

MOUNTAIN EAR

Monthly Newsletter of the Rocky Mountaineers

February, 2006 Missoula, Montana

The Rocky Mountaineers is a non-profit club organized to promote all types of recreational use of mountainous areas.



February 9th, Wednesday: Caving

Alpine Caving In Austria and Poland

(Alps and West Tatra Mountains)

By Joe Oliphant

The Alps has the greatest concentration of the deepest caves in the World. The West Tatra Mountains has the deepest caves in Poland (-800 meters). In February, Joe Oliphant will give a presentation on his fall 2005 European caving trip. Besides caving in Poland and Austria the presentation will also include surface shots of the alpine settings and a few slides on Polish history including some WW II concrete bunkers that the cavers/climbers train on around Warsaw. A brief discussion on some of the massive WW II grave sites and some of the wartime sites around Warsaw will be shown.

During this trip Joe also brought back a rare primitive breed puppy (Russo-European Laika). The puppy, a Russian bear dog, is named after the fourth brightest star, Arcturus. Arcturus will also make an appearance at the end of the presentation.

From the President:

We have had some good news from the local recreational front recently. They are starting to construct Brennan's Wave downtown, and they are finalizing plans for the removal of Milltown Dam, which will lead to more trails and free flowing streams nearby. The Lolo National Forest has come up with a plan that, while not perfect, will preserve a lot of backcountry areas with the quiet recreation opportunities so many of us enjoy, but there is still a lot of work to be done. In February there will be some opportunities to comment on transportation plans. It would be

great if a lot of you would speak up for more bike and walking trails. One example would be the Bitterroot Branch Trail, which seems to have hit a dead end at North Avenue because of the Malfunction Junction reconstruction. Another is the trail to Frenchtown. Some way has to be found to get across Reserve Street. Also in February people are being asked to write the Governor and tell him how you would like to see roadless lands managed in the future. Hopefully most of you will want them to remain as they are now. The Lolo National Forest should have their Forest Plan Revisions ready for the last round of public comments sometime late in March. The above is just a small sample of the many issues going on right now.

We also have some good news about the Club. We do have a better variety of trips, and attendance has been good on some of them. We have had great attendance at the monthly meetings and have had some very entertaining presentations. We do have a hard working team which has produced brochures and talked about fund raising. We continue to produce a good website and a top quality newsletter, but there is still some work to be done. We are planning to have a contest to design a new logo. Overall the attendance on trips hasn't been as good as we hoped. We need to reconvene the group that wants to fix up the cabin and make detailed plans. Then we need to recruit some workers. Most of all we need to find some new people willing to serve as officers, editors, or committee members.

On balance, the club is moving in the right direction – upward. How appropriate for a mountaineering club. I thank all of you for your energy and enthusiasm.

Steve Schombel

Special Event, April 29, 2006:

Mario Locatelli is putting together an endurance hike up Little St. Joseph Peak on April 29th to raise funds for an Eagle Scout project by Dallas Fadely. The \$50 fee to join Mario's Mountain Goat Club will all go toward the project. Dallas is proposing a picnic table shelter at the Bass Creek/Charles Waters Campground, and a picnic table and benches at the trailhead. Contact Mario for more information at 406-363-1262.

For the whole story, go to:

<http://missoulian.com/articles/2006/01/21/news/local/news05.txt>

Upcoming Trips

February 11, Saturday: Gash Point- Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness- Ski or snowshoe- If the trailhead can be achieved by vehicle, this is about an eight mile round trip to an 8886' summit. Great tele skiing on the way back down. Bill Martin 829-1988.

February 17-20, Fri-Mon: Waterton Ice Climbing-Stage Two-

Friday the 17th: travel to & meet in Radium

Sat 18 & Sun 19: climb at Haffner Creek, Louise Falls or Johnston Canyon in Banff & maybe Mt. Stanley (all grade 3 & 4 stuff, Haffner has mixed routes) or other routes in the Columbia Valley

Monday the 20th: climb at Gibraltar Wall (grade 3-4) and drive back.

Most of us plan to stay at:

PINEWOOD MOTEL

Radium Hot Springs, British Columbia

Toll free: 1-888-557-5567

Phone: (250)347-9529 Fax: (604)677-6673

Email: pinewoodmotel@radiumhotsprings.com

Send me an email and I will try to suggest /coordinate car pool & lodging arrangements.

Jim Cossitt, at: jhckal@yahoo.com

Home 406-756-6818 Work 406-752-5616

February 18-20, Sat.-Mon: Glacier Park- We will head to West Glacier on Saturday and participate in the naturalist led snowshoe trip that was featured in the Outdoors section of the Missoulian a few weeks ago. Then we will inquire locally about good ski touring for Sunday and Monday morning. Call Steve Schombel at 721-4686 if you want to meet up with us.

February 22, Wednesday: Lolo Pass- Fred Schwanemann will lead a cross country ski trip around Moose Ridge Loop at Lolo Pass. The loop is 14 miles long and the gradual altitude change is 1000 feet (5,000-6,000 feet). It should take from 5-6 hours. For more info., call Fred at 542-7372.

February 24, Friday: Ward Mtn.-Bitterroots- Will follow the general route of the trail just southwest of Hamilton up to the 9119' summit. Skiers or snowshoers welcome. Elevation gain is about 4800' - assuming a start at the trailhead. Contact: Forest Dean at 240-7612, 721-6384 or e-mail fdean@midlandimplement.com

March 3-5: Mount Rockwell-Glacier N. P.- Assuming the conditions are okay, will leave Missoula early Friday morning. Two nights in backcountry- hopefully near Rockwell Falls (running water?). On Saturday will attempt climb of Mt. Rockwell (9272')- if that fails, Grizzly Mountain (9067') can be a secondary option- or an addition. Roundtrip mileage will be around 25 miles- depending on where Two Medicine road is plowed. Elevation gain is 4000-4400'. Ski's, winter camping skills, a warm bag, ice axe, and crampons needed. Additional gear will possibly include: avalanche equipment, a rope and climbing gear. Alternate date will be the following weekend. Contact: Forest Dean at 240-7612, 721-6384 or e-mail fdean@midlandimplement.com

June 22-25: Mount Rainier- Sunset Ridge- This is tentative right now, but if anyone has interest let me know. Disclaimer: This is my first attempt to climb this mountain- I am certainly not in position to serve as a guide. I am looking to 2-3 others willing to share glory/defeat in what looks to be a lesser used side of the mountain. Contact: Forest Dean at 240-7612, 721-6384 or e-mail fdean@midlandimplement.com

Trip Reports

January 13-16, Waterton Ice Climbing- 2nd annual MLK Canada ice climbing trip took place, based this year out of Radium Hot Springs, British Columbia. Radium Hot Springs, a wonderful little town with all the amenities, is nestled in the center of the Columbia Valley with three major downhill ski resorts within an hour, a superb hot spring to soak the sore muscles away, some great Nordic skiing and of course a ton of great ice climbing.

Five members of GMS came along with three guests. The members were Jim Cossitt, Ronnie Laudati, Deborah Pratt (Bozeman) and Jim and Deb Foster. The guests were Tammi Filliater (Helena), Grant and Ryan. Grant is Ronnie's son and Ryan is a friend of Grant's. The boys came up to go riding" (that's snowboarding for most of us) at a couple of ski resorts.

Everyone made it through customs with no incidents and home safely. A really great weekend. We know where we are going next year for the GMS 3rd annual MLK Canada ice climbing trip. *Jim Cossitt*

January 15, Sunday: Lolo Pass Ski Trip- I got more calls about the Lolo Pass ski trip than for any I have done for a long time, but only several of the regulars, Dave and Julie Kahl, Fred Schwanemann, Cathy Burlison and Michael Bowles, plus Bill and Vera Meyers, showed up at the meeting place. We were joined in Lolo by three people from the Bitterroot x-country ski club: Janis Cooper, Barb Hixon and Jill Davis. The snow at the pass is wonderful. There were good snowmobile paths to follow all the way down, and the temperature was about right with only a few flakes falling during the day. Everyone skied at their own pace, and we all reached the bottom without much waiting around. And best of all, it was a quiet day, with no snowmobiles encountered past the Moose Pass Road junction and only a few skiers going up or down. I hope some of the newcomers will join us more often. *Steve Schombel*

January 20-22: Electric Peak- Yellowstone National Park- Steve Niday had originally planned a trip to Glacier this weekend, but after realizing that yet another winter storm was bearing down on the Park, we decided to give Electric Peak in Yellowstone a try. After about a four hour drive to the Paradise Valley, we had the pleasant discovery of a trailhead right on the north Yellowstone NP boundary. Our Topo maps showed a forest road beginning here, but looked to be on private property. Apparently the Gallatin National Forest purchased this large block of property in recent years allowing public access on both sides of the Park boundary, and allowing us to ski up the road. Starting at about 5200' we hiked about a mile before putting on ski's and heading up the old road to a ridgetop. Very hard to get lost in this country as the Park has put up marker posts every 30-40 yards along its boundary. The snow was powdery but dense, so the going difficult- we arrived at our camp at 8300' about 5:00 PM- right on the Park boundary (the map shows a spring here, but we didn't find any running water)- distance traveled about 4.3 miles. The next morning we continued the ascent along a forested ridge leaving camp about 8:30. Between 9000-9500' we got out of the open forest and above treeline onto a very windy cold ridge, which we continued up and to the south to about 10,400' where we took off the ski's and cut across a snow bowl to a saddle separating the eastern summit from a false summit to the west. From there we picked a way up another 400' to the summit. At one point on this final pitch Steve put his ski pole into a cornice and watched it fall into space below and two feet to his left. All day the mountain had been mostly socked in by clouds, but remarkably as we summited the sun popped out. After a few pictures at and near the summit (10,992') we descended back the way we came. Distance from camp to summit was 4.0 miles. Arrived back in camp about 3:30. A cold night followed (-5 degrees), then a quick 2 hour trip back to car. *Notes:* In our opinions, this was a very worthwhile mountain, with a mixed bag of travel- especially in winter. This peak can be done in a day via our route in summer, and even

Trip Reports

in winter with an early start- probably best enjoyed as a two day trip though if coming from the west. We took and used ice axes for crossing the snow bowl and ascending the final summit. Brought crampons as well, but didn't use- however, may need if snow is hard packed.

Forest Dean

January 21, 2006: Lolo Kid's Trip- Scattered enjoyment was the theme for the Kid's Ski and Sled day. Four parties embarked from Missoula. Pasty O'Keeffe, son Geoff Easton and granddaughter Lily Easton (2 1/2) found parking at Lolo Pass, but Lily was overwhelmed by the activity and after a brief trip back to the sled hill they returned to town. The Schombels, Steve, Kathy and Michael, didn't find parking at Lolo Pass and headed down to Lee Creek to ski there and then go to Lolo Hot Springs. Barbara Ross and young charges, Justin and Jennifer Shackelford, turned back from Lolo Pass to park about 2 miles down in a pullout to sled and ski up a logging road. They were still there and having a great time about 4:00 PM when the fourth party, David and Julie Kahl and granddaughter Abby Roth (9) came down to stop at Lolo Hot Springs. It had been Abby's first time skiing and she did very well in great conditions to learn to ski. Her mother Becky Roth joined us at the hot springs to end a fine day. *Julie Kahl*

January 21, Saturday: Lolo Peak- according to an anonymous source, Bill Martin's trip to Lolo Peak turned into a vehicle rescue due to extremely icy roads. Ask Bill for the gut-wrenching details. Speaking from first hand experience, never go into the mountains without tire chains. Also, make sure they fit before you need them. *S. Niday*

January 28, Saturday: Bobcat Creek- We had fresh snow at Lolo Pass. It was great to see many inches of the fluffy white stuff down lower than we have seen for several years of the drought. We had planned to do a point to point ski from Bobcat Creek down to Fish Creek. Since one of us had to get back early, and it looked like we had lots of trail to break, we decided to take the "low road" between the two points instead of the higher road,

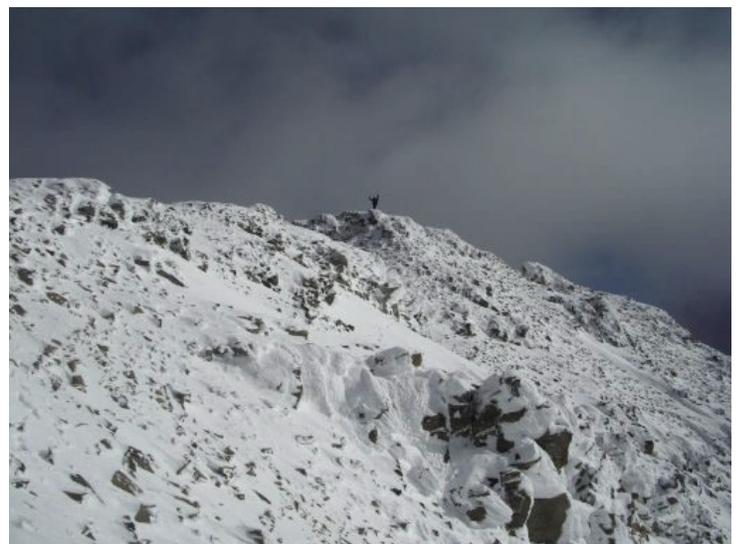
#4200, which is on the map. We made great time, and reached the Fish Creek road at about 1:30, so we extended the trip by following the snowmobile route up Fish Creek to the bridge and then back to the parking lot. It was a great day, with gentle snow falling off and on. Participants were: Fred Schwanemann, Mike McKeegan, Lois Crepeau, Dave Kahl and Steve Schombel. *Steve Schombel*

Thanks to member Jim McLean for the \$20.00 donation. It may not be tax deductible, but you can apply it to your Karma account.

Space filler photos



Windy ridge on the way to Electric Peak



Forest Dean on top, you had to be there.

ROCKY MOUNTAINEER'S CLASSIC SERIES

Below is a schedule of the next seven outings. For more information, or to offer to lead one of these outings, please contact Steve Schombel (721-4686) or Forest Dean (721-6384) or the listed trip leader.

FEBRUARY: Gash Point- Selway- Bitterroot Wilderness- Leader: Bill Martin;
Date: Saturday, 11th; Category: Ski or snowshoe
If the trailhead can be achieved by vehicle, this is about an eight mile round trip to an 8886' summit.
Great tele skiing on the way back down.
Bill Martin- 829-1988

MARCH: Wisherd Ridge- Rattlesnake National Recreation Area- Leader: TBA
Date: Saturday, 11th; Category: Ski or snowshoe

APRIL: Trapper Peak- Selway- Bitterroot Wilderness- Leader: Forest Dean;
Date: Saturday, 1st; Category: Ski or snowshoe

MAY: Stuart Peak- Rattlesnake Wilderness- Leader: TBA;
Date: Saturday, 20th; Category: Hike

JUNE: Squaw Peak- Nine Mile/Reservation Divide area- Leader: TBA;
Date: Saturday, 24th; Category: Scramble

JULY: Lolo Peak- Selway- Bitterroot Wilderness- Leader: TBA;
Date: Saturday, 22nd; Category: Scramble

AUGUST: Glacier Classic- Glacier National Park- Several trip offerings will be available.
Dates: 18-20.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND LIABILITY WAIVER

Family Yearly Membership: \$20.00 - paper newsletter
Family Yearly Membership: \$10.00 - electronic newsletter
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.

Print Name

Signature/Date

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

Club Contacts

Website: www.rockymountaineers.com
e-mail: rockymountaineers@hotmail.com

Mailing Address: The Rocky Mountaineers
PO Box 4262
Missoula MT 59806

President: Steve Schombel 721-4686
ssbell@montana.com

Vice-President: Forest Dean home: 721-6384 or
cell: 240-7612
fdean@midlandimplement.com

Secretary: Frank Kleschen 728-4793
fkfc98@yahoo.com

Treasurer: Julie Kahl 543-6508
jawkal@hotmail.com

Newsletter editor: Steve Niday 721-3790
seniday@yahoo.com

Webmaster: Alden Wright
alden@wrightmontana.net



The Rocky Mountaineers
PO Box 4262
Missoula MT 59806

