

MOUNTAIN EAR

Monthly Newsletter of the Rocky Mountaineers

The Rocky Mountaineers is organized as a nonprofit Club for the mutual benefit of its members to promote all phases of recreational use of mountainous areas.

MARCH 2003

Thirty three Years of Visits to the Alps

Former Club President Bill Myers and his wife, Vera, and their children, Bob and Bill, have been to the Alps many times. Their first visit was in the summer of 1969. Since they were new to Europe they saw a lot of the main tourist attractions and did some guided hiking. Then in 1973 they took a sabbatical to Geneva, put the kids in a French language school, and started exploring on their own. There are many attractive peaks near Geneva, the foremost being Mount Blanc, about 80 miles away.

Soon the two Bills formed a good father-son team and did some challenging climbs and high mountain traverses, sometimes with other family members. The two boys even found their own way to the top of the Matterhorn at the young ages of 15 and 21. Bill himself used a guide to climb the Matterhorn. He remarks that the Matterhorn Guides are very jealous of their business, and do not allow paint or other route markers like one will find on most other mountains.

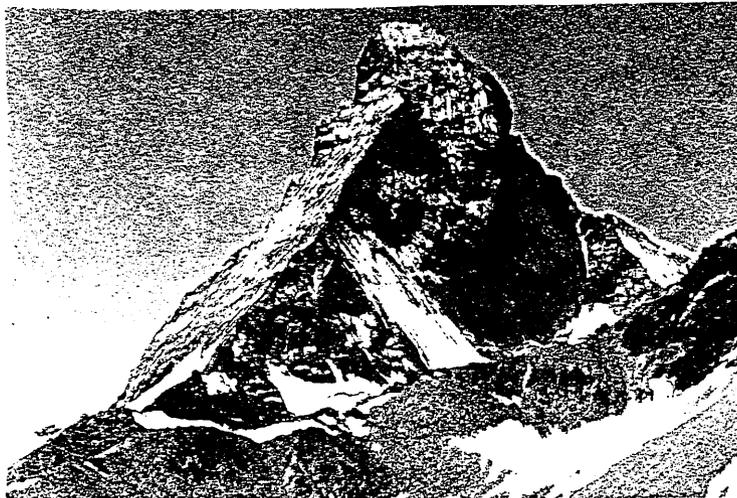
Both Bill and Vera like it that the Alps are in a small area with many peaks close together; unlike the Rockies. One of the best things is the numerous mountain huts where one can get food and lodging. There are about 600 of these in Austria alone, a country about the size of Western Montana. Some of these huts are quite spacious, sleeping up to 150

people. The best deal of all would be to join one of the European Alpine Clubs and spend weeks trekking from hut to hut.

Bill has a lot of exceptional mountain slides. He will concentrate on Mount Blanc, the Jungfrau and the Matterhorn. There are also some shots of

Eastern Switzerland around the Piz Bernina.

Come and see this spectacular show at the next Rocky Mountaineer's meeting on Wednesday, March 12th. We meet at 7:00 PM in the second floor conference room of the Court House Annex on Pine Street. Meetings are free and open to all.



Special Meeting on Tuesday, April 8th

There will be a video and talk on "Safety in Bear Country" by Jamie Jonkel, Grizzly Specialist with Fish, Wildlife and Parks. He has valuable information for all who use the outdoors in Western and Central Montana. He will have a lot of props and handouts, and plenty of time for questions. One point he likes to emphasize is that it is now possible to encounter a grizzly in any mountain range in the region. This is one talk you should tell your friends about. We will meet downstairs in the Missoula Public Library to take advantage of the larger room and video display machine. The meeting will start at 7:00 PM.

TRIP REPORTS

February 9th Lolo Pass

Two "beginners" opted to go along for an introduction to Lolo Pass. Steve Pracht and John Wolverton joined Charles Tree, Dave Kahl and Julie Warner for a nice days' skiing to the Lee Creek Saddle. We experienced different types of trail conditions and skied down through the trees (always fun) before ending the day in the warming hut drinking hot drinks. - Julie

February 15-16th Sula

Cathy and Michael Burleson and Steve Schombel had a nice little cabin and a great hot tub to soak in Saturday night. But what made it memorable was the wildlife. Sunday morning we saw a herd of at least 20 Bighorns traversing the hill just north of the motel. There were several ducks rooting for bugs in the East Fork, and, later, a group of Mule Deer came down the hillside to the south. In the afternoon a heavy wet snow was falling at Chief Joseph, but we did the Continental Divide Trail and enjoyed drying out in the fantastic warming hut. - Steve

February 26th

On Feb. 26, 2003 at 9:15 am, Fred Schwanemann (me, myself, and I) started on Moose Ridge Run at Lolo Pass. I skied half way around, 7 miles, and took a half hour for lunch. The sky was blue, the snow was slow, and the temperature was brisk. After about six hours I was back at my car. It was a good day! - Fred

March 2nd

All of the participants agreed that this was a really fun day, and an exceptionally pretty area that none of us had skied in before. In fact, it's tempting to not talk about it. The snow conditions were about the best we've seen so far this year. Once you pass the Monture Creek registration box the area is closed to motorized vehicles. There is a narrow groomed trail, using a human pulled sled, up to the first footbridge, which then loops around and goes past the Monture Guard station. You then ski or carry your skis along the road for about a mile back to the campground. There also is a good set of tracks up the creek which we followed for roughly three miles. Half the group went a mile more. There are some lesser used side trails, and snowshoe tracks in the area. Lots of possibilities.

The participants were Dave Kahl, Julie Warner, Fred and Eileen Schwanneman, Will Butler, Ron Pierson, and the leader, Steve Schombel

More Help Needed

It is time to start preparing for the annual election in May. It would be great if someone would be willing to be a nominator and see if any member would be willing to serve as a club officer. But for now people who would like to run for one of the four offices can call one of the officers or e-mail or write the club - addresses below. Doing the newsletter is quite a chore. You certainly won't hurt anyone's feelings if you volunteer. We hope to have some candidates to introduce at the April meeting.

We could also use help in getting the word out about the change of day and place for our April meeting. Since we are meeting in a larger room feel free to invite others to this informative meeting.

We will also meet downstairs in the Missoula Public Library on Wednesday, May 14th at 7 PM.

Outdoor Interests Survey

We received three more surveys, for a total of five, which is a great response for a group our size. Hiking was checked on everyone's list. We still have no interest in trail running or ice climbing. Bicycling was added in other interests. Most people would like a better explanation of difficulty and lengths. Regular trip leaders should take note and help the editor out on this one.

Trips of any length and trips for either singles or couples were preferred. There is still a 50/50 split on whether the club should focus on recreation or get involved in some environmental issues.

Some people also asked for trips on Saturdays. Some of the regulars just aren't free on Saturday. Why don't people call and ask one of the regulars if they would go out some Saturday and suggest a destination if they aren't comfortable with being a leader?

CLUB CONTACTS

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND LIABILITY WAIVER

Family Yearly Membership: \$13.00

Make checks payable to: "Rocky Mountaineers"

and send to: Rocky Mountaineers
P.O. Box 4262
Missoula, MT. 59806

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

I have read this release and indemnity agreement and have fully informed myself of its contents before I have signed it. When I join or renew my membership I also sign on to this agreement.

Print Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian if Participant is Under 18 Years of Age

I, (print name) _____ hereby state that I wish to participate in courses and/or activities offered by The Rocky Mountaineers, a non-profit organization. I recognize any outdoors activity may involve certain dangers, including but not limited to the hazards of traveling in mountainous terrain, accidents or illness in remote places, forces of nature, and the actions of participants and other persons. I further understand and agree that without some program providing protection of its assets and its leaders, the Rocky Mountaineers would not be able to offer its courses and activities.

In consideration of and as part payment for the right to participate in the activities offered by The Rocky Mountaineers, I agree to **RELEASE, HOLD HARMLESS, AND INDEMNIFY** The Rocky Mountaineers and its members from any and all liability, claims and causes of action arising out of or in any way connected with my participation, or the participation of any minor that I am signing on behalf of, in any activities offered by The Rocky Mountaineers. I personally assume all risks in connection with these activities. If I am signing on behalf of a minor, I further agree to **RELEASE, HOLD HARMLESS, AND INDEMNIFY** The Rocky Mountaineers and its members from any liability, claims and cause of action, which the minor may have arising from the minor's participation in activities. The terms of this agreement shall serve as a release and indemnity agreement for my heirs, personal representative, and for all members of my family, including any minors. (Parents or Legal Guardians must sign for all persons under eighteen (18) years of age).

Recreational Survey

We would like to end the year by asking people to tell us what you do or don't like about the Club's weekend activities. Please put an X next to each of the following that you are interested in, and circle the ones you'd do as a group activity, and send the response to: Rocky Mountaineers, P.O. Box 4262, Missoula, MT 59806; or e-mail to: rockymountaineers@hotmail.com.

Hike ___ Camp ___ Backpack ___ Rock Climbing ___ Mountain Biking ___ Trail Running ___

Peak Bagging ___ Whitewater ___ Plants and Wildlife ___ Old Lookouts ___ Ski Touring ___

Backcountry Skiing and Telemarking ___ Ice Climbing ___ Snowshoeing ___ State High Points ___

Other Interests _____

Do you prefer activities to last: A day or less ___ Overnight ___ Multi day ___?

Would you like the activities to be: Close to town ___ A few hours away ___ Long distance ___?

Would you like activities that are: Family oriented ___ For individual adults ___ Couples ___?

Would you like more details in the Newsletter, like distance and elevation, and ranking trips easy, moderate, hard? Yes ___ No ___

Would you like the club to get more involved in conservation and environmental issues ___, or focus on recreation ___?

Are you a member of the Rocky Mountaineers? Yes ___ No ___.

Thank you for helping us plan our activities.

UPCOMING TRIPS

March 9th

We are planning another fun outing with kids and grand kids. Others are welcome to come and ski. We are thinking of doing some cross country skiing, followed by a swim in Lolo Hot Springs. We'll probably go up the Granite Pass Road, where there are some big openings with neat snowboard runs. The kids will probably want to ski farther than we do. Call Cathy Burleson at 543-9558 or Julie Warner at 543-6508 for information. We'll meet at K-Mart at 10:30, at the Quick Stop in Lolo at 11, or at Lolo Pass at 11:30.

March 16th

We are doing a ski-hike down the Lee Creek drainage near Lolo Pass with the Sierra Club and interested people. This is a moderate 8 mile point to point trip starting high along the Bitterroot divide and dropping through mixed forests and clear cuts. It closely follows the Lewis and Clark Trail. Sorry, no dogs.

Bob Clark, local Conservation Organizer for the Sierra Club will give a brief update on the current threat future Plum Creek land sales present to this area.

For more information call Julie Warner, trip leader, at 543-6508 or Bob at 549-1142 for more on preserving the area. We will meet in the south end of the K-Mart parking lot on Brooks St. at 9:00 AM.

March 23rd

We'd like to do a full day skiing if it stays cold enough. And we'd like to try someplace different, near Seeley Lake or Garnet Road. But this depends on the snow conditions. Call Karen Apland at 542-3737 for details.

March 26th

Ski the Packer Meadow Loop at Lolo Pass. This eight mile groomed trail should be very quiet in the middle of the week. It is gentle going uphill but has some fun downhill sections. Call Fred Schwanneman at 542-7372 for information.

March 29th or 30th

Call one of the officers for information

April 6th

Hike the Bear Dance Trail along Flathead Lake, assuming it thaws out early. This trail winds its way up the hillside for about three to four miles near Woods Bay, and ends in a logging area. It does steadily gain elevation, roughly 1750'. There is a great view of the lake below. There is also some access to the lake shore in this area. It is north of the reservation so no permits are needed. Meet at the Town and Country Shopping Center on West 3rd and Russell at 10:00 AM or call Steve Schombel at 721-4686 for information.



Rocky Mountaineers
P. O. Box 4262
Missoula, MT 59806

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