

THE PACKRAT

ROCKY
MOUNTIAN



RAMBLERS
ASSOC.

June - July 1999

ACTIVITIES: Hiking, Backpacking, Skiing, Cycling, Climbing, Scrambling, Mountaineering, Educational and Awareness Programs, Social Functions.

MEETINGS: Every Wednesday evening at 7:30 p.m.
Rosemont Community Hall, 2807 - 10 Street N.W.

MAIL: Rocky Mountain Ramblers Association
c/o Calgary Area Outdoor Council (CAOC)
1111 Memorial Dr. N.W.
Calgary, Alberta
T2N 3E4

TRIP INFO: 282-6308 Hotline and at meetings.

RMRA EXECUTIVE 1998 - 1999

President	Anita O'Reilly
Vice President	Garry Denman
Past President	Bob St. John
Trips Director	Ron Hunter
Treasurer	Chris Saunders
Secretary	Ron Mason
Social Director	Mary Jane Hradowy
Program Director	Maria Nemethy
Newsletter Editor	Suzanne Costaschuk

EDITOR'S NOTE

SOCIAL EVENTS

by Mary Jane Hradowy

The ski season is definitely over now (sigh), but if this summer is as good as the last one, we should get a lot of mileage on our hiking boots again. The club is still growing and new coordinators are coming in, so get ready for lots of trips going out this summer. The last week of May we held two special events for our new members: the Open House at the Wednesday meeting, and the Open House Skills Day on the weekend at Sibbald Lake. They were both great success and fun. If you are a new member and have missed both these events, do not despair because the Ramblers' Stampede Breakfast is coming on July 10, and you will get your chance of meeting your fellow Ramblers. I would like to thank Louise Richard for her excellent work as the Packrat Editor for the last 9 months. We will miss you!

Enjoy the summer, it is so short after all.

Yahoo!



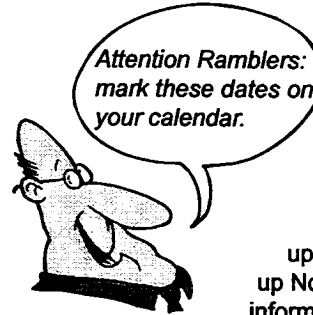
Social Events.....	page 2
How to climb a mountain	page 2
President's message.....	page 3
Upcoming backpacks.....	page 3
Hostels: a great deal	page 4
Backpacking buying guide	page 5
Coordinators Council	page 6
Survey results	page 7

Mahatma Gandhi walked barefoot throughout the countryside so much that his feet became very hard and calloused. His diet was spare, and he was extremely thin as a result. To keep going, he tried to carry a little bit of garlic with him at all times and chew on it for energy and clarity of thought.

Thus, Gandhi became known as the...
Super Calloused Fragile Mystic
Blessed with Halitosis.



Interested in advertising in the Packrat? Please inquire about our reasonable rates to Chris Saunders



Attention Ramblers:
mark these dates on
your calendar.

July 10 - Stampede Breakfast will be hosted this year by Suzanne Costaschuk, Claret Street NW, from 9 a.m. to 12:00. After the breakfast and clean up there will be a walk or hike up Nose Hill. For further information call Suzanne or Mary Jane

or check the Ramblers' hotline under Social (press 3).

Sept. 17-19 - Annual Car Camp at Ethrington Campground. Stay tuned for further details. Coordinator is Del Trewinard

If anyone is interested in Rosebud Theatre, a hostel trip to Jasper and/or Fernie, please call Mary Jane Hradowy

HOW TO CLIMB A MOUNTAIN

submitted by David Ladouceur

from Zen and Motorcycle Maintenance
by Robert Pirsig

Mountains should be climbed with as little effort as possible and without desire.

The reality of your own nature should determine the speed.

If you become restless speed up.

If you become winded slow down.

You climb the mountain in equilibrium between restlessness and exhaustion.

Then when you are no longer thinking ahead, each footstep isn't just a means to an end, But a unique event in itself.

This leaf has jagged edges, this rock looks loose.

From this place the snow is less visible even though closer.

These are things you should notice any way.

To live only for some future goal is shallow.

It's the sides of the mountain which sustain life, not the top.

I will gladly publish any article related to the outdoors. If possible, submit articles on a 3 1/2 computer disk, in DOS or Windows format. Email submissions can be made at: scosta@telusplanet.net. Typed articles are also welcome. Disks will be returned at the meeting.

The next Packrat deadline is July 14, 1999.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Anita O'Reilly

This has been a year of change! I would like to thank Mary Jane Hradowy for stepping in as Social Director for the balance of the year. Jean Amat is assisting Chris Saunders in the treasurer's department - a job that has seen a lot of growth as our membership numbers have climbed higher and higher. Thank you, Jean. Louise Richard found it necessary to resign as the Packrat Editor. I thank you, Louise, for your contribution! We appreciate Danielle Tardif's kind offer to publish this newsletter and Suzanne Costaschuk for agreeing to fill the position for the rest of the term.

We've experienced some controversial changes in the last year. Nothing remains the same forever and the Rocky Mountain Ramblers are no exception. As change is not necessarily good if it's only for change, also growth is not good for the sake of bigger numbers. Although we are a club with many new members, I don't believe any of our changes have come about to entice new membership. We hike and ski in different times. I try to imagine how this club will look in 2 years and I can't come up with a picture. The only thing I feel certain of is that it will not be like it was or even like it is. We have so much to learn from our long time members. They know the mountains better than I know the streets in Calgary. Each time I go on a trip I learn by listening and observing. I learn about the landscape and the terrain, I learn what is good to have in my pack and what is useless. I find out about flowers and birds, get photography tips and recipes. I share my opinions on ecology, economy, the environment and other "inconsequential" issues and listen to the opinions of

others. I make new friends and get reacquainted with long term friends. What an exciting, diverse group we are! Happy hiking.



LOST AND FOUND.

Several weeks ago (perhaps 5 to 8) some unfortunate Rambler, riding with me to the trailhead and back, forgot a nice pair of gloves in the trunk of my car.

Please contact John F Schleinich
I will be pleased to hand them over to you free of any storage charges accrued over the many weeks under my roof.

REMINDER: ASSINIBOINE BACKPACK

Ken Park will coordinate a backpack to Mount Assiniboine from September 4 to 8, 1999. Start from Sunshine Village, then on to Citadel Pass, Magog Lake, and end at Watridge Lake. Registration is first come, first served. For more information, check the last edition of the Packrat, or call Ken Park at 244-6809. A trip not to be missed!



BACKPACK TO HIGH UINTAS WILDERNESS

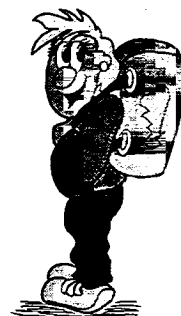
COORDINATOR CARL POTTER

One week trip to high wilderness area of northern Utah.
August 14 - 22, 1999

Five day backpack at high elevations
Trailhead 9,300 feet
Camps at 10,500, 11,200 and 11,300 feet.
Six passes over 11,000 feet
Highest *full load* pass 12,200 feet
Scramble up King's Peak, 13,528 feet, highest in Utah
Total distance 70 km (43 miles)
Total elevation gain 8,950 feet
Spectacular high alpine scenery
Extensive views of Wyoming to north, Utah to south
Circle route

Requirements:

Group size limit will be 10
Participants must be very fit and able to tolerate high elevation for extended period.
Warning: There is no escape route to car in case of elevation-related health problems.
Alternate escape routes may end 100 miles away by road.
Must carry much more gasoline than normal for cooking at such elevation.
Critical to avoid dehydration. Hot sun by day, very cold at night.
Must use water filters or boil water for giardia.
Sunscreen is essential as the dry, thin atmosphere does not effectively screen the sun's ultraviolet rays.
Extensive high altitude hiking/camping training recommended leadin u to tri
Call Carl



HOSTELS: A GREAT DEAL

by Bob St. John

This article gives an overview of hostels and how we can take advantage of the excellent value they offer. The Ramblers have purchased a group membership over the last few years at an annual cost of \$40.00. This enables participants on club trips to get member rates while staying at hostels. This membership gives good value— for example on a ski trip to the Rampart Creek Hostel from January 1st to 3rd 15 participants saved a total of \$120.00 over two nights!

Alberta Hostels are part of Hostelling International, a network of over 5,000 hostels in more than 70 countries. They provide affordable, quality accommodation and services for guests of all ages and nationalities. Most of the hostels in Alberta are in the National Parks: Waterton, Banff, Yoho and Jasper. They vary from relatively luxurious country inns (Banff Hostel, Lake Louise Hostel) with cafes, semi-private rooms, showers, etc. to more rustic accommodation (Rampart Creek, Athabasca Falls) with self serve kitchens and dormitory sleeping cabins. Even the rustic hostels are several steps above the Alpine Club huts in terms of convenience and comfort. Typical member rates are \$11.00 per night for rustic hostels to \$20.00 per night at the fancy hostels. The rates may vary with the season (some have higher rates during the busy summer months), and some hostels may be closed (Beauty Creek) or closed for part of the week during the slower winter months. I prefer using the rustic hostels in the slower fall, winter and spring months when often it seems your group has the hostel to themselves. The following describes what it was like staying at a typical rustic hostel.

In late December I decided to coordinate a trip after New Year's. The Rampart Creek Hostel offered close proximity to several good day trips for skiing (Nigel Pass, Wilcox Pass, Parker Ridge, Glacier Lake) and was open Thursdays to Sundays in the winter season. To reserve space at a hostel you need the Rambler Group Membership number (available from Ron Hunter) and a credit card for the first night's deposit. I initially reserved 8 spaces, but over the next several days increased the spaces to 15 as interest in the trip grew. All hostels are accessible by car and thus considered by Parks Canada to be in the front-country— therefore there are no back-country fees required as for Alpine Club huts. This easy car access has advantages; you can bring as much gear and supplies as you wish. You don't have to skimp on weight as you do with backpacking, thus meals can be as elaborate as you wish.

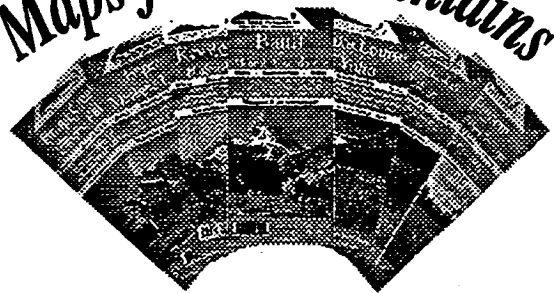
On day 1 we drove to Bow Summit and had good day skiing the easy to intermediate telemark slopes. Some of us as well went on a short, interesting side trip along a bench to an excellent viewpoint above the slopes. In the late afternoon we continued the drive to Rampart Creek

situated 11 km north of Saskatchewan Crossing on the Icefields Parkway (highway 93). The hostel buildings are about 100 meters walking distance from the parking lot. There are two dormitories sleeping 15 each and a central building with kitchen, dining area, and living room/lounge area. A separate building is home to the resident manager. Completing the site are a cozy wood burning sauna and two outdoor latrines. The manager assigned one of the dorms to our group. Some hostels enforce separate dorms for men and women, but this usually applies to the busy summer months when there are many single guests. It made sense for our large group to have our own dorm and the few other guests shared the other dorm.

The sleeping accommodations consisted of bunks stacked three high. If you are agile and like warmer conditions choose a high bunk. If you like it cooler, or get up often in the night, or are clumsy, take a low bunk. Each bunk has a thick mattress with pillows and blankets available. Linen sheets are also available for a modest fee, but most people bring a light sleeping bag for convenience. The dorms are equipped with good propane lighting and heating. Some handy items to bring

continued next page

Maps for the Mountains



Our user-friendly topographic maps are designed specifically for the outdoor enthusiast.

The Canmore & Kananaskis Village and Kananaskis Lakes maps have recently been up-dated and feature:

- ◆ trail distances
- ◆ photos and descriptions of recommended trails
- ◆ shaded relief
- ◆ 25-metre contours
- ◆ waterproof paper

10% discount for Ramblers
See Donna Nelson to order

GEM TREK PUBLISHING
MAPS FOR THE MOUNTAINS

P.O. Box 1618
Cochrane, Alberta T0L 0W0
932-4208
www.gemtrek.com

Available at:
Map Town
Suite 100, 400 5th Avenue S.W.
Mountain Equipment Co-op
U of C Outdoor Program
Hostel Shop
Most Bookstores

BACKPACKING

By David Mulligan

ITEM Example	APPROX. COST	COMMENTS	LOOK FOR
PACK e.g. Serratus Summit Standard	\$200	50 – 70 litres, internal frame Tolerable -> Excessive Body Weight 1/4 -> 1/3 e.g. 40 -> 55 man 160 lbs e.g. 30 -> 40 woman 120 lbs	1. Correct torso (back) length, especially for women 2. Strong material 3. Comfort
TENT e.g. MEC Gothic Arch	\$300	2 person -> weight 7 lbs 7 ft x 5 ft x 3.5 ft	1. Fly comes close to ground 2. Ease of assembly
SLEEPING BAG e.g. MEC Swan DF regular -12°C	\$260	4 lbs -5°C or colder rating e.g. mummy, down	1. Down or synthetic 2. Mummy style 3. Offset stitching
SLEEPING PAD e.g. Thermarest Ultra Lite Long	\$80	Length: 4 ft (short) or 6 ft (long) Thickness: ¾ inch (Lite) or 1 ½ inch (standard) 2 lbs	1. Which length and thickness 2. 4 ft often good for women
BOOTS e.g. Zamberlan Badile e.g. Raichle Roseg	\$300	FIT, FIT, FIT Leather with Vibram sole Max ½ steel shank, or full plastic shank	1. FIT (1/2 inch in toes) 2. Stability
STOVE e.g. MSR Wisperlite Coleman Peak	\$ 100 \$75	Fuel (white gas) 150 ml/person/day (summer) 250 ml/person/day (winter) Wisperlite better in cold temperatures (<10°C) Coleman easier to use	1. Multi-fuel only for outside North America
OTHER		Clothes Food Bear rope (50 ft - 3 mm static) Garbage bags (to keep stuff dry) Water purification – filter, iodine	

continued from previous page

are a head lamp for night time trips to the latrine, earplugs, and some comfortable shoes or slippers to wear indoors.

The main building has a well equipped kitchen with propane lighting, heating, stove, fridge, cupboards for storing food, pots, pans, mugs, plates, bowls, cutlery, etc. There are some simple rules to follow that are well posted- where to put garbage, where to get water (a stream nearby), to cleanup after yourselves, etc. The dining area has cafeteria style seating ideal for groups. The lounge area has comfortable chesterfields and chairs with an assortment of books, cards, and games to keep you entertained. For a group, especially one of our size, it is more efficient to have group dinners than to have everyone cooking on their own. With fifteen people we had 7 cook dinner one night and 8 the next. The dinners turned out to be superb with each person contributing a portion of the meal. This method also allows half the group to have a night off to be pampered by the other half.

Relaxation in the evening can take several forms: conversation, reading or playing cards in the lounge; going for a moonlight ski on the Saskatchewan River flats nearby, or enjoying a sauna. The sauna was an excellent way to sooth any aches and pains from the day's skiing. It consisted of a separate log hut with two rooms: an entrance to change into a bathing suit, and the sauna itself. Inside the sauna a wood burning heater kept stones hot and a tub provided water to

continued on page 6

SPRING COORDINATORS COUNCIL MEETING

By Ron Hunter

The spring meeting was held on May 11 and a number of items of interest were discussed:

1. The responses to the Safety Policies Survey were discussed (see separate article).
 - A motion to adopt the CAA Standard Policy for all trips in avalanche terrain was not passed so we will be retaining the current policy.
 - A motion to adopt the treeline descriptors for the Avalanche Safety Policy carried so the policy shown at the end of this report will now apply.
 - A motion that the minimum required for all RMRA trips be three (3) adult participants was passed.
2. To date we have not paid out any course subsidies. If coordinators or members have taken avalanche awareness, first aid or other courses, please see me for a course reimbursement form. Priorities for reimbursement are firstly, coordinators taking required avalanche awareness or first aid courses (\$30 per course) and then if there are funds available the Coordinators Council may approve pay out to general members for such courses or for other courses that may be relevant, e.g. map reading.
3. Congratulations to Carl Potter, who is now a full Coordinator.
4. Summer Car Rate - A motion was approved that the suggested donation for car pooling be 4 cents per kilometre for the summer.
5. A motion was passed to convert the trip lists of Canadian trips completely to metric to be in line with the way almost all new maps are issued (currently elevations are in feet).

RMRA AVALANCHE SAFETY POLICY TABLE

Regional Avalanche Danger	Non-Avalanche Green Terrain	Avalanche Terrain Below Treeline	Avalanche Terrain Above Treeline
Low	ok	aval equip & training recommended	aval equip & training REQUIRED
Moderate	ok	aval equip & training recommended	aval equip & training REQUIRED
Considerable	ok	aval equip & training recommended	aval equip & training REQUIRED
High	ok	aval equip & training REQUIRED	trip canceled
Extreme	ok	trip canceled	trip canceled

“aval equip” refers to avalanche equipment, which includes transceivers, shovels & probes.

continued from page 5

splash on the stones for a burst of steam. In no time everyone is totally relaxed and merrily sweating away the pounds. For those brave enough a quick roll in the snow outside followed by an even quicker return to the sauna provided added exhilaration.

On day 2 we got up a 7 AM and got ready for the day's skiing. While dinners are best done by groups and can get quite elaborate, breakfasts are usually best when kept simple with each to their own. Two trips were offered: a tour to Nigel Pass or telemark skiing on Parker Ridge and nearby Hilda Ridge. Both trips were successful and enjoyable with everyone returning by car to the hostel around 5 PM. Another great dinner by the other half of the group, and more moonlight skiing, saunas, or lounging completed the day.

Day 3 saw us load up the cars and drive back down highway 93 for a day trip to Crowfoot Pass. With 15 people sharing trail breaking duties the pace was reasonable fast. Clear skies provided more excellent views, and good powder provided a fun downhill run. Dinner in Canmore completed the trip.

In conclusion hostels provide comfortable, convenient, affordable accommodation from which to base day trips from. The experience is more than the sum of the individual day trips. The sharing of great meals, the listening or telling of stories, the relaxation of a sauna, and the hostel environment in general makes for a great holiday experience. Try one of these trips; you will enjoy it!!



SAFETY POLICIES SURVEY A SUMMARY OF 38 RESPONSES

By Gary Denman

Rather than reprint the entire survey, please refer to the April – May 1999 issue of the Packrat.

AVALANCHE SAFETY POLICY - ISSUE 1: Rescue Gear Requirements

Proposal #1: No Policy	1
Proposal #2: CASC Policy	3
Proposal #3: RMRA Revised Policy	21
Proposal #4: CAA Standard Policy	10
No Opinion	3

AVALANCHE SAFETY POLICY - ISSUE 2: Terrain Descriptor

Proposal #1: CASC Terrain Descriptors	5
Proposal #2: Treeline Descriptors	29
No Opinion	4

MINIMUM PARTICIPANTS POLICY

Proposal #1: No Policy	1		
Proposal #2: Single Minimum for All Trips	20	2-person minimum	1 votes
		3-person minimum	8 votes
		4-person minimum	10 votes
		5-person minimum	1 votes
Proposal #3: Trip Dependent Minimums	17		
No Opinion	0		

COORDINATORS SPRING MEETING MAY 11, 1999

Taking these responses into consideration and after much discussion, the coordinators decided to implement the following policies.

Issue 1 Rescue Gear Requirements: Proposal #3 RMRA Revised Policy

This is the existing policy established by the executive on January 25, 1999.

Issue 2 Terrain Descriptor: Proposal #2 Treeline Descriptors

Combining these two policies, the following table will become part of the RMRA Avalanche Safety Policy.

Regional Avalanche Danger	Non-Avalanche Green Terrain	Avalanche Terrain	
		Below Treeline	Above Treeline
Low	Ok	Recommended	REQUIRED
Moderate	Ok	Recommended	REQUIRED
Considerable	Ok	Recommended	REQUIRED
High	Ok	REQUIRED	NO Trip
Extreme	Ok	NO Trip	NO Trip

Minimum Participants Policy: Proposal #2 Single Minimum for All Trips

A Three (3) person minimum for all RMRA trips was adopted.

A special Thanks to Bob StJohn for all the time and effort donated to create this survey.

June - July

KEN'S QUOTABLE QUOTES

"The game of life is not so much in holding a good hand as playing a poor hand well."

— H.T. LESLIE

"I never lost a game. I just ran out of time."

— BOBBY LAYNE

"I think of life as a good book. The further you get into it, the more it begins to make sense."

— HAROLD S. KUSHNER

"The trouble with life in the fast lane is that you get to the other end in an awful hurry."

— JOHN JENSEN

"For fast-acting relief try slowing down."

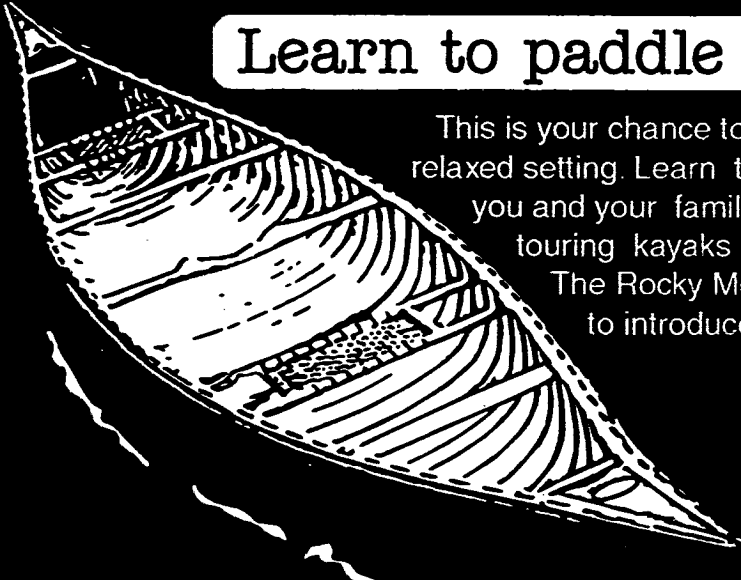
— LILY TOMLIN

"One of the greatest labour-saving inventions of today is tomorrow."

— VINCENT T. FOSS

Submitted by **KEN PARK**

Learn to paddle on the Bowness river



This is your chance to demo several different boats on the river in a relaxed setting. Learn to paddle while finding the boat that best suits you and your families needs. Try a wide selection of canoes and touring kayaks on the Bowness river between noon and 4pm. The Rocky Mountain Paddling Centre staff will be on hand to introduce you to the basics of canoeing and river safety.

Sundays 12 - 4pm
June 20th July 11th
& Aug 8th

totem
PADDLESPORTSCENTRE

We will be bringing some of the new boats out to each session but if you would like to try a certain model just call the store at 264-6363 a day ahead and we will be sure to bring the model you want.

341 10 ave sw (403) 264-6363 // www.totemoutfitters.com