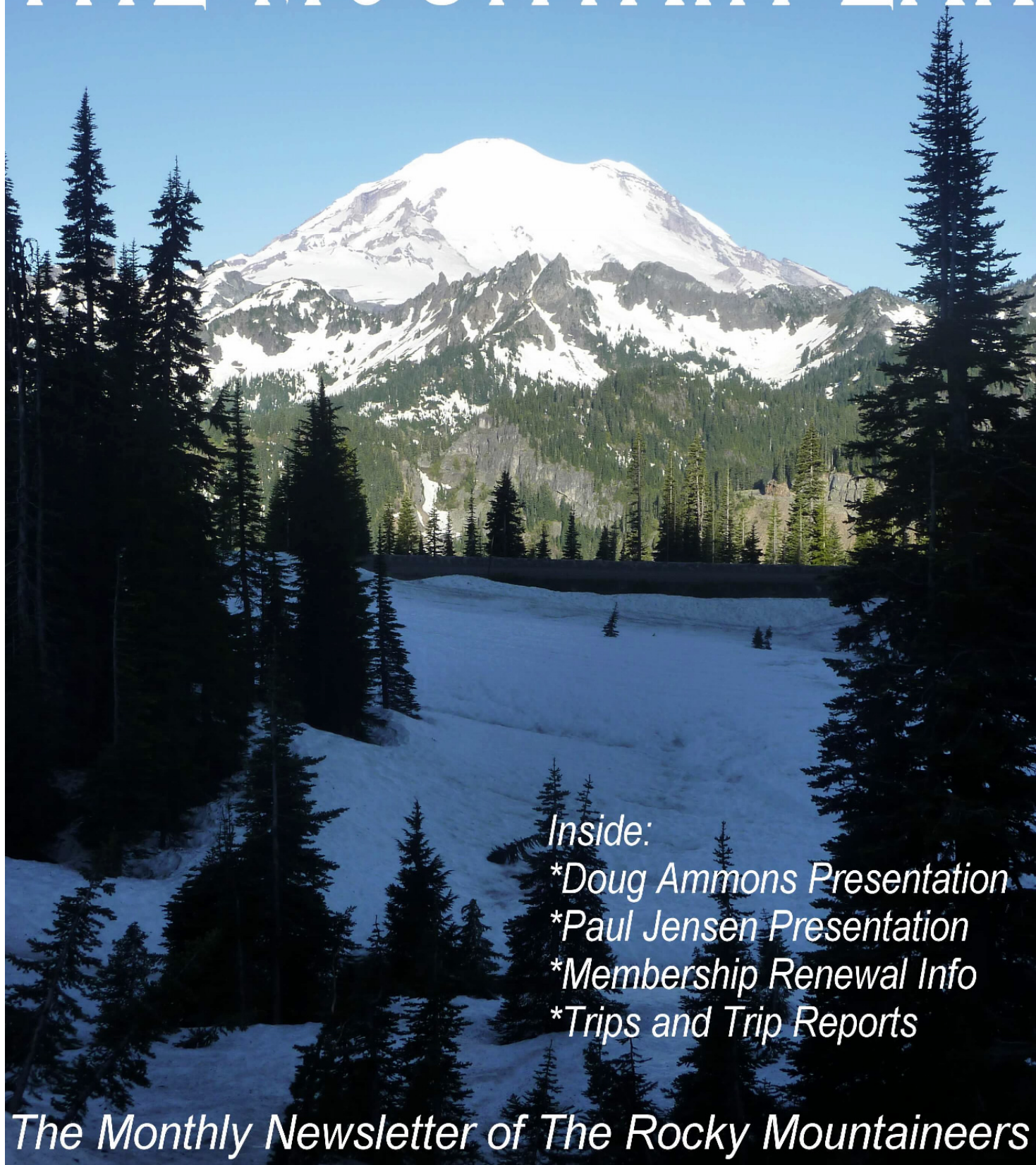


FEBRUARY 2011

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. Each meeting is followed by a featured presentation or speaker at 7:00 PM.

Activities:

- ☐ Hiking
- ☐ Backpacking
- ☐ Alpine Climbing & Scrambling
- ☐ Backcountry Skiing
- ☐ Winter Mountaineering
- ☐ Track Skiing
- ☐ Snowshoeing
- ☐ Mountain Biking
- ☐ Rock Climbing
- ☐ Canoeing & Kayaking
- ☐ Rafting
- ☐ Kids Trips

President's Message

Rocky Mountaineers,

Days are getting longer and it is time to get outdoors. There are so many things to do in the Missoula area. We are fortunate to live where we do, get out and enjoy it. Share with others by emailing our club newsletter editor; mtnear1@gmail.com with a trip invite.

On February 10th, we are hosting along with UM Campus Outdoor Recreation, a presentation by Missoula's own world class whitewater adventurer, Doug Ammons, and his latest film, "Wildwater, A Love Story". Showing will be at the Urey Lecture Hall at 7 PM on Thursday. We will still be having our monthly board meeting on Wednesday (the 9th) at The Trailhead (6:00 PM).

Paul Jensen will be doing the March meeting on his recent trip to Nepal. Looking forward to hear how Paul did this on a shoe string budget.

In April we will be having a presentation by the recently hired director of the new Milltown State Park, Michael Kustudia. Come hear about the status and the plans for the area after a lot of remedial clean up that has been occurring the past years.

Tom Hanou
406-360-3564
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February Special Presentation

"Wildwater: A Love Story"

A new film about the soul of whitewater

We are in for a special treat at our meeting in February. We will have a presentation by Doug Ammons, well renowned paddler and white water adventurer. Please be aware that this presentation will be on a different day, Thursday, Feb 10th, at 7 PM, and a different place, the Urey Underground Lecture Hall on campus.

Doug will talk about his many kayaking experiences around the world, including stories from his two books, The Laugh of the Water nymph and Whitewater Philosophy. This show will be free and open to all, but copies of the book will be for sale and donations accepted. All proceeds will go to support two schools in Dolpa, one of the poorest regions of Nepal.

The main event will be a showing of Doug's latest film, "WildWater", directed and produced by Anson Fogel. This is a well done film and was good enough to be selected a Finalist in the "Best Film on Mountain Sports" category at the 2010 Banff Mountain Film Festival. Need we say more? Please come prepared to buy some books or make a donation to the schools. We really thank Doug for putting on this show with no admission charge, in The Rocky Mountaineers tradition.

Here is more about the film, from the website: DougAmmons.com. Check out the website for more on the books and comments on the film.

Forge Motion Pictures has just finished shooting action and interviews for “Wildwater: A love story” a film about the soul of whitewater. In the film we show what this love affair with beautiful rivers is, what is so compelling about flowing water, and why people are so drawn to rivers.

Filmmaker Anson Fogel teams up with Doug Ammons to tell this love story, and more, using incredible Hollywood level high definition footage from scenic desert rivers to super-charged steep creeks and jungle rivers. The film is shot in the Grand Canyon, Yule Creek, jungle rivers in Ecuador, Tumwater Canyon in Washington, and the North Fork of the Payette in Idaho with a wide assortment of kayakers and river runners. Insightful commentary is taken from dozens of interviews and woven into the visual stream. It is a deep look at what draws us to rivers and what we find there.

The full length film should be done by the beginning of August, and will be submitted to the Banff Film Festival, other festivals, and then released for showings in various premieres. Doug and Anson intend to do introductions at specific venues. At some point it will be available commercially.

You can view several teasers showing footage from the film on Vimeo. The easiest way to do this is google up “Vimeo North Fork of the Payette teaser”. I believe you’ll be amazed – you then can select from the other teasers, from Ecuador and the Grand Canyon. The first two weeks after the North Fork teaser was put online, it had more than 50,000 views. When you watch it you’ll see why.

You can also view selected other teasers by going to Anson’s website, “Forge Motion Pictures”, select “Film” and then select “teasers” on the next screen.

Doug Ammons, 52, is a Montana native and has been a world class kayaker for the last 25+ years. He has done dozens of expedition first descents of rivers around the world, as well as steep creeks and rivers in the Rocky Mountains in the US, Canada, and Alaska. He is particularly known for his outrageous solo descents of highwater and extended wilderness Class V+ and VI runs. He writes regularly for adventure publications and published the book, “The Laugh of the Water Nymph” in 2005, voted one of the best outdoors books of the year by the National Outdoor Book Awards. He published a second book, called “Whitewater Philosophy” in February, 2009. He has several more in draft form, including “The Stikine”. This is the dramatic history of the attempts on the Grand Canyon of the Stikine, together with the story of his 1992 solo run, which has been equated to Himalayan climber Reinhold Messner’s epic solo of Mt. Everest.

Looking ahead....

March Meeting- March 9. Trekking in Nepal –Paul Jensen, long time club member, and his friend, Kirsten Schmidt, spent about 7 weeks exploring Nepal last fall. They spent a month long trek with an organized company around Manaslu, and also went up into the Nar and Phu valleys. Both places were in “restricted areas”, which means they were still relatively untouched by development. Paul writes that the high points were the interesting villages, the friendly people, a couple of high passes, and, of course, the scenery. They also explored other places on their own on the other days.

This sounds like another “can’t miss” show. Paul has done other programs for our club. The meeting will be at 7 PM on Wednesday, March 9, downstairs at the Trailhead. It is free and open to all.

Membership Renewal Notice

All TRM memberships will expire at midnight on April 30. All renewals must be received by that time if you don't want your membership to lapse. Annual dues cover the period from May 1 through April 30. Those dates were chosen because of our by-laws, which state "A member's dues must be current the last day of the month before the annual meeting to be eligible to vote." We vote for officers during our May meeting. Of course we welcome dues payment at any time. Dues can be paid to me at our monthly meetings, sent to PO Box 4262, Missoula, MT, 59806, or paid via credit card or PayPal via our website:

www.rockymountaineers.com

Whatever method of payment you choose, make sure to provide your email address to receive your newsletter and announcements.

Oh, and the annual dues are still just \$10.00

Steve Niday, Treasurer.

TRIP FORUM

Smith River Float Trip

Some of us are going to, again, apply for permits to float the Smith River. Our target dates will be around Father's Day weekend in late June. If any one out there is interested, the deal is that, if anyone in our club is successful in getting a permit, then the other people in the club who put in applications get to go along, up to the maximum number. February is the month you have to send in permit applications for the drawing. If you want an application or more info you should go out to the MT Fish, Wildlife and Parks Office on West Spurgin Road, or call them or visit their website. For more info contact Steve Schombel at 721-4686.

Freezeout Lake Waterfowl Viewing

Early Planning for Freezeout Lake, waterfowl viewing. Tentative dates -weekend of March 26th. Feedback please! Some are considering rooms at the Gunter Hotel. Julie Kahl 543-6508

Cover Photo: Mt. Rainier from the east. F. Dean photo.

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 (and some Fridays!), January/February 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 January and February at various locations in the surrounding area and am encouraging folks to come along. The weather and snow conditions/stability will dictate the locations as well as 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.

Email me to get on my "back country ski partner" email list. I usually send out an email on Thursdays.

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

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

Sunday, February 20 – LOLO PASS SKI (Bitterroots)

Distance: 8 miles -Lolo Pass to Lee Creek Camp Ground

Description: "A" Trail/Lee Creek Trail. If conditions are right down hill on the Lee Creek side could be very fast.

Equipment: Ski or Snowshoe, will leave a vehicle at Lee Creek.

Leader: Julie Kahl 543-6508

Sat-Sun, March 5-6 – CHIEF JOSEPH PASS SKI (Bitterroots)

Description: Chief Joseph Ski Trip: Join us for a weekend of skiing at this nice area near Lost Trail Pass. We are going to ski Saturday afternoon, spend the night in a cabin at Sula, then ski Sunday morning before heading home. Plan on making your own room arrangements, but I could put someone on a waiting list on the small chance that one of my friends cancels. If you have your own transportation you can join us for just one of the days. Other options include a few hours at Lost Trail Hot Springs and a pot luck dinner. Our plans will evolve over the next few weeks.

Leader: Steve Schombel - 721-4686

TRIP REPORTS

January 9- Miller Creek area

"Something At Lolo Pass" didn't happen quite that way. The one person interested in going opted out because of the winter storm watch. So Julie & David Kahl opted to go up to the Miller Creek area instead. We took both skis and snow shoes. I had two reasons for opting for this area, I wanted to see what winter usage was in this newly acquired Nature Conservancy lands and if this area should be rated as anything other than "just another area to ski only after a fresh dump of snow low down." We went up a road 9 miles up Miller Creek Rd. on the west (right). The main road, roughly 1 mile up a canyon, rises continuously and would be a nice bonsai down hill run if conditions were right. The usage was no surprise, mostly people and dogs, though in places we could see possible traces of skis and snowshoes. There wasn't anyone up there running dogs this day, probably because the badly chewed up snow was hard enough to cut their feet. We opted to hike the road in our pack boots and the going was difficult as the few inches of snow was badly chewed up and it was difficult to find stable footing that didn't break away under our feet. We hiked up to the road "T" at the end of the canyon, the usage was less the further we went up, but it continued up the right stretch of the "T". The left way, which we wanted to follow, was untracked and the snow was deeper than our boot tops, we opted to turn back and going down was easier as we could "heel walk" and about an inch of snow had fallen filling in some of the roughness. If we had been willing to pack our skis or snowshoes the mile up to the end of the canyon there probably would have been nice going on the untracked roads for several more miles, but otherwise this would qualify as a good place to recreate after a good dump of snow low down. *Julie Kahl*

January 28 – West Saint Mary's Peak (Missions)

After a successful solo climb of East Saint last month, I figured I might like to try its westerly twin: a peak I had never climbed before. On my ESM (East St. Mary's) climb I gazed at the south ridge of WSM and thought it looked like a fun winter route. This time I actually got a couple of people to join me...Curt Tweedy and Fred McDonald. We all opted for snowshoes, not knowing what type of terrain to expect. Started about 9:00 am at a bend in the road about a mile short of St. Mary's Lake. The first 800' up was through fairly open forest and not too steep. Snowshoes were a good choice here, as the snow cover wasn't the best and there was some exposed brush. After that, the route heads to the NE and steeply up the ridge. We took turns breaking trail as the snow got considerably worse as we ascended. Tiring work it was! At times we were plunging almost two feet into the snow. Needless to say, the going was slow. Around 8000' the ridge finally flattens a bit, but here the snow changed again...more sugary it was. After a short flat area, the ridge steepens again. We put on crampons for this section. A real short cliff blocks upward progress around 8400'; there was no ice on this, just powdery snow, so we traversed west till we found a ramp up. The traverse was steep and exciting. After this we ascended to about 9000' which left another flat area of travelling before the final 300-400' to the summit. Problem was, it was already after 3pm and we still had to descend 5000'. We hemmed and hawed as we looked at the final problems. Things didn't look horribly difficult, but based on the snow we had travelled through thus far, we estimated another 1 ½ hrs minimum just to get to the summit and back to where we currently stood. We had brought a rope and there was a decent chance we were going to have to employ it, which then, of course, would take time to set up, etc. So we opted for a daylight descent and the thoughts of pizza and beer. It only took 2 ½ hrs to descend and we arrived out just as it was getting fairly dark. This is only a 3 mile one-way climb, but it does gain 5500'. And in poor snow, it's a lot of work. This was my first trip with both Curt and Fred and I can't say enough about their stamina and attitudes in the mountains...it was a pleasure doing this trip with you guys! *Forest Dean*

January 29 – Lolo Pass

It often happens that, when you deal with uncertain weather and talk to friends, trip plans change quite a bit from what was advertised. Such was the case with this trip. Two of us had recovered from health problems enough that we felt like skiing, not snowshoeing, and Pattee Canyon did not have much snow, so we went to Lolo Pass (hard to believe with the huge dump we got on 1-30). Since I'm still not in the best of shape we decided to do a fairly short run, out the Packer Meadow Loop and then up the Lee Creek Trail to a junction before it starts to climb steadily. The snow was good and it was quiet and pretty, but there was a light, wet snowfall most of the day so we were wet by the time we got back. Luckily, it was warm out. We then headed to the Lumberjack for some burgers and beer, a good end to a nice day. Participants were: Dave and Julia Kahl, Roy Regel, Lois Crepeau and *Steve Schombel*.

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.