

FEBRUARY 2009

THE MOUNTAIN EAR



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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:

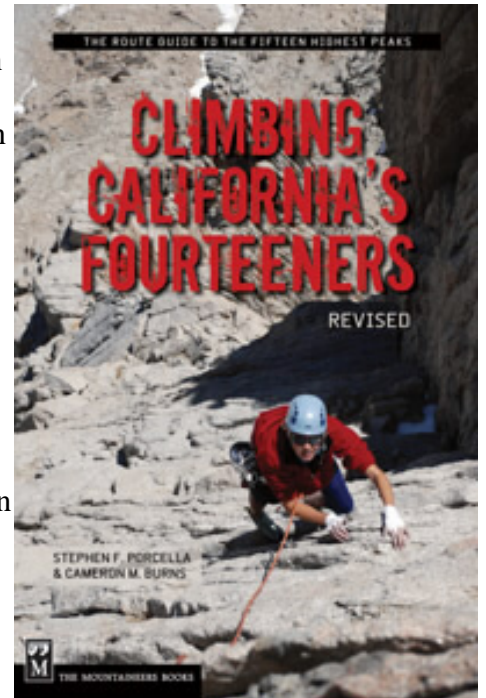
- ☐ Hiking
- ☐ Backpacking
- ☐ Alpine Climbing & Scrambling
- ☐ Peak Bagging
- ☐ Backcountry Skiing
- ☐ Winter Mountaineering
- ☐ Track Skiing
- ☐ Snowshoeing
- ☐ Snowboarding
- ☐ Mountain Biking
- ☐ Rock Climbing
- ☐ Canoeing & Kayaking
- ☐ Rafting
- ☐ Kids Trips
- ☐ Terracaching/Geocaching

February Meeting & Presentation

We have a very special speaker coming to our meeting in February, **Stephen F. Porcella**. He is a doctor from Hamilton, works at the Rocky Mountain Laboratory, and has been climbing for a long time. He has a great slide show using two projectors and fading in and out. At our meeting he will do a two-part show focusing on the two areas he likes best.

The first part will cover his backyard, climbing in the Bitterroots. Stephen and his friends have done a lot of climbs on walls and spires in Blodgett, Lost Horse, and other canyons up and down the range. Last year he was in the news a little, since he was very involved in a group that was trying to stop the Forest Service from re-opening an old quarry that had become a popular rock climbing area. Although they weren't able to stop the quarry they did get some concessions.

The second part of his show will be about the Sierra Nevada in California and his climbs of some of the most difficult routes and traverses in this magnificent range. Stephen and various partners have done some of the most difficult climbs in these areas. They have made first ascents of some new routes; and some of their most daring exploits have been written up in the "American Alpine Journal." Recently he and Cameron M. Burns have revised and updated their guidebook to the Sierra titled "Climbing California's Fourteeners". There are new routes and photos and updated information. He'll probably have some copies of this book at the meeting.



So come see the show at **Pipestone on Wednesday, February 11th at 7 PM**. It is free and open to all. The Rocky Mountaineers Business Meeting preceeds this at 6 PM. We invite anyone interested to attend this as well.

Next Month:

March 11th- *Scott Doherty, the founder and director of World Class Kayak Academy, will be present to give a slideshow on his travels to Peru and China in the winter of 2008/09. The presentation will include commentary on the culture and geography of the regions visited, which include the headwaters of the Amazon, the world's deepest canyon, and the three great rivers of the Yunnan province; draining the Tibetan Plateau.*

President's Message

I hope all of you have checked out the updated Rocky Mountaineers website. The Forums page is up and running and is a great tool for coordinating trips and getting in touch with other club members. Check it out if you haven't yet. All you have to do is sign up with a user name and password. Then subscribe to the live bookmarks to receive notices when others post items or respond to your posting. Thanks for your work on this Alden!

Lately, most of my free time has been spent working on the GMAR. (I've gotten out skiing a few times too though.) I am getting more excited each day as race day approaches. Racers are registering and sponsors continue to come out of the woodwork to lend support in our effort to bring the community this exciting event. You will soon begin hearing radio ads on 103.3 The Trail as they have sponsored the event at the highest level.

Missoula Bicycle Works has donated a new Kona King Kikapu Mountain Bike to be given to a top finisher. Volunteers for the event will enjoy gifts and prizes as well as their own race day performance type T-shirt. Join us in helping The Rocky Mountaineers be seen by the community as an active club of members working toward making this community event a success.

Email our volunteer coordinator Emily Garlough if you'd like to man a checkpoint/aid station, help with check-in and SWAG bag hand-outs, direct traffic, man a transition area or help in start/finish line maintenance.

egarlough@gmail.com

Joshua Phillips

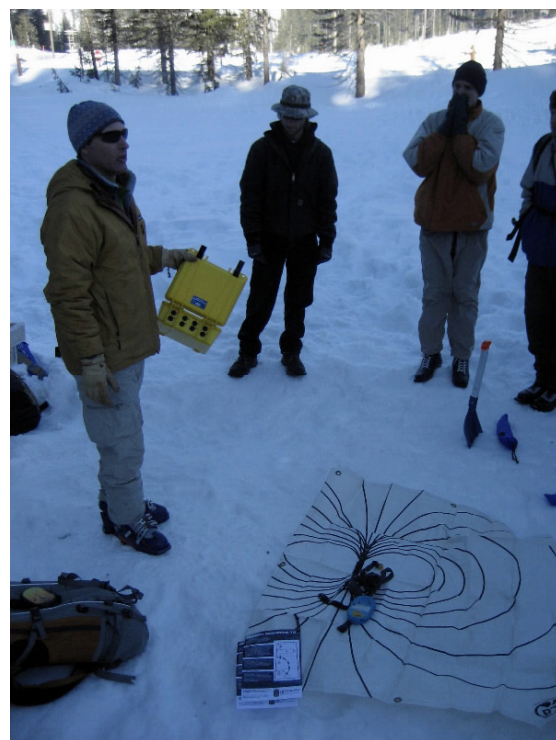
Avalanche Awareness Clinic

On January 17th, sixteen people turned out for what seems to have become the Annual Avalanche Awareness Clinic presented by Minot Maser. With this winter's particularly unstable snowpack in the news, it was no surprise that more folks were interested in dedicating a Saturday to learning the basics of avalanche safety. We



met at the Kmart parking lot and carpooled up to the Visitor's Center at Lolo Pass. After checking out the controller for the newly installed beacon park, we walked over to the facility (a mere 200' from the Visitor's Center). Minot started out by acquainting us with how flux lines guide us to a buried victim. Then, we all used our transceivers and probes to find several of the beacon park's simulated buried victims. Once we all felt capable of recovering one victim, Minot showed us the necessary procedures critical in differentiating between transceiver signals when searching for multiple victims. After some practice in

this, we donned our skis and snowshoes and climbed up the hill south of the Visitor's Center to dig snow study pits. Minot instructed us in how to analyze the snowpack and recognize weaker layers. We dug our own pits and performed shovel shear tests and shovel compression tests. Gathering on the other side of the ridge, we laughed as Joshua jumped up and down in a desperate attempt to get a Rutschblock test to fail. The warm weather had caused the snowpack to bond quite well. At the end of instruction, several of us skied laps on the north facing slope down to the highway. After a few runs on good snow, we hiked up the highway back to the cars at the Visitor's Center. Thanks for another great clinic, Minot! *Joshua Phillips*



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.

Fri-Sun, February 6-8 - LITTLE ST. JOSEPH PEAK - TRM CABIN (Bitterroots)

Rating: Class 2; *Mileage:* 11 miles RT to summit, 7 miles RT to Cabin; *Elevation:* 5300' to summit

Description: Ski up to the cabin on Friday. Ski to the top or near the top of Little St. Joseph Peak on Saturday. Participants can make as many runs as they want then head back to the cabin, or head out if they so choose. Ski some more on Sunday or just head out. Contact Paul for more ideas or alternatives.

Special Equipment: Ski's with skins.

Leader: Paul Jensen – 728-6881

Saturdays, February 7, 14, 21, & 28 - BACKCOUNTRY SKIING (Bitterroots)

Rating: East to Moderate level backcountry skiing, *Elevation Gain:* 4000'-7000'

Description: I am planning on getting out every weekend I can in February. Most of the terrain I plan on skiing is located in the Bitterroots and I'm hoping other skiers will join me. (A transceiver doesn't do much good when you ski alone.) The weather and snow conditions/stability will dictate the locations and the amount of vertical feet gained. I'm interested in skiing long days and trying for a few more remote objectives. Bass Peak? Sugarloaf? McDonald Peak? I'm open to making one an overnight trip too. Email or call me if you're interested.

Special Equipment: Skis/skins or splitboard/skins, beacon, shovel, probe

Leader: Joshua Phillips-H: 543-0898, email: mtsurveyor@gmail.com

Saturday, February 7 - LUBRECHT FOREST SKI TRIP (Garnet Range)

Description: Sunset/ Moonlight Cross-Country Ski at Lubrecht Forest, under an almost full moon. We'll ski the gentler trails as they wind through this beautiful local forest. Plan on taking a long break at the mid-way shelter, so bring hot drinks and snacks. This is an easy ski for people who are not accustomed to low-light skiing. Harsh weather will cancel the trip and no pets, please. Low or no snow, and we'll divert to Lolo Pass. For the late afternoon meet-up/ride-sharing contact Outings Coordinator, John Wolverton at: yodelingdog@hotmail.com

Leader: I'm a co-leader on this ski trip, so it is open to The Rocky Mountaineers members. If you want more information you can call Steve Schombel at 721-4686, but if you want to participate you must contact John Wolverton, above, to get the time and place to meet.

Sat- Sun, February 21-22 – CHIEF JOSEPH PASS (Bitterroots) *CLASSIC SERIES TRIP*

Description: We have the Cabin at Chief Joseph Cross Country Ski area for the night, ski late in the day, moonlight ski, what ever we want. The cabin sleeps 8 and we'll do it on a first come first served basis.

Leader: Julie Kahl

2009 – The Rocky Mountaineers – CLASSIC SERIES

<i>Month</i>	<i>Destination</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Leader(s)</i>
January	SQUAW PEAK	BC Ski	Forest Dean
February	CHIEF JOSEPH PASS	Cross Country Skiing	Julie Kahl
March	LONESOME BACHELOR	Ski/Climb	Joshua Phillips
April	TRAPPER PEAK	Ski/Snowshoe	Alden Wright/David Wright
May	GRAY WOLF PEAK	Snow climb	Forest Dean
June	CANYON PEAK	Climb	Forest Dean
July	GREAT NORTHERN MTN	Scramble	Forest Dean
August	GLACIER CLASSIC (Rising Sun)	Various	Forest Dean/Steve Niday
September	HOLLAND PEAK	Scramble	
October	MCDONALD PEAK	Scramble	
November	LOLO PEAK	Scramble/Snowshoe	
December	WARD MOUNTAIN	Ski/Snowshoe	Joshua Phillips

TRIP FORUM

Tetons or Glacier NP- Last year Joshua Phillips and I went down to the Tetons in mid-March to attempt the Middle and South Tetons. Weather interfered (to the tune of 2 feet of white stuff in 24 hours) as we got up into Garnet Canyon. Such an amazing area though, especially in winter...its hard not to want to go back and give it another try! So, looking to try and do just that. Would be looking at a 4 day trip somewhere in late March to early April. Ski up Garnet Canyon and then up between the Middle and South Tetons. All the usual ski, avalanche, winter camping and climbing gear would be needed. If conditions are poor in the Tetons, a plan B would be to ski up the Belly River in Glacier to scope out the Lithoid Cusp (see Steve Niday article). This trip could also involve a possible climb of Mt. Merritt if conditions permit. Either of these trips will require some substantial previous winter climbing experience. If interested in discussing the options, contact: Forest Dean @ 240-7612 or mtnear1@gmail.com

Gunsight/Edwards (GNP)- Tentatively planning a 3 day trip in early May to attempt a two-fer of Gunsight Mountain and Edwards Mountain in Glacier National Park. Trip would involve hiking and skiing up the Gunsight Pass Trail to the Sperry Glacier area on a Friday, then attempting these two peaks on Saturday and Sunday and then heading out. Both are 9000'+ peaks. Conditions and temperatures will dictate some of the gear needed, but we would likely be treating this as a winter camping and climbing trip. If interested, contact: Forest Dean @ 240-7612 or mtnear1@gmail.com

Spring on Mount Jumbo. Every year I hike up Mount Jumbo soon after it opens up in mid March. It is not a very big mountain, and I usually do it spur of the moment, but if it would interest anyone I could keep it in mind. The likely date would probably be either Mar 15, Sun., or the following weekend. It only takes half a day at most. Steve Schombel, 721-4686.

TRIP REPORTS

January 10 – Mill Point (Bitterroots)

Several skiers joined in to ascend the 4300 vertical feet to the summit of this great ski destination. Lewis Kogan and I got a little bit early start and left town at 6:30am. (I might become notorious for my early starts if I don't watch out.) Lewis and I skinned up the northeast ridge over point 6142' and circled north of Tag Alder Lake. Minot Maser, Rob McCleod, Ronnie Attaway, Paul Jensen, JC Schneider, and a few others traversed south on the old road grade to the east ridge to ascend. After a lap down to Tag Alder Lake, Lewis and I headed back to the summit (8467') where we bumped into Minot. The weather prohibited much of a view and the wind made the summit less inviting. As we descended, we stopped to chat with the others on our way down and met everyone back at the Mill Creek Trail head for a beer. I think everyone went for two runs to Tag Alder and the total elevation gain was approximately 6000' feet. The skiing conditions were quite favorable above 7100'. Below that, I was "survival skiing". Check out a video I put together of this outing at:

<http://www.vimeo.com/2960102>

Joshua Phillips

January 11 – Lolo Pass (Bitterroots)

The forecast for Lolo Pass on Sun. Jan. 11th was a 90% chance of snow. It snowed most of the day, with occasionally windy conditions. The original plan to ski the "A" trail or Lee Creek, was scrapped because of the possibility of high avalanche danger in the area of the Lee Creek Saddle. So Roy Regal, Lois Crepeau, David & Julie Kahl had a nice afternoon skiing the Pack Creek Loop and having a beer at Lolo Hot Springs. *Julie Kahl*

January 17 – Ward Mountain (Bitterroots)

We left the Parking area at 8:50 am. We skinned the initially icy trail through the forest and up into the burns above and eventually the rounded rocky summit. For those of you who have not been there it is a 4+ mile hike with an elevation gain of 4850 feet. Today the skinning was relatively easy, not very steep, and little ski penetration, none in fact on the wind hammered sections in the sparse trees above 8000ft. In the south facing burns the spring like snow had a great consistency from around 10:45-2:45 pm. We didn't take advantage as our goal for the day was a long hike. For reference later we found a stiff rain crust below a couple inches of soft snow below 6880 ft. We skied down from the almost top, enjoying the snow until about 6880ft, and then we just skied back down, reaching the car at 4 pm. The north facing slopes seemed pretty frozen up so we stayed just below the ridge on the south facing side to get the best snow we could. Looking at the map though it looks as though there are some nice open patches with good pitch on the north side if you drop into the Roaring Lion Valley at about the 8000ft mark. has anybody skied these ? Good day trip with drool inducing views from the summit, So many lines, so little time..... The slopes that the trail ascends are very moderate with little to no avalanche hazard except in the worst conditions, but with lots of sun and wind some layers are forming, for the next few storms to slide off of. *Matt Henderson*

January 18– Ward Mountain (Bitterroots)

Greg Cohn agreed to an early start in an effort to get above the inversion and enjoy a day in the sun. We started up from the trailhead just as it began to get light and after a short climb we were above the inversion and basking in the sunshine. It had been 22 degrees at the car and after just a couple of hours we were wishing for T-shirts and shorts! As we ascended, the view over the cloud-filled valley became more and more impressive. We paused for lunch at a spot of dry ground that offered a stunning view down into Roaring Lion. The summit (9119') was calm and warm, not a breath of wind or even a breeze. It felt like 50 degrees on the summit. The valley looked more like a lake of gravy and we took pity on the poor souls freezing in the gloom down below. The sun softened up the crusty snow just enough to make the first 2500' of skiing enjoyable. Down low however, it had not warmed up and the icy crust took extra caution to negotiate. Once we reached Molly's Meadow we joined up with an older gentleman that proceeded to "out ski" us on a vintage leather boot alpine setup. He guided us back to the cars and wished us well. I told him I'd quit complaining about my 3 buckle

plastic boots being too flexible. After enjoying the balmy temperature above, we were amazed that the car thermometer still read 22. View more pictures from this outing at:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/mtsurveyor/WardMountain>

Joshua Phillips



Skinning up Ward Mountain above a sea of valley fog.



Looking north over Roaring Lion drainage atop Ward Mountain

January 29 – Lubrecht Ski (Garnet Range)

Only Fred Schwanemann joined me this day for a half day ski at Lubrecht. We left in the morning, and we did have a quiet ski trip. Other than the groomer buzzing by once in a while, we saw no one else on the trail. And we saw no animals either, but several birds. Oh yes, the groomer. Thursday is grooming day, and if you take a day off once in a while to ski check this out. There is nothing like being the first to ski after the groomer has gone by. The weather was also fine, not sunny but mild temperatures. We did the loop we will take on the moonlight ski, on Feb. 7th, and it should be a great trip. And I'm now a co-leader on that trip, and can take names of people who are ready to commit. But we are going to limit the group size on the 7th, so call me soon if you are sure you want to go - 721-4686 . *Steve Schombel*

February 1 – Mill Point (Bitterroots)

Matthew Scrivner and I had planned on skiing up Downing Mountain on Jan. 31st. On that morning we woke up to 25 mph winds in Missoula. We decided to wait a day and opt for a shorter trip so I could make it to a Superbowl Party. Matt and I left town at 6:30am and headed for Mill Creek trail head. We left the car at 8am and headed south on the road to catch the east ridge that offers a more direct approach to the summit. Matt and I made fairly good time and stood on the summit at 11:15am. We skied a direct line down to Tag Alder Lake but were disappointed in the snow conditions. Most of the snow was wind affected and conditions were variable. After a short break at the lake, we skinned back up to the east ridge and transitioned for our decent. The snow was excellent on the ridge and we made enjoyable turns for at least 1500'. We bumped into Rob Mcleod and a couple of his friends on our way down. They thanked us for the skin track we'd put in. Lower down, Matt and I found a breakable crust that slowed us down a little. We were glad to have waited a day because the weather was beautiful. *Joshua Phillips*

Rocky Mountaineers Merchandise

Short Sleeve T-Shirt	\$13.00 (\$17.00 non-members)
Long Sleeve T-Shirt	\$18.50 (\$23.50 non-members)
Caps	\$18.00 (\$23.00 non-members)
Fleece Beanie's	\$16.00 (\$20.00 non-members)
Stickers	\$ 1.50
Newsletter Archive CD	\$20.00

All of the Mountain Ear newsletters since 1960 on one CD!!



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



Meeting Minutes of The Rocky Mountaineers January 14, 2009

1. Call To Order 6:25
2. Record Attendance: David Wright, Steve Niday, Julie Kahl, Alden Wright, Steve Schombel, Charles Tree, Greg Cohn, Shawn Bennett, Melissa & Dawn Odom, George Hirschenberger, Lois Crepeau
3. Minutes from 10 Dec.. 2008 OK
4. Correspondence Chris Forines of Search & Rescue is glad to help with the GMAR
5. Treasurer's Report \$158.85 in Checking, \$37.50 in savings. Steve used \$50.00 for GMAR to set up an account under our name.
6. Club Business
 - A. Old
 - Updates
 - *GMAR -Posted on the Playak (kayaking) web site.
 - *2 Registrations so far
 - *3 Clinics so far, all sections scouted
 - *Julie will contact Blackfoot Challenge and TU-Big Blackfoot Chapter
And post on MissoulaEvents
 - *Rocky Mountaineers Website redesign
Josh suggested a different banner picture
Will set up connections to special information linked to the trip listing (i.e. the cabin requirements for Chief Joseph cabin.)
 - *2009 calendars -brought a prototype some corrections -Not Discussed
 - *Merchandising still have shirts, caps, stickers, CD's, Patches, can order more, and embroider personal gear
 - *Future speakers good until May
 - B. New
 - *Meetings to plan trips -survey Josh made, monthly party
 - *Classic Series -2009's list, next time, use e-mail, we need more leaders.
 - *Bitterroot Summit Registers Next time
 - *How to celebrate next years 50th Ann.
 - *Special calendar?
 - *Party?
 - *Reunion?
 - *Reunion Party, but when?
7. Adjourn Meeting 7:02

Cover Photo: Skinning up the north ridge of Mill Point in the Bitterroots. Joshua Phillips photo.



Being on a tightrope is living. Everything else is waiting. -- Karl Wallenda

Photo taken in Glacier Park. Credit: Wildphotons.com

THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Annual Membership Fee: \$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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