, but was unable due to a temporary visit by microscopic beings. Kyle Balke and I met at the harsh hour of 6:00 AM and left the trail-head with headlamps glowing after an appropriate wait for stragglers. Due to the recent snowfall, we expected extreme trail breaking higher up. Fortunately, someone had made the trip in the preceding days, and we took advantage of the partially broken trail as far as the Wilderness boundary. From the boundary to the summit was slow going, but not as hard as we had imagined. No views from the summit, but the weather was good, and lots of new snow made the upper portion fun and the lower portion manageable on skis. *Steve Niday*

January 19- Lubrecht Moonlight Ski

There was a lot of interest and a lot of calls about the moonlight ski at Lubrecht on January 19th. Sixteen people participated, including me. It took a while to get organized since we barely had enough cars to carry everyone. At the parking lot three people couldn't wait for others to get dressed, and took off. The rest of us slowly headed around the "C" loop, but made the shelter just before dark. There was a beginner who needed some coaching. The temperature was mild and it only snowed a little, but it was too cloudy to see either the sunset or moon. After we crossed the dam the other three, who had seen our headlamps, made contact. Since they had their own car they wanted to stay out later. We got back to the lot, and then the predicted storm moved in. The drive home was rough, with low visibility. But all made it safely. Some of the names were indecipherable, but here is a list of participants: John Wolverton, Yoko Ichimura, Irma Lane, Carol Anderson, Marion and husband Freeman? ??, Cary Davis, Fred Schwanemann, Wesley Surmato, Heather Jones and son Griffin, Michael Bowles, Amy Gordon, Christina VanRoebel?, Trevor Van Valiet and Steve Schombel. Some people like to stop at the store and some like to change boots and put on ski clothes at the parking lot. Unfortunately this makes some who are ready to go to stand around waiting for a while. There is no good way to solve this problem.

Steve Schombel

January 26 – Boulder Peak (attempt)- (Bitterroots)

Chris Dunn and John Schwartz joined me for an early 7:00 am start from the West Fork Ranger Station southeast of Darby. We were unable to drive up FR 373 at all, but we started by skiing up it a ways to where it makes a switchback at Ward Creek. At this point we started heading straight up the ridge on the south and west side of Ward Creek. The climbing alternated between steeper and gentler sections but the forest was quite open and with all the snow, the going was pretty straightforward. Chris and John were on snowshoes, and myself on skis. The ridge climbs about 3200' to a 8020' highpoint. From there we contoured around the forested slopes to the west. John had fallen behind and he ended up turning back after reaching the 8020' point. Chris and I got to the far side of the basin where a steep slope allows access to the southeast ridge of Boulder Peak. Once upon that ridge it is a rather easy jaunt up to the summit. However, after studying the steep slope in several places for a good route up, I determined that snow stability just didn't feel right, especially since we had not brought transceivers. So we tucked in our tails and headed back down the way we came. We arrived back between 2:00 and 2:30. A roundtrip of about 10 miles with 4500' of climbing. Good skiing on way down.

Forest Dean

Feb. 2-3 – Little St. Joe Peak and TRM Cabin (Bitterroots)- CLASSIC SERIES TRIP

After some jockeying of schedules (mine included) it seemed like a Sat – Sun trip would work out best. Ken W, Cody B, Rosemary P, Trevor V, Jake W and I met up around 9:00 at the Bass Cr trailhead to start the trip in. Since there's so much snow out there right now we had to start skiing even before we reached the locked gate, which is unusual. The weather was good plus the new snow promised some great powder skiing up above. All the new snow also meant tough trail breaking but that was solved by our President Steve and one other (I didn't get his name) who beat us to the trailhead and did a day trip to the cabin. Thanks!!! We arrived at the cabin in mid-afternoon to a warm stove – thanks again! While we were settling into the cabin Kevin B arrived to also spent the night making a total of 7 people. We had a fun evening of visiting and cooking up dinner in the cabin. The following morning Ken, Cody, Rosemary and Kevin skied out while Jake, Trevor and I went up the peak to do some skiing. We had powdery conditions and made a few nice runs before heading back to the cabin. A pot of Ramen hit the spot before we packed up and skied out. We made it back to the car in a bit over an hour because the conditions were so good. All in all it was great trip...

Paul Jensen

Rocky Mountaineers Merchandise - For Sale!!

Just in time for the holidays, we have unveiled our first ever Rocky Mountaineers merchandise featuring our new logo! Be one of the first to own and wear this great new stuff. More to come!

Short Sleeve T-Shirt	\$13.00 (\$17 non-members)
Long Sleeve T-Shirt	\$17.00 (\$22 non-members)
Caps	\$18.00 (\$23 non-members)
Fleece Beanie's	\$16.00 (\$20 non-members)
Stickers	\$ 1.75

Shirts and hats are available in various sizes and/or colors. For more information, or to place your order email: seniday@yahoo.com or call Steve at 721-3790. Additionally, all of the above will be available at the Club meetings as well as the racks at Pipestone Mountaineering.



Art Gidel climbing southeast of Ajax Peak near the Bitterroot Divide in southern MT. Peter Dayton photo.

1. Called to Order 6:21 PM
2. Attendance: Alden Wright, Steve Niday, Julie Kahl, Forest Dean, John Schwartz, Amy Gordon, Brian Story, Deidad Wright and David Wright
3. Previous meeting minutes: Approved with no changes
4. Correspondence: Glacier Mountaineer Society newsletter and Grotto Society meeting invite
5. Treasurers report: Approx. \$330 in checking and \$235.59 in savings
6. Club Business:
 - a. Old business
 - i. Logo and merchandise
 1. Sticker pricing - \$48.40 (includes \$10 setup fee) for 50
 - a. Sell stickers for \$1.75
 2. Embroidery – available to members through internal requests (send in as lump request; minimizes organization for now)
 - ii. Classic series trips are finalized
 - iii. Collaborate/joint trip with the UM Outdoor Club
 1. Steve N. will call Lewis to get feedback
 - iv. Recruiting trip leaders – how can we get more participation
 1. Present certificates of thanks
 2. Establish a point system for leading trips (David will think about this!!!)
 - a. Leads to discount on dues and/or merchandise
 - v. Awards ceremony
 1. “Pseudo-formal” meeting
 - a. Presentation of awards and election???
 - b. Set during the month of May???
 - c. Steve N. has a list of goals which he will email
 2. Establish some goals for members
 - a. 9000 foot peaks Selway-Bitterroot Mountains
 - b. 9000 foot peaks in view of Missoula
 - c. 10000 foot peaks in MT
 - d. Technical rated peaks in MT
 - vi. Finalize speakers
 1. Julie suggested Alden Adams – about a trek in Nepal
 - b. New business
 - i. Updating by-laws
 1. Search for electronic version or scan in the current
 2. Alden will move by-laws on to webpage and add link
7. Meeting adjourned at 6:59 PM

*Cover Photo: The north face of Mt. Siyeh as viewed from Cracker Peak in Glacier National Park.
Photo for SummitPost by M. Smith.*

THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Annual Membership Fee: _____ \$20.00 for paper newsletter
_____ \$10.00 for electronic newsletter

Note: Membership includes all members of a family or household.

Make checks payable to 'The Rocky Mountaineers' and send to:

The Rocky Mountaineers, PO Box 4262, Missoula, MT 59806

Name: _____

Additional Family Members Names: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone (optional): _____

Email: _____

Additional Email (optional): _____

*Joining or maintaining your Rocky Mountaineers membership has never been easier! **PayPal** is now available on the Rocky Mountaineers website. Click on the membership link on the main page.*



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