

FEBRUARY 2010

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

Mike Hoyt- Climbs in the Bitterroots

On **Wednesday, Feb. 10th** we will have a photo presentation by Bitterroot resident Mike Hoyt, photographer, hiker and climber, who will give a multi media presentation covering hikes and climbs he did last summer. He had quite a summer, doing two or three trips a week into the fall. He was on a summit 55 times during his adventures.

What prompted this activity is his plan to write a guidebook to Bitterroot peaks. His book will offer more than the typical hiking guide, and will include many off the beaten path adventures for beginning and intermediate climbers. He realized the information had to be accurate, so he repeated many of his previous climbs, collecting more photographs along the way. He reached many popular peaks, such as Sweeney, North Canyon, El Capitan, and more, and also topped many of the lesser known ones. He invited others to join him, and was often joined by Jim Greenfield of Hamilton. Many he did solo. He made observations on wildlife behavior, and had good luck with weather and fires, and says the trails were in great shape due to Federal stimulus money.

Come out and see and hear more. The meeting will be at **Pipestone** on West Front Street, and is free and open to all. We will have a business meeting at 6 PM downstairs and will have some announcements and start the presentation at 7PM.

President's Message

At the time of this writing, we have 67 registered racers for the GrizzlyMan Adventure Race and Black Bear Challenge! Last year at this time we had 44. We're on track for a great turn out in racers; what we need now is volunteers! I hope you will all come out and support the club and make this year's race another success. Here's a note from our Volunteer Recruiter/Coordinator, Emily Garlough:

Happy February Everyone!

It's still cold and snowy outside but the GMAR race committee has been hard at work putting this year's race together. Our racers were blown away last year by the support and enthusiasm from our volunteers and we can't thank you enough! With registration numbers already jumping through the roof, we're going to need more help than ever for a successful race. The third annual GrizzlyMan Adventure Race will be held on **April 17th, 2010** at Lubrecht Forest. For more information on the race, check out our website at www.grizzlymanrace.com!

For those of you who are new to GrizzlyMan volunteering, we're looking for help with everything from transition areas to remote checkpoints, racer sign-in to aid stations, gear checks to food prep and everything in between. If any of you have river experience, please let me know as our river section promises to be especially challenging this year. Volunteers require NO experience or special training prior to the race, we'll teach you everything you need to know when you show up!

So what's in it for you? All volunteers will receive a GrizzlyMan Adventure Race synthetic t-shirt, be eligible to win raffle prizes donated by local businesses, a free post-race spaghetti dinner at Lubrecht (and beer to those of age) and the satisfaction of helping The Rocky Mountaineers pull off a great event! All full day volunteers are guaranteed to receive SWAG bags with goodies from our sponsors including Hammer Nutrition and Raw Revolution.

What I need from each of you:

*T-shirt size (adult sizes)

*Preference of volunteer shift...

- Friday evening: check-in, set-up, gear checks
- Full day Saturday: remote check points, transition areas, gear checks
- Saturday morning: Start line, river assistance, transition areas
- Saturday afternoon: Finish line, clean up, spaghetti dinner set-up

THANKS!

Emily Garlough, Volunteer Coordinator

6th Annual Glacier Classic

2010 will mark the 6th installment of our signature event- the Glacier Classic. Planned for the last weekend in August, we are currently seeking input on where to hold this year's event. Two options are the Bowman Lake/Polebridge area or Two Medicine. Other suggestions, feel free to let us know. We try to move it around every year: we have hosted this event this far at Blakenship Bridge on the Flathead River, Two Medicine, Lake McDonald (Fish Creek), Many Glacier and last year, Rising Sun. We look for an area with a number of diverse things to do: mountaineering, hiking, camping, boating, etc. Let us know your preference! Email: Forest at mtnear1@gmail.com

Canadian Maps

From the Alpine Club of Canada: Website: <http://www.AlpineClubofCanada.ca>

Canadian topographic maps can be downloaded for free. For Canadian maps, go to <https://admin.alpineclubofcanada.ca/link/to/2082-66805-15-02>.

These maps have also been converted into a format suitable for Garmin map source software and their GPS receivers <https://admin.alpineclubofcanada.ca/link/to/2083-66805-15-02> (Source: ACC Edmonton Section member Rob Denson).

TRANSCEIVER TEST 2010

The Canadian Ski Patrol System and Canadian Ski Guide Association compare the new three-antenna avalanche beacons with existing technology.
by F.M.Swangard MD, Bob Sayer, Steve Gunderson

ABSTRACT AND INTRODUCTION

The minimal safety equipment a person must have in the backcountry in winter is a transceiver, probe and shovel. Clearly, nothing replaces the transceiver when a person is caught in an avalanche and the shortest time taken to extricate a buried person, the better his chances of survival. The chances of a live rescue fall quickly after 15 minutes.

RESULTS

In the hands of a knowledgeable user, there was only a small difference in search times between the two-antenna and the newer three-antenna transceivers. All expert testers noted that with all the

newer digital transceivers, it's important to slow down and reduce lateral movement since the searcher can move faster than the processor can process. In the hands of an expert user there appears to be little difference in the results using the multiantenna transceivers and all are faster than the F1, which is nearing two decades of use. The results from the naive users proved more interesting. Six out of 10 testers failed to find the two targets using the Ortovox F1 in the allotted time. All of them did much better using the two- and three-antenna transceivers. The fastest was the Ortovox S1 (2:59 minutes), then the Ortovox d3 (3:21), Mammut (3:25), Tracker (3:26) and Pieps (3:34).

DISCUSSION

Both the knowledgeable guides and naive users liked the ease of use and the marking of multiple burials on the screen of the **Ortovox S1**. The screen didn't seem to be affected by the cold (at times -15C to -20C) as well.

The **Ortovox d3** was easy to use but not as easy to find multiple burials as the S1. Both the S1 and d3 had the best attachment systems.

The **Mammut Pulse** worked well, when correctly set up. It seemed to have too many parameters to set however and testers thought it needed a lock function to stop a desired setting from being changed. *[Editor's note: Mammut Pulse units tested did not include a firmware upgrade that is now on all models and also available to existing Mammut Pulse owners. "Basic" and "Advanced" modes were developed, says the company, to address complication-of-use concerns by some casual users.]* We also feel that the "Pulse" feature, designed to detect a buried victim's heartbeat, should be



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tested separately. The attachment system is good.

The **Pieps DSP** worked well, but the on/off slider switch, which sticks out from the transceiver, seemed to present a risk of being broken. We also found the deactivation of a

transmitting beacon with the special probe (for use in a multi-burial once a victim is located) required a thorough understanding. The attachment system was to use as the others.



Tracker DTS

The **Tracker DTS** did better than we expected as a two-antenna transceiver being compared to antenna models. The pinpointing with this was more difficult than with a three-antenna transceiver. However, at field demonstrations in Europe this September, the pinpointing speed of BCA's new three-antenna Tracker2 was very impressive. As well, the existing attachment system has been much improved.

CONCLUSIONS

The new three-antenna transceivers are faster at finding a buried person in an avalanche than the older single-antenna transceivers—especially for naïve users. Guides or guiding companies using anything other than three-antenna transceivers should consider upgrading.

The simpler the transceiver is to use, the better. Extra functions such as the pulse detection with the Mammut and it is our opinion the probe switch with the Pieps may detract from the primary goal of rescuing the buried person.

For the complete article: <http://www.skicanadamag.com/Features/2009/FALL09/Transceivers>



scenario
not as easy
expected as
three-
transceiver
transceiver.

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.

Saturday or Sunday, February/March weekends (wherever the snow is best...around Missoula)

Rating: East to Moderate level backcountry skiing, *Elevation Gain:* 2500'- 4000'

Description: I plan on skiing at least every weekend in February and (at least) early March at various locations in the surrounding area and am encouraging folks to come along. The weather and snow conditions/stability will dictate the locations and the amount of vertical feet gained/descended. The Bitterroots, Missions, Lewis and Clarks and Swans are all in striking distance; let me know if you're interested. Snow stability investigations will be made on every trip.

Special Equipment: Skis/skins, beacon, shovel, and probe. Some lending gear available.

Leader: Joshua Phillips-H: 396-3162, email: mtsurveyor@gmail.com

Sat-Sun, February 6-7 – LITTLE ST. JOE/TRM CABIN STAY (Bitterroots)

Rating: Class: 1-2, *Mileage:* 3.5 miles one way to cabin, *Elevation:* 2000+

Description: Meet at old big lots parking area @ 7:30am Saturday, drive to bass creek TH, park at the gate and follow the ridge up to the cabin. Drop off overnight gear then, if time, energy and snow conditions allow ski/snowshoe to the Little Saint Joe summit. ***Please contact Shawn prior to the morning of the trip, as I probably won't show up at the meeting place if I don't receive any calls or e-mail.

Special Equipment: Ski's w/skins, Snowshoes (heel lifts highly recommended), Summertime Sleeping bag, clean pot to cook in and eat out of.

Co-Leaders: Shawn Bennett – shawnedwardbennett@gmail.com (cell – 493-4892)

Saturday, February 13 – ST. MARY PEAK (Bitterroots)

Rating: Class 2-3, *Estimated Mileage:* 10-12 miles, *Estimated Elevation Gain:* 2500-3000' depending on road conditions

Description: We'll take the "normal" route using the trail, or more likely just plowing up the ridge. Apparently this area is great for skiing. Well, seeing as how I've only got snowshoes I'm just gonna climb the damn thing. So if you wish to climb it also, whether by ski or snowshoe, then please join me. This could possibly be an overnighter up on top if anyone is down for it.

Special Equipment: Snowshoes or skis.

Leader: Chris Dunn-203-4962, email: hammaneater@gmail.com

Saturday, February 20 – TRAPPER PEAK (Bitterroots)

Rating: Class 3; *Mileage:* 18 miles round trip; *Elevation Gain:* 5500'

Description: Meet at old big lots parking area @ 6:15 carpool as much as possible down past Darby to the lavene creek road. From there well have to see how far we can drive up I'm guessing not at all, hence the 18 miles round trip est. There is little if any chance of avalanche danger if we use our heads and stay on route. And please prepared for a LONG day ***contact me prior to the morning of the trip, as I won't show up at the meeting place if I don't receive any calls.

Special Equipment: Ski's w/skin or, Snowshoes,

Leader: Shawn Bennett, please call at 493-4892

Saturday, February 27 – CHIEF JOSEPH CROSS COUNTRY SKI

Rating: Class 1; *Mileage:* depends on participants

Description: We will go for a day of skiing at the Chief Joseph Ski trails which are just east of Lost Trail Pass. The ski trails are groomed (but not for skating) by the Bitterroot XC ski club <http://bitterrootxcskiclub.net/>, and there are grooming reports at http://missoulanordic.org/snow_grooming. If participants are interested, there are some other ungroomed trails that can be accessed from the groomed ski trails:

http://fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5052373.pdf.

Leader: Alden (and Sally) Wright – alden@wrightmontana.net (work 243-4790, home 542-1966).

Saturday March 13 – SNOW SHELTER FIELD DAY (Lolo Pass)

Description: Come join me up at lolo pass where we will practice building Quinzhees, Dugloos and Igloos. Also we will cover trenches that compliment tents and tarps. Anyone willing is then welcome to then spend the night in his or her shelter of choice, and share a nice fire and dinner with the group before bed (If you don't know to much about making fire in the snow, I can teach a little about this as well). Nice late start at 9am, meet at the old big lots parking area (between the carmike 6 and K-mart)

Special Equipment: Ski's with skins or Snowshoes, Snow shovel (please rent one if you don't own) and a snow saw if you have one.

Leader: Shawn Bennett – (cell – 493-4892)

Saturday-Sunday, March 20-21 – MT. HAGGIN (Pintlers)

Rating: Class 2-3, *Mileage:* 14.4 miles, *Elevation Gain:* 5150

Description: A fairly easy mountain that rises over 10,000 ft above Anaconda. We'll probably drive up really early on Saturday and climb it the same day and spend the night nearby, maybe at Hearst Lake.

Special Equipment: Snowshoes or skis.

Leader: Chris Dunn-203-4962, email: hammaneater@gmail.com

Sat-Sun, March 27-28 – BASS PEAK (Bitterroots)

Rating: Class 3; *Distance:* 22 miles; *Elevation:* 5500'

Description: This will be an early spring overnighter trip to climb 8855' Bass Peak via the Bass Creek drainage. Depending on conditions, we may attempt the actual climb on Saturday afternoon, or early Sunday morning. Participants will need winter camping gear, ski's or snowshoes, crampons and an ice ax (minimum requirements). The pace will only be fast enough so as to complete the climb and trip in the two days (in other words, the trip leader will be a bit rusty!).

Special Equipment: See above. Shovels, transceivers, helmets, and ice tools are other possibilities.

Leader: Forest Dean- 240-7612, mtnear1@gmail.com

Trip Forum

Smith River Float- Just a reminder-several of us have talked about putting in applications for a Smith River Float next summer. The time has arrived to submit those applications. People who are interested should start talking to each other. We have to decide what time of year we want to go, and if we want to have several people apply for the same launch date. Or do we want to stagger them, Sun., Mon., Tues etc.? There are several other details involved, but we have until the end of February to get organized and submit applications. Joining this group who are going to submit applications will not require you to go on the trip, unless you are the person who gets the permit. The rest of the group will be very upset if you back out after that. Julia Kahl can give information, or contact me, Steve Schombel at 721-4686; stephenschombel@yahoo.com . We should exchange phone numbers and e mail addresses.

TRIP REPORTS

January 9 – East St. Mary’s Peak (Mission Mountains)

Matt Henderson, Greg Cohn and I headed up to the Missions to ski E. St. Mary’s. Turns out we had been completely duped by the N. Fork Jocko SNOTEL site. It reported 75 inches of snow and lies at 6300’. We got out of the truck at St. Mary’s Lake to a skiff of snow. We boot packed up and then started skinning up the mountain. Greg was having some gear issues and after reaching 6200’ we decided we’d rather be doing something else. At 6200’ we found maybe a foot and a half of snow. We all had a good laugh talking about pizza and beer and how much we’d rather be imbibing. Tucking tail and heading down the mountain, once we hit the truck we made a bee line for Big Sky Brewery. After our “4 fo’ free”, we headed to OSFF and got makings for homemade pizza. We ended up salvaging the day and saving face in the end. Banner day, guys!
Joshua Phillips

January 16-17 – Lolo Pass “Hosting”

David and I served as the hosts at Lolo Pass on the weekend of Jan.16th and 17th. Though we could have stayed overnight in the Mud Creek Cabin, instead we got a room at Lolo Hot Springs for the night. The Missoula Snowgoers Snowmobile Club was having a benefit poker run on Sun. Jan. 17th.

Our "work hours" were from 8:AM to 4:30 PM Pacific time, 9-5:30 our time. When we arrived on Sat. morning we had to read and sign some materials on job hazards and job safety and formally get on their "volunteers list." Then they showed us around and explained how to help with the warming hut, putting wood in the stove, keeping the coffee and hot water filled etc. Then we did the job they needed us to do most, put on vests and take a radio and go out and ski the trails. We skied the Glade Creek Loop (the short trail) and checked the conditions and talked to people. Back at the visitors center we had some lunch and then tackled a couple of jobs they had for us. The first was to dig a ramp for the snowshoers through the snowplow bank, then to chip about 2 inches of ice off the sidewalk next to the snow ramp you go up to get on



the ski trails. David applied some concrete busting skills and it took us a little over an hour to do that. In the late afternoon we stayed in the visitors center while some of the rangers went out to do some tasks. We gladly gave advice in the malfunctioning vacuum cleaner incident. It snowed most of the day on Sat. but Sun. was sunny and clear and didn't get above freezing. First we helped open the warming hut, I built a fire and David tidied up some. Then we went to ski the Pack Creek Loop (the long one). They had done a "pallet repair" on a creek crossing washout point on the trail and wanted a report on that. Also the administrator, Buffy, wanted to know if they needed to



put out more signs to keep the poker run people off the ski trails. We stopped and talked with people on the way, the washout repair was holding and we found some snowmobiles had been using the ski trail as a shortcut. Back at the visitors center we had lunch visiting with folks in the warming hut, and with the numerous people we knew skiing that day. Late in the afternoon we hung around the center again, and I and two others went out to try out the beacon park. While doing that we found a loose dog running around that we tried to catch.

In discussions with Buffy she said that of the three people assigned there, she is the only one that skied and she really needed people to ski the trails and check on things. They also need people who volunteer on a regular basis, then they will train them to run the cash register and other tasks like that.

My idea was to do a volunteering weekend in conjunction with a moonlight ski. And I still think that is a good idea. Also I would suggest that others look into getting on the list as volunteers and then if we are up there anyway we could do a ski trail run or something.

As a side note I would like to encourage everyone who goes up there to sign the log book every time, their funding is based partially on its entries. *Julie Kahl*

January 24 – Stonewall Creek, Lincoln

Matt Henderson, his wife Allie and I made the drive out to Lincoln for a day of skiing. It's a relatively flat 2 mile approach to the avalanche chutes. We found a very stable snow pack with a weight bearing crust under several inches of new snow. After skinning up to the ridge at 7000', we stopped for a snack. The three of us ended up skiing 3 laps and we found that the northerly facing aspects held good powder. The draw we liked the best had a sharp "V" in the bottom of the drainage and in the flat light, Matt and I both got a rude awakening by smashing into the other side of the draw. It made for some good laughs though. The trail back to the car was flat and fast. We were all surprised with how quickly we made it back. *Joshua Phillips*



January 29- Lubrecht Forest Moonlight Ski

This was an awesome experience for me. There were over 20 people gathered near the back door of Pipestone when I arrived. It also happened to be the night of "Friday Night Smackdown", so, many of us had to park near the Carousel. So here was this group in ski clothes standing around while many shaved headed and tattooed people walked by headed to the Wilma. But John Wolverton got the group organized – he is good at that. A few volunteered to drive, and others gathered around each driver.

Someone stopped to pick up a couple of more people in Bonner, so when we reached the parking lot at Lubrecht we had a head count of 25. This is surely a record for any Rocky Mountaineers trip I've been involved in. I won't even attempt to list names of attendees; John has a sign up sheet if anyone needs to know.

The night was so beautiful. It was one of the rare, clear nights we have had between grey overcast days. The temperature was comfortable in the high 20's. Dennis, the groomer, was happy to hear that a group was coming up to Lubrecht, and he was in the parking lot to greet us. He offered to go up to the warming hut to start a fire for us, and his wife joined us. There were a couple of more late arrivals, so the total group probably numbered closer to 30.

Then the group set off. There was a bunch of faster skiers, but since they said they knew the way I told them to go ahead. I was in the middle, but waited at each junction for the slower group to catch up, enjoying the moon and stars. We had a nice break at the warming hut, but decided not to light the fire since there were so many of us. Then we headed down to the new route which bypasses the road over the dam which is plowed for logging this year. I could see evidence that the groomer had gone out and made at least one pass over this section to help us. We thank him, and those who read this should consider joining or making a donation to the

Missoula Nordic Ski Club for all the work they do. Once again I was in the middle, waiting at each junction for the slower group to catch up, enjoying the bright moonlight and studying the contrast between white snow and black trees. It was almost a spiritual experience for me, like it says in the Psalms: *"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork."*
 Steve Schombel

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

The Rocky Mountaineers
Minutes- Jan. 13, 2010

1. Called to order 6:15 PM

Attendees: Joshua Phillips, David Wright, Steve Niday, Julie Kahl, Alden Wright, Forest Dean, Steve Schombel, Tom Hanou, Chris Dunn, Shawn Bennett

2. Treasurer's Report: \$965.16, paid cabin rent of \$62, and website \$60, Pay-Pal may have \$20 - \$30.
3. Dispensed with most other business to discuss a trip schedule. Forest's compilation follows

Trip schedule

Feb. 6-7 - TRM Cabin Trip- Shawn Bennett/Chris Dunn

Feb. 13- St. Mary Peak- Chris Dunn

Feb. 20- Trapper Peak- Shawn Bennett

Feb. 27- Chief Joseph Ski- Alden Wright

March 13-14- Chief Joseph Ski- Steve Schombel

March 20-21- Mt. Haggin- Chris Dunn

March 27-28- Bass Peak- Forest Dean

April 3-4- Freezeout Lake- ????

Memorial Day Weekend- McDonald Peak- Forest Dean

June 5- Castle Crag- Shawn Bennett

June 12- Climbing Class- Shawn Bennett

June 12-13- Mt. St. Nicholas- Forest Dean

June 19- Warren Peak- Joshua Phillips

July 4th- Weekend- Blackfoot Mtn.- Forest Dean

July 10- Triangle Peak- Alden Wright

July 30-31- Hyalite Peak- Julie Kahl

August 27-29- Glacier Classic

Sept 4-6- Granite Peak- Forest Dean

Sept 11-12- Grave Peak- Chris Dunn

4. Smith River permits for June 20th or 21st. Cost \$30, must be in by Feb. 16, get to chose 3 dates
5. No business meeting in May before the 50th Anniversary Party at the Larry Cr Group Site
Site has been reserved for Saturday, May 15, including overnight
Elections and awards presentations will take place on Saturday. Time: to be announced
Bring food and drink, and camping gear if you want to stay overnight.
6. Where to hold the Glacier Classic this year - Apgar, Two Medicine & Pole Bridge were suggested, more discussion needed.
7. David Wright started a discussion on what types of classes we would like to see: basic ice axe/self arrest, crevasse rescue, back country essentials 1st aid- repeat the class we had a few years ago. Shawn Bennett suggested belaying and kids climbing.
8. Adjourned 6:56 PM

The Rocky Mountaineers 50th Anniversary

A talk with Jim Ulrich plus some selections from old newsletters

by Chris Dunn

Steve Schombel and I met with Jim Ulrich at Steve's house last December, as I had agreed to do a write up as a part of the 50th anniversary of the Rocky Mountaineers. Jim had a wealth of information about a prior era of the Rocky Mountaineers and life and the outdoors in Missoula. Jim arrived in Missoula in 1969. At that time the Mountaineers were 9 years old. One of the first stories Jim mentioned was that on the first Earth Day on April 22, 1970 the Mountaineers, with the assistance of a crane, helped pull cars, which were being used as riprap, out of the Clark Fork.

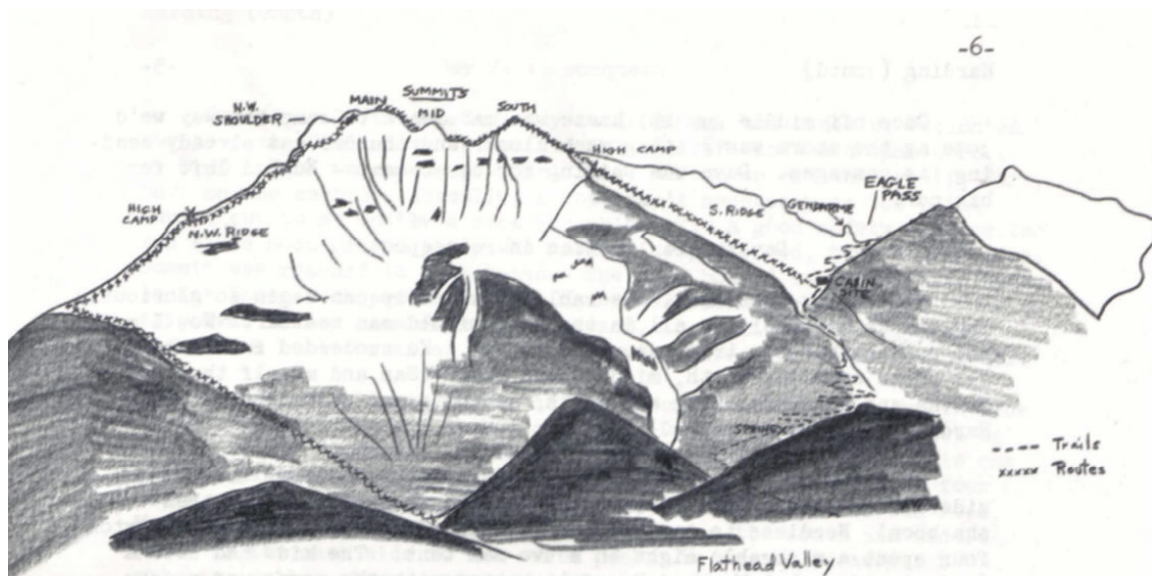
Jim mentioned many small stories and details about how things used to be run. The original cabin was at Lappi Lake in what is now the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. Once the wilderness was instituted, however, the Forest Service burnt the cabin down. The new one was built at its present location apparently single handedly by Bob Bensen, a member who apparently led some canoe trips among other things. The club used to meet in a basement of a forgotten building on Brooks. The club had speakers at that time. Some that Jim mentioned were a presentation on the geology of the Bitterroots and another on Glacial Lake Missoula by one of the authors of Roadside Geology of Montana. Flipping through the old newsletters, I noticed that the club used to also show movies related to skills, safety, or the outdoors. The club also ran a climbing school at Kootenai Creek.

Jim also told a few stories from back then. One time some folks were winter camping at Carlton Lake. They stayed the night in a snow-cave and the next morning they woke to find a snowmobile track right over the cave. Jim considered himself lucky. Another time Jim and some folks were taking a spring hike on what would have been May 18, 1980. Jim didn't hear it, but someone else made the comment that they thought they heard a sound which might have been Mt. St. Helens exploding. On the drive back, which would have been around 5 or 6 pm, the ash from the volcano began to arrive. Another time Jim and a friend made a traverse through the Missions from Grey Wolf north to Turquoise Lake over 5 days. They left a car at either end. When they went back to get the first car, they discovered that the dome light had been left on and thus the battery was dead. They weren't able to drive right up to this car and had to walk in a bit. They came back with a battery, the old type that had to be handled carefully, which they had to walk in. Once at the car they realized it didn't fit so they had to leave again to St. Ignatius. A last story is that once Bill Weiland, a friend of Jim's, left his rope on the top of N. Trapper Peak. He was 'bitchin and moanin' to some folks so one of them climbed the mountain in the full moon that night and the next day left the rope on Bill's desk. Needless to say, he was perplexed for a few days afterwards. Bill had also apparently climbed Mt. St. Nicholas 17 times.

Finally, Jim mentioned a few other details. He noted that the gear back then was a lot different. The choices were basically cotton, wool, and leather boots. He said folks would climb Denali in cotton t-shirts and just change shirts once they got sweaty. He said he used a 3 foot wooden handled ice axe, there wasn't any dry rope, and crampons didn't have any front points. Jim said technical gear had to be purchased from REI in Seattle or WWII surplus from the army/navy store. Later Bob Wards began to have technical gear. Jim was proud of his ancient REI card dating from 1962 and with a very low number (mine on the other hand was from about 2002 and has a number above 6 million). When I asked Jim about snow, crowds, and giardia he mentioned that the north side of Lolo held snow all year, that folks used to ski Trapper peak on Memorial Day, that the woods and mountains were not crowded at all, and finally that giardia was not common.

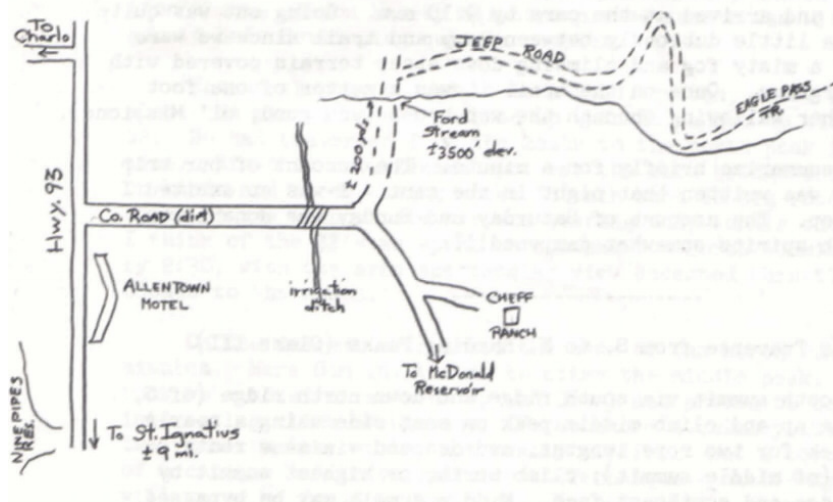
While we were talking to Jim, Steve handed me some old newsletters from the 60's. I had never seen any old ones before and was pretty impressed by some of the drawings. The ones Steve gave me had sketches of routes up Mt. Harding (now Calowachan). Jim mentioned that there were no maps of the Missions (and

definitely no summit Post) at that time so finding, describing, and mapping routes through the Missions (and other areas) was a focus. I've included a couple of images from those newsletters below.



MT. HARDING FROM NINEPIPES RES. - From photo May, 1958

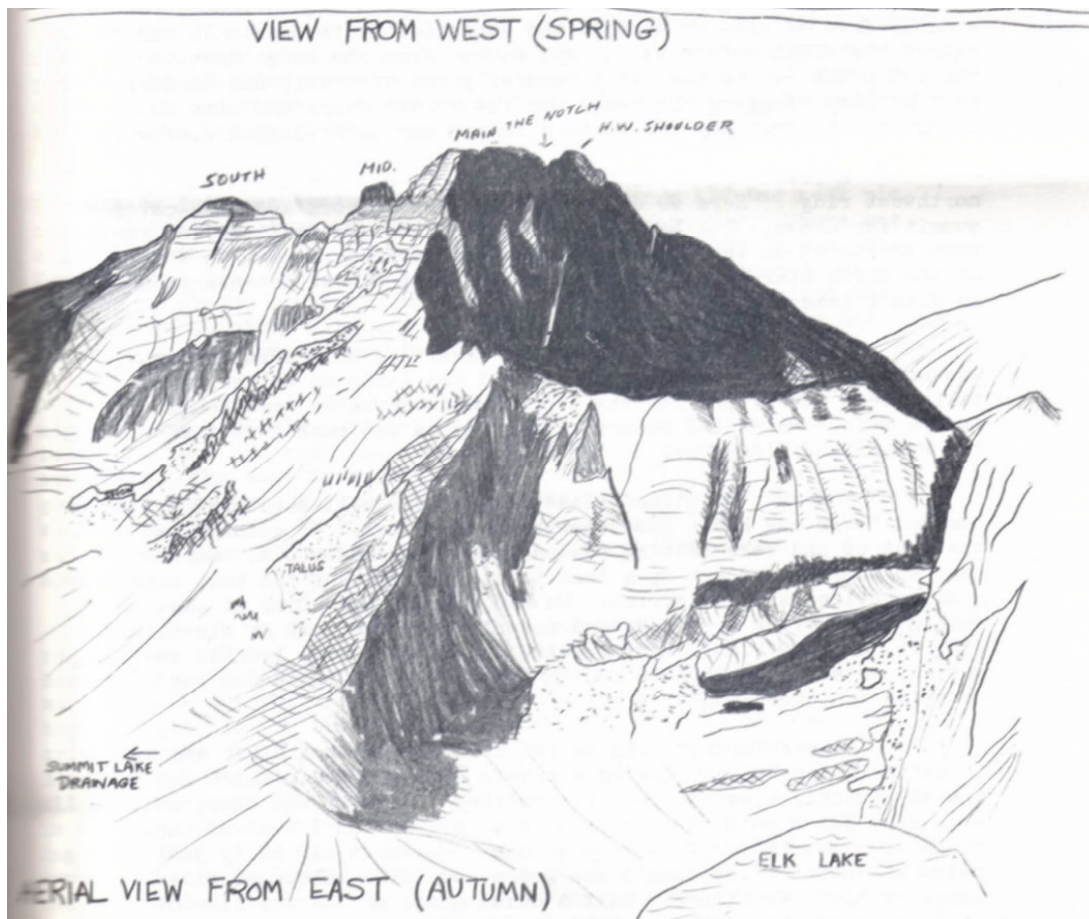
Trip to Eagle Pass for Hikers and Climbers...Sept. 27, 1964..Call 549-2513 for information. This is a trail hike to a most interesting spot high in the Mission Range. A gendarme in the Pass will offer rock work for climbers while hikers explore the area. All day trip - cost per person, \$1.50 - bring lunch and canteen.



Approach to Eagle Pass Trail.....

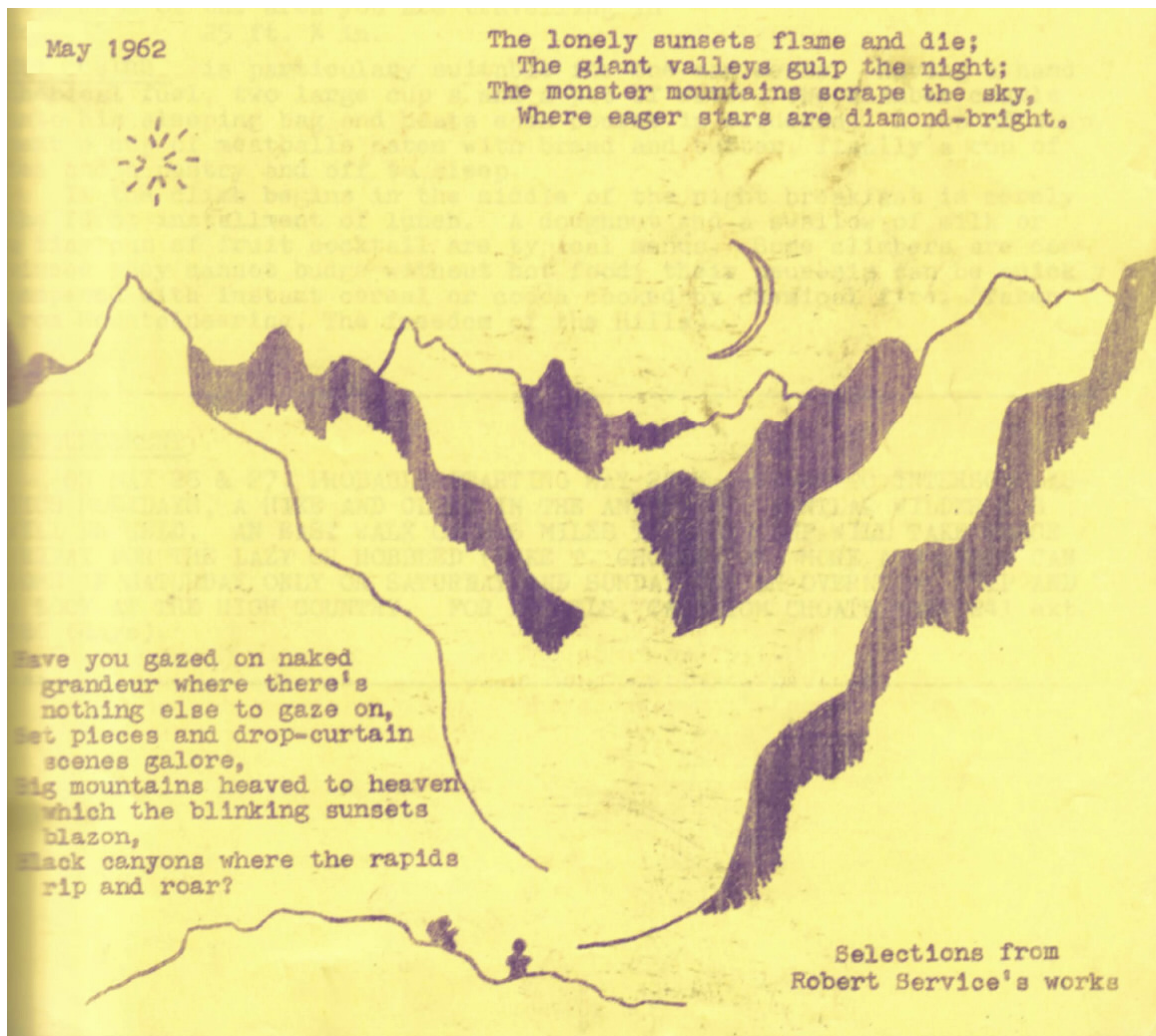
Turn left just after crossing large irrigation ditch; ford a stream, then take road on right. Follow jeep road as far as you can drive - it has been extended for several miles by pole cutting in the area. Trail takes off in plain sight.

From September, 1967



From March-May 1964

While looking through the old Ears to find the drawings, I noticed some other things as well. The newsletter wasn't simply a record of trips and advertisement of new trips but an all-out publication. It had these things of course, but also recipes, techniques, comics, quotes, sketches, and advice. One thing I noticed was that there was a lot of appreciation for the beauty of the mountains and nature evidenced by the inclusion of quotes from the likes of Muir and Thoreau, and also some focus on the land and on conservation. In some of the upcoming newsletters leading up to the 50th reunion on May 15th, I may find some more interesting tidbits on other topics from the old newsletters to print. For this one I wanted to put a couple of the bits that focused on the land, partly because it relates to a story Jim told. There was apparently some controversy related to land use and conservation. While discussing the old speakers, Jim mentioned a Representative Olsen had asked to speak and so Jim scheduled him. He was involved in the issues of logging and terracing at the time. Some of the members didn't want the club to be political so he was disinvited. Some members worked for the forest service and didn't want to get involved in the then raging debate between environmentalists and loggers, in part for fear of losing their jobs.



The December 1962 issue (with a poem taken from a Sierra Club publication on the cover), included some quotes concerning conservation in a section entitled "CONSERVATION...and the Mountaineer." I include these below.

"We get as much enjoyment out of natural outdoor areas as any other people. Yet we usually do nothing to help conserve or protect it. Have you noticed the bad logging practice at the head of Rattlesnake Creek, for instance? If you saw the great waste of trees, the rapid erosion of the bulldozed soil, then why did it not bother you, make you want to write the people in charge? Let's talk over what we can contribute to the wise and careful use or protection of our local resources soon." –Tom Choate

"Conservation is a state of harmony between man and land. By land is meant all of the things on, over, or in the earth. Harmony with land is like harmony with a friend; you cannot cherish his right hand and chop off his left... the outstanding scientific discovery of the twentieth century is not television, or radio, but rather the complexity of the land organism. Only those who know the most about it can appreciate how little we know about it. The last word in ignorance is the man who says of an animal or plant: 'what good is it?' If the land mechanism as a whole is good, then every part is good, whether we understand it or not. If the biota, in the course of aeons, has built something we like but do not understand, then who but a fool would discard seemingly useless parts? To keep every cog in the wheel is the first precaution of intelligent tinkering." – Aldo Leopold in Round River

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Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

March-April 1962



Climb
the mountains and
get their good tidings.

Nature's peace will flow
into you as sunshine flows
into trees.

The winds will blow their own
freshness into you, and the
storms their energy,

while cares will
drop off like

autumn
leaves.



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