

# THE PACKRAT

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DECEMBER 1999 - JANUARY 2000

**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 1999-2000

President	Garry Denman
President	Danielle Tardif
Past President	Anita O'Reilly
Trips Director	Ron Hunter
Treasurer	Jennifer Oss
Secretary	Linda Eastwood
Social Director	Loris Neff
Programs Director	Carl Potter
Newsletter Editor	Suzanne Costaschuk
Membership*	Jean Amatt

\* Not an elected position.

## EDITOR'S NOTES

Thank you for another term as the Packrat Editor! I will enjoy working on next years' newsletters and look forward to including your interesting and varied articles. The Social Events planned over the next few months will provide fun times and lots of laughs. The programs planned for the Wednesday night over the winter months will provide opportunities to sell those skis you have not been using or perhaps to get good buys. Slide presentation evenings based on the 1960s and 1970s will be interesting. Carl, how about an evening of slides from the 1980s?

This last Packrat of the millennium has letters from Dorothy-Ann Reimer in Peru and the Flanagans in Montreal, plus an article from Alastair DesMoulins on his and Gail's adventures in the Jasper area. Packrat favorite contributor John Schleinich has once again put his thoughts on paper. Wally Drew has written a few anecdotes on longtime Rambler Peter McGill who will be sadly missed by many.

Daneille Tardif has outlined the details on ski-related courses and the need for your suggestions for the Safety Committee. Also on the ski pages are reminders of Dave Mulligans' call to join him on his uplifting and memorable ski trips to the backcountry. Carl Potter's call to have him join him for downhill skiing is simply too good to miss this year.

The deadline for the February-March 2000 newsletter will be Wednesday January 12, 2000. Please sent articles to or hand in a final paper copy or a disc to myself or another executive member at a Wednesday night meeting.

I hope to see you at the Annual Christmas Potluck Dinner or over the holiday season for a little skiing and some really good times.

*Happy Holidays and Best Wishes in the New Year.*  
*Suzanne Costaschuk*

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"The man who is too old to learn was probably always too old to learn."

*—Henry S. Haskins*

## PACKRAT ADVERTISING RATES

### Rates per Issue

¼ page size	-	\$ 10.00
½ page size	-	\$ 20.00
Full page	-	\$ 40.00

## President's Message

By Garry Denman

Wow! Only a few weeks left of this century. It seems like only yesterday those crazy Wright brothers were experimenting with the impossible. The Ramblers have been around for almost half of the nineteen hundreds and with the membership numbers of recent years it looks as if the club will be around for many more.

The club relies on member volunteers for it to remain an active and desirable organization to belong to. There are many opportunities for you to get involved. You need only raise your hand and you will be hired. Try it. It's a lot of fun.

The Annual Dinner and Dance was again a roaring success thanks to the efforts of Mary Jane Hradowy and her helpers.

Thank you, Barb Mitchell for filling in as secretary at the Annual General Meeting.

The new executive is busy with various tasks; re-registering the club as an association, a waiver review committee has been formed and is actively pursuing it's objective, organization of upcoming events (mentioned else where in this newsletter), publishing this edition of the Packrat, and of course tending to the general business of the club. There is a lot of time put in to make this all happen. Thank you to all those involved.

I would like to express my gratitude for your support at the Annual General Meeting. Being president will be a new experience for me. I look forward to the challenge and will act only in the club's best interest.

*May you and your family enjoy a Merry Christmas, and a Healthy and Happy New Millennium.*

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DECEMBER – JANUARY

### KEN'S QUOTABLE QUOTES

"Be like a postage stamp — stick to one thing until you get there."

— MARGARET CARTY

"Is life worth living? That depends on the liver."

— ANONYMOUS

"Ideas are like rabbits. You get a couple and learn how to handle them and pretty soon you have a dozen."

— JOHN STEINBECK

"You can't act like a skunk without someone getting wind of it."

— LORENE WORKMAN

"In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity."

— ALBERT EINSTEIN

"The art of taxation consists of plucking the goose so as to obtain the most feathers with the least hissing."

— JEAN BAPTISTE COLBERT

Submitted by KEN PARK

## SOCIAL EVENTS

*Submitted by: Loris Neff*

Our Annual Awards Dinner and Dance was a great success. Many thanks for the role which Mary Jane Hradowy played in making this evening an enormous success. Over 60 people attended and the following awards were given out:

Congeniality	-	Suzanne Costaschuk
Best Outfit	-	Suzanne Costaschuk
Best Bum Slide	-	Jean Armatt
Chivalrous	-	Dave Mulligan

Special thanks were also expressed to Roger Woodgate and Darlene Weger. Marianne and Tom Flanagan, and Dawn Jones for graciously opening their homes to the Ramblers this past year.

### Forthcoming Events

**December 1, 1999** - Winter Open House  
Wednesday

**December 15, 1999** - Annual Christmas Potluck Dinner - 7:00 PM  
Wednesday  
Bring a food dish (for 6 people), dishes and cutlery. Coffee will be provided.

**January 28, 2000** - Murder Mystery Dinner - Deanne House  
Friday  
806, 9 Ave SE (across Elbow River from Fort Calgary)  
Cocktails - 6:15 pm  
Theatre starts at 7:00 pm  
Dinner - 7:30pm  
Cost per person will be \$50.00

\* So what is a murder mystery dinner? It is the most entertaining kind of theatre. While you enjoy your four course dinner, you eavesdrop on the characters' private conversations, question prime suspects, make deductions and dig for information. You're the detective, sorting out facts from fiction during this evening on murder. Figure out whodunit and why. It is a great evening of fun.

\* If you wish to attend this event or require more information, please call Loris Neff or see me at the meeting on Wednesday evening. Tickets must be paid for by January 19, 2000.

*\* Remember happiness is a journey, not a destination \**

## WINTER OPEN HOUSE

*Submitted by: Carl Potter*

Our Annual Winter Open House will be at 7:30 on Wednesday, December 1. There will be equipment displays on several popular club activities

- \* Trackset cross-country skiing
- \* "Trail" cross-country skiing (i.e. skier set tracks away from the "facilities."
- \* Back country skiing (i.e. telemarking and ski mountaineering)
- Snowshoeing
- Winter safety (transceivers, safety kit, avalanche awareness)
- Winter camping and snow caving

There will be slides of typical club trips (if you have any suitable slides, especially on the easier trips, please call Dave Mulligan )

## Upcoming Programs

**Used equipment sale:** Do you have any winter outdoors equipment you are trying to sell? Then take your old skis, poles, boots, bindings or whatever to the Jan. 12 meeting for a members' used equipment sale

**For Old Time's Sake:** As we settle into the Second Millenium for our club, what better time to reminisce with a slide presentation by member Helga Pattison of Rambers members and trips from the 1960s and 1970s? Do you have any really old slides you would like to add to the presentation? Just like old Corvettes, the older they are the more valuable to the RMRA history buff! Stay tuned for date.

**Northern Reflections.** Member Alastair Des Moulins will present slides on some Northern mountain trips he has taken. Anyone who knows Alastair knows he does some pretty exotic adventures, so these should be a treat, especially for those of us who are only up to a "vicarious" Alastair trip! Alastair has been away from Calgary a lot in the past year or two feverishly working on Y2K compliance programming to ease entry to the new millenium for his clients, but he has still managed to get away to a few different areas.

**Horseshoe Canyon:** On March 22, Leila Nodwell will share with us her vision of protecting the Horseshoe Canyon badlands near Drumheller. Without any government subsidy, she has built an interpretive centre overlooking the canyon and short hiking trails along the rim and into the canyon. She has engaged local residents in restoring a patch of native prairie plants and grasses on the former cultivated field, and the Blackfoot Nation in a native cultural display. Her dream is achieving World Heritage Site status for the canyon, which protects flora otherwise found only hundreds of miles farther south. Horseshoe Canyon is a favorite springtime haunt for Ramblers hikers.

**RMRA trips  
October/98 -  
September/99**

Coord.	cycle	Hikes				downhill	snows hoe	X-C ski				Total
		mtneer	Offtrail	scram ble	trail			mtneer	offtrail	tracks et	trail	
Campbell	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Croasdale	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Denman	1	0	4	6	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	15
Drew	0	0	5	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
Fischer, B.	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Fischer, P.	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Fritz	0	0	1	3	7	0	1	0	0	0	0	12
Fryling	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Hradovy	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Hunter	0	0	2	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Jones	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	7	12
Kittle	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Ladouceur	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Lavallee	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Logos	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Mason	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	5
Moran	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	3
Mulligan	0	0	1	4	1	0	0	3	2	0	0	11
Noer	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	0	0	5
O'Reilly	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	1	0	11
Park	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	0	1	0	0	6
Polt	0	0	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Potter	1	0	5	1	16	2	0	0	0	1	2	28
Powley	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Reid	0	0	6	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	10
Reimer	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Ross	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Safety Comm	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sargent	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Saunders	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	6
Schleinich	0	0	8	1	9	0	0	0	0	3	2	23
Sinclair	0	0	6	0	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	24
St. John	0	2	6	11	0	0	0	1	3	1	2	26
Tardif	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Watson	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Weger	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	5
Westcott	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Wolters	0	0	3	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>276</b>

# **RMRA TRIPS DIRECTOR ANNUAL REPORT 1998 / 1999**

*Submitted by: Ron Hunter*

This past year was another successful season despite a rather late spring, especially in the high country. In terms of activity we had 276 trips called & 2,763 person-days, which was slightly up from the previous year. Hikes were about the same, cross-country ski, downhill ski and snow - shoeing were up a bit and cycling trips were down. A list of all trips from this past year is posted on the bulletin board.

We had 37 different people coordinate trips this past year, of which 11 had ten or more trips. Ten coordinators had 100 or more person days of activity led by John Schleinich, Bob St.John, Carl Potter and Alastair Sinclair with over 200 person-days each. These four took out more than 20 trips each, which represents a pretty heavy commitment of time by them to provide trips for members. Barb Fischer had the dubious honour of coordinating the non-bus trip that attracted the most participants (40), while Mary Jane Hradowy had the joy of coordinating a bear encounter.

We have some coordinators to congratulate; Carl Potter, Richard Powley, Jim Ross and Mary Jane Hradowy became Full Coordinators, while Peter Bradbury became a Probationary Coordinator.

In summary, I think we can thank the Coordinators for a lot of interesting and varied trips and I will be looking forward to more of the same in the coming year.

## **Addendum to the report:**

I neglected to mention at the annual meeting that six coordinators received Silver pins for their coordinating efforts in providing varied and interesting trips: Gary Denman, Barb Fischer, Ken Park, Rita Polt, Carl Potter and Chris Saunders.

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*If you want to know what your true beliefs are—  
Take a look at your actions.*

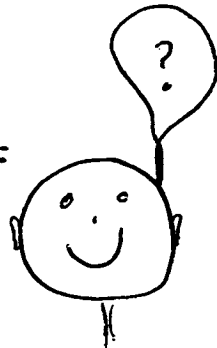
*Winning requires shifting your emphasis  
From won't power to willpower.*

*Stop sweating the small stuff because,  
100 years from now, no one will care!*

*Winners are ordinary people  
with extraordinary determination.*

*Winners never quit  
Quitters never win.*

*All written by Dr Robert Anthony.*



**ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION  
STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES  
FOR  
YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 1999.**

	1999	1998
<b>INCOME</b>		
MEMBERSHIPS	5,280	5,430
SOCIAL EVENTS - NET OF EXPENSES	152	(153)
REFRESHMENTS - NET OF EXPENSES	(70)	47
PRODUCT SALES - NET OF EXPENSES	104	10
INTEREST INCOME	169	206
	5,635	5,540
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
RENT	1,733	1,600
PACKRAT EXPENSES - NET OF ADVERTISING REVENUE	1,806	1,971
SEMINARS & COURSES - NET OF RECOVERIES	120	116
TELEPHONE	461	500
PRINTING, POSTAGE & STATIONERY	558	286
MISCELLANEOUS	156	296
DONATIONS	450	-
BANK CHARGES	148	98
	5,432	4,867
<b>EXCESS OF EXPENSES OVER INCOME</b>	204	673
<b>BALANCE SHEET</b>		
CASH AT BANK	5,456	5,475
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	793	653
	6,250	6,128
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	-	82
<b>CAPITAL ACCOUNT</b>		
OPENING BALANCE	6,046	5,373
INCOME FOR THE YEAR	204	673
	6,250	6,128

Prepared by C.Saunders, Treasurer

We have examined the accounting records of the Rocky Mountain Ramblers Association for the year ended September 30, 1999 and in our opinion the financial statements express fairly the financial position of the Association as of September 30, 1999 as recorded in the records and are on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

F.Appleyard

A.Desmoulins



*Love makes all hard hearts gentle.  
Old Proverb.*



*Women and maidens must be praised,  
whether truly or falsely.  
German Proverb*



*There are two things a real man likes —  
danger and play; and he likes woman because  
she is the most dangerous of playthings.  
Nietzsche*





# **SOBREVIVIR**

*Submitted by: Dorothy-Ann Reimer*

In Spanish, the word 'sobrevivir' means 'to survive' and that is precisely how I felt after my weekend in the Huaylas valley about 400 km north of Lima. A great experience but somewhat hard on the constitution.

We left Lima at 10:15 p.m., bound for the city of Huaraz. Yes, I said p.m. We drove all night in a van, 25 people including driver, helper, and 2 guides (man & wife). We were stopped by police no less than 8 times for some deemed breach of law for which our driver paid the 'fine', fuming all the while.

The road follows the coast for 200 km then heads inland to climb 4000 m through the Cordillera Negra, so called because, unlike the snowy Cordillera Blanca on the east side of the Huaylas, it remains snow free all year round. Once in the mountains we wound up and up, hairpin curve after hairpin curve, full moon overhead and it was the most spectacular trip I think I have ever done. Finally, around 4 a.m., I was able to sleep for an hour or so but by 5:30 a.m. we were cresting the top. The cold crept in, the front window started to freeze up (it was the 'helper's' job to keep it clear, no defrosters, of course). But again, spectacular views.

At long last, the hotel in Huaraz by 7:45 and we were allowed to rest until 9 a.m. Whoopee! Now our day really began. We drove north up the valley, stopping at various villages. Lunch found me already suffering from lack of sleep and 'soroche' or elevation sickness had caught up with me. My appetite disappeared, I was too tired even to speak, barely able to sit upright.

Still to come was the climb up though a scoured-out valley to Laguna Llanganuco, at a mere 3850m. The road is narrow, gravel with lots of steep precipices to look over, as it follows the edge of a valley gouged out by the terrible 1970 earthquake-generated avalanche that destroyed the town of Yungay below and took the lives of almost the entire population of 26,000. The lakes lie nestled below vertical cliffs with the Huascarán peak looming above – the highest mountain in Peru at 6768 m.

Eventually we did return to our hotel, about 7:30 p.m. Needless to say, no one talked about partying or even supper. Straight to bed and out like a light for over 8 hours. That is what soroche can do to the human body.

So what could be more tiring than this! Day 2, that's what. First we visited the exotic Puya Raymondi plant. This looks like an enormous century plant or an inverted palm tree, 6 to 8 m tall. Here I knew we were over 3700 m because these things don't grow below that.

Next? We continued upwards, travelling on a road to one of the Andean mines, to reach the famous Nevada Pastoruri or Pastoruri Glacier. Here the parking lot is at 4800 m. But the glacier is another 1½ km and is even higher at 5000 m. At this elevation even walking very slowly is exhausting. The pace was - walk a hundred metres, stop and rest, walk another hundred metres and another rest. Most people rode up on donkeys but I chose to walk (I had to maintain Rambler standards, didn't I?). At the 1 km viewpoint (also at 5000 m) I stopped to rest before walking back. I was too tired even to ask someone to take my picture to prove that I'd made it.

Finally, I returned to the van and this was the more spectacular view: a broad plateau that gradually dropped downwards within a ring of mountains. As I waited for the others my thoughts were on what can happen to a person who stays too high for too long. To cope, I ate more lemon candies, took a bit more fluid until at long last the group was collected and we were all ready to leave. Almost everyone had a headache and several were very sick. One woman never even got out of the van. I was actually in pretty good shape and could eat a small amount of food later. But again no one was interested in partying when we got back to Huaraz and it was another early night for all.

Our reward was a rest day for our last one in this mountain town. While the others went to the thermal baths at Monterrey, I toured the tiny Ancash Archaeological Museum with its large and delightful collection of Chavan carved stone figures.

Then, just when I was at last becoming acclimatized to the elevation, it was time to return to Lima and the mundane world of earning a living.

As some of you know, Gail and I were away from Calgary from early April 1998 to the end of August 1999. We spent 9 months last year working in sunny Regina from where I wrote 2 Pack Rat articles and the first 8 months of this year we spent in Edmonton. Edmonton is much closer to the mountains than Regina but it is still a four hour drive to Jasper. We got to know Highway 16 west from Edmonton fairly well. We did 14 weekend trips to the mountains - two exploratory driving trips, 5 overnight ski trips and 7 backpacks. Of the latter 12, we did 6 trips in the Wilmore Wilderness, 4 in the area south of Cadomin and just 2 in Jasper Park. The first trip to the Park was at Easter when we skied to the Shovel Passes from Maligne Lake and had our best snow of the season. The Wilmore and the areas east get snowpacks similar to the foothills here. The trip I'm going to describe here is the only backpack we did in the Park.

The weather forecast for August 21-22 was a perfect clear sunny weekend. We decided we would do another lightweight backpack (using our 45 litre daypacks and not carrying a tent) like the one 2 weeks earlier where we spent the night on top of a 7500 foot ridge in the Wilmore. As usual we got the packing done on Thursday night. Friday we left town at about 6pm and headed west on the now familiar road - the temperature was nearly 30C as forecasted. It's divided highway for 390km to about 10km west of Hinton but even on holiday weekends there is less traffic on #16 west of Entwistle than on highway #1 to Banff in November! We got gas in Edson as usual then drove through Hinton and then north up Highway #40 a short way to find a place to park for the night.

Saturday morning dawned cool and cloudy - now a forecast of cloud and showers but clearing for Sunday. Would it clear on Saturday evening or Sunday morning? The forecast is never that specific, but for us sleeping without a tent that would make a lot of difference! We then drove back to Highway 16 and west into Jasper Park. We then drove up the road from Pochontas to Miette Hotsprings. Although we were backpacking in the Park we did not need a permit as we would spend the night east of the Park boundary. The plan was to do a loop trip following the trail south from the springs, over a pass and down to the Fiddle River then follow the trail further upstream before heading east to Slide Mountain. Sunday we would follow the broad ridge north west then bushwack down a side valley to meet the Mystery Lake Trail and return to the Hotsprings from the east.

We set off at about 10.15. There was a note on

the map at the trailhead saying that the trail to where we were going was not maintained after 5km and that there was no trail from the pass east of the Hotsprings to the Fiddle River - that was our proposed return route. As both trails are in the Canadian Rockies Trail Guide I decided we should stick to our route plan and find the old trails. We passed the ruins of the original hotsprings buildings and followed the good trail through the trees up 1000 feet to what the Park calls Fiddle Pass then we were on unmaintained trail but there was little difference in the quality of the trail. We then descended 1000 feet fairly steeply to the Fiddle River. Good views up and downstream from here so we had our first food-stop. The weather was still cool and clouds were building to the west. We followed the good trail upstream for about 8 kilometres. We then left the trail and crossed the Fiddle River which was no more than knee deep. After another snack we headed into the trees and found some animal trails to follow east up a side valley towards Slide Mountain. The valley then, like many Jasper area valleys, became full of large willows so we headed up onto the ridge on the south side of the valley where it was easier going. The weather did not look good and it began to spit some rain. It was about 14.30 and I decided we should cook supper while waiting to see what the weather was going to do before heading higher. Having supper at lunchtime is something I do sometimes especially if I'm planning to camp high or in a place with no water. The weather cleared as we ate and we continued up the ridge then had about 1/2km of steep traversing through trees to reach a tributary of the side valley. We filled our water bottles - 5 litres total, got above the trees (treeline is at 6000 - 6500 feet here) and followed the mostly dry stream-bed up towards the peak. We then had a choice of going up to a gap between the two summits or going to a col to the north. We chose the latter. The temperature seemed to drop suddenly and we could see more cloud developing behind us to the west. We kept on going up and reached the 7300 foot north col. There had been no sign of thunderhead development all day so I was not too concerned but it was cold with a strong wind so we put on most of our clothing. We climbed up to the 7800 foot summit reaching it at about 18.15; we did not linger long as precipitation of some kind was approaching fast. We headed down the east side a short way hoping to find some shelter, however when we had dropped about 200 feet the hail started and we were in cloud so we sat and waited it out the worst of it. We remembered the trip of two weeks earlier when we had to wait for the rain and thunder to

finish before climbing up the last 1000 feet to our summit camp. When the hail eased off I went to search for some shelter. Nearby on the east slope of the mountain I found an ideal spot which was protected from wind on 2 sides - what a difference!! As we were creating a sleeping platform and a wall for further protection the weather cleared - a fine rainbow appeared to the east but a few feet away the wind continued blowing as strong as ever. Now we had a good sheltered spot for the night with an easy fast descent route below us if we needed it and a wind free zone assuming it did not change to an easterly!! We made tea and had some more lunch! Gail got in her sleeping bag, I went back up to the summit to enjoy the last light on the mountains in the wind.

We had a good sleep. I had to get up at about 3.00 am as usual but was rewarded by seeing the aurora borealis in the form of an arc right across the sky to the north. Soon after 6.00 I was back on the summit, watching the sun climbing up into the cloudless sky. The wind was much less strong. We had our breakfast, packed up, dismantled the walls and set off at about 9.00.

We descended NE and came to an unexpected cliff band barring our way so had to descend east to get round the base of it and then climb back up to the col to which we were originally descending. After that we continued along the Park boundary NE to another summit then headed NW descending on scree. We stopped for a snack and watched 3 sheep for a while. After the next top the ridge broadened even more and resembled Forgetmenot ridge. The wind was still cool but the sun shone brightly. We were on the easternmost ridge of the mountains. Our views were of the Miette and Nikanassin Ranges to the SW. We could see part of the appalling scar of the Luscar coal mine to the east and a sea of trees to the NE horizon. We had lunch at Mount Drinnan (7356 feet) then reluctantly descended west towards the trees - a nice grassy descent at first then we were able to avoid some bad scree by following a ridge into a tributary valley of the Fiddle River. In the bottom of the valley the creek was dry but the willows were a nuisance. We found a few animal trails but still did quite a bit of willow bashing. It was a lot warmer in the valley than on the ridge. I was out of water and was hoping to see water round every kink in the stream-course. At about the 5000 foot level we got water and found an rather overgrown trail - probably the one marked on the map. We followed it for a short way before descending down a broad treed ridge to the Fiddle River. Before we got to the river we came to a well used trail which was not marked on the map. We followed it SE for a bit

but then came back and descended directly but very steeply to the river. The trail on the map crosses the river at this point and then climbs 400 feet or so up the south side of the valley. There was no way it was going to do that on the ground! We could see the river came through a very impressive canyon but could we get through it - would there be any obstacles in the canyon - we headed upstream and soon found a trail and then a Parks Canada signpost! The trail followed the river right through the canyon which had been in shade all day so felt much cooler. At the far end of the canyon we had to cross the river - one would not want to attempt this early in the season. We then sat for a while looking at the canyon before heading onwards. We had to cross the river twice more before we started the 1000 foot climb up the very good trail to the pass east of the hot springs. Our bodies did not really want to do this ascent at 16.45 on a Sunday afternoon! Luckily we were in the shade for most of it. After the top of the pass we joined the major trail back to the Hot Springs which we reached at 18.15. We chatted to a guy from Edson who had backpacked from Cadomin up Whitehorse Creek and all the way down the Fiddle River valley - 42 km journey.

At about 18.30 we started the drive back to Edmonton. On our first few trips there was discussion about whether to stop in Hinton or Edson for supper. After the fourth trip, there was no discussion. We always stopped at Legends at the east end of Edson. We found the place by accident. There was a 'Buffet' sign at the restaurant next to Legends and they always catch my attention. We went in and saw stuffed animals around and Gail said No I'm not eating here so we decided to try Legends. The non smoking section is smaller than the smoking section but the air was OK so we stayed. We each ordered a special which came with soup and dessert for \$6.95 to \$8.95. I had a Monte Cristo and Gail had Lasagna. The bowl of soup was a large bowl of full bodied soup - almost a meal in itself for some people. The main course was on a grand scale as well and when Gail asked me to finish her Lasagna I had to say that I was struggling to finish mine. We just managed our pie and ice cream desserts and went on our way - Gail with the rest of her lasagna for breakfast! This was the pattern for most visits to Legends. We got to know them quite well. On August 22nd Gail ordered a ham steak and it was (with no exaggeration) an inch thick! On most trips, and August 22nd was not an exception, we left Legends at about 21.45 and then drove the last 200 kms back to Edmonton arriving at our apartment at around midnight. Thanks to flexible working hours, we did not have to be at work at 7.30 in the morning!

Day 1 - 18 kms 4000 feet of ascent, 1000 feet descent  
Day 2 - 18 kms 2500 feet of ascent, 5500 feet descent  
Rating OT5 but most of it is OT3/4 or TL2/3. Map 83 F/4 Miette.

## **LIVING IN MONTREAL: PART ONE**

*Submitted by: Marianne Flanagan*

Each large city is different from all others, even though they all share huge populations and traffic congestion. One the differences that you notice first in Montreal is the driving. Initially you would be tempted to say that Montrealers are bad drivers. After driving in their lanes for a while you understand why they drive the way they do, and can admire them.

Montreal has a great many traffic rules, and each one has its own sign to be read as you drive along the streets. There are so many one way and no left turn signs that people have learned to ignore them when necessary. Montrealers would die on their way to a hospital, or wouldn't be able to get to their early morning donut shop, if all these signs were obeyed, and they know it. All the other drivers understand the difficulty, so making illegal left turns across early morning traffic, especially if it is to Tim Horton's, is acceptable. Making an illegal left turn onto a large thoroughfare with a large no left turn sign is not acceptable unless the traffic is very light. Or you are a taxi or delivery van. (A whole different set of rules applies to them, or rather, no rules apply to them, except perhaps the one-way street rules, if it's for more than a block.) The frequency of this no left turn rule requires also that both lanes can turn left (and of course right) when a turn finally is allowed, even though there are no dual turn signs. The turning of the car from the middle lane across the front of your vehicle in the side lane is often a surprise, but with good reflexes, you can handle it. Neighbourhoods adjacent to larger streets are, of course, filled with cars that are manoeuvring to get going the right direction at the times they need to get around the no left turn situation. Which explains the blanket coverage of four way stop signs in residential areas.

Also, for several hours each morning and afternoon buses and taxis have priority in the lane closest to the sidewalks and to the street where you need to turn, complicating the traffic at those times. Occasionally you are forced to move into that lane, and can proceed for a while in that lovely, emptiness before forcing your way back where you are supposed to be. Entering a moving line of traffic is surprisingly easy. Even in heavy traffic, when you are coming from a neighbourhood street into a major street, only one or two cars will go by before you will be allowed to enter.

They know what you're going through.

Another major rule is that lane markings are only suggestions about where you might go if it were convenient and if you felt like it. Drivers generally choose one side or the other of their lane, depending on where they think the obstructions might occur, thus creating an ever changing middle lane on the line separating the two lanes. Not infrequently, one side of an intersection will have four moving lanes, and the other side will have three marked, with one of the lanes beginning large and becoming normal width within 20 feet. Or you may have three lanes, and the next block has no lane markers until the next intersection is reached. By then everyone will have sorted out where they want to go. The lane existing on both sides of the centre lane dividing the two traffic directions is also available if necessary, as it often is when there is a moving van taking up one-and-a-half lanes on your side of the road. The oncoming traffic sees your predicament, or sees your car in its lane, and gives way without even the shake of a fist. Based on the very few dented vehicles observed here, Montrealers have great empathy plus exceptional depth perception, peripheral vision and reflex times.

This seeming lack of discipline is necessary for two reasons. Montreal has a vast amount of parking. And a lot of people need to just dash into a shop, so they must park in the lane beside the parking lane, but this doesn't upset the other drivers. Someday they might need the same consideration! So bob and weave, bob and weave. Driving in Montreal feels very much like downhill skiing. Every driver concerns himself with only the cars beside and in front of himself. If every driver does this, everyone will be safe, and the traffic will squeeze in and spread out as space allows, efficiently wending its way across the city.

The streets themselves can be part of the problem. Parking is prolific, even downtown, at all hours of the day, making all roadways one or two lanes narrower. It is always possible to park for a short while in the traffic lane beside a full parking lane just because you need to, and I have also noted cars with or without their emergency lights

flashing parked beside an empty parking spot. In the summer and fall, all the streets are cleaned twice a week on a regular schedule. The leaves pile high in the streets so this is important to the functioning of the city, but it removes that side of the street from the parking pool for those periods. Neighbourhoods also often have priority for residents during certain hours, and sometimes there are just signs saying that no one can park there during a certain four hours during the day. Montrealers tend to park three feet from the curb, thus changing the shape of the driving lane. There are no signs about how close to the end of the street you can park, so you park right up to the corner. People do leave about ten feet in either direction in front of a fire hydrant, usually. To compensate for all this, parking meters are cheap, 25 cents for an hour, and you usually can find a spot within three or four blocks of where you want to go.

The pedestrians deserve comment. They are pretty good judges of how close they are to vehicles in traffic. Standing on the centre line is common, and jay walking is expected. That's how Montreal keeps its sidewalks so clear! There is a rule: every pedestrian is responsible for his own safety. Walking through heavy traffic at rush hour is very safe due to the slowness of the traffic, and there are many parts of minutes when no cars are proceeding down a particular part of the street, so crossing is permitted. It is a little unnerving to a visitor that many pedestrians do not look up until they are several feet into traffic, but no injuries have been witnessed yet. Cars can go through pedestrian walkways as long as the people are not on the part the driver wishes to use. This is true for police cars too. If there is a pedestrian in the way, cars are encouraged to stop, especially if the pedestrian walk sign is flashing. Everyone seems happy with the situation except the parents of small children.

Montreal is a great , wake-up city!

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PETER MCGILL 1925-1999

Peter McGill joined Ramblers in the early 70's after immigrating from New Zealand and getting established in a geology career during which he did field work from the Canadian Arctic Islands to Belize. He was a very powerful man, seemingly bigger than life, whose hearty laugh could be heard for a great distance. He carried a big two-bitted axe on backpacks so he could chop logs off of the trail. He also loved ski touring and canoeing. Peter did everything in a big way. When he built a fire to heat water in his billy for tea he didn't just use sticks and logs; he put whole small trees on the fire. Peter's appetite was as big as his warm heart and strong body. I'll quote an Anecdote I wrote for the club history.

PETER'S LUNCH

On a trip up Brewster Creek Sunday, Jun 3, 1973, the following was witnessed by 12 Ramblers: With disbelief we watched Peter McGill pull his lunch out of his day pack. A bottle of beer was followed by a loaf of bread, a pound of butter, a pound of cheese, a pound of honey, a fresh grapefruit and a whole fresh pineapple with top and all. There was still a grapefruit left over for later on.

I should add that he carried these heavy loads in an old N.Z. pack that looked like a laundry bag with straps on it.

In 1978 Peter married Esther Jeffrey, a fellow Rambler. At that time he was serving on the executive as Leaders' Chairman and later as Equipment Chairman.

Peter's and Esther's loving marriage lasted until death did them apart on Oct. 15. At Peter's funeral service we learned from his son, son-in-law and granddaughter what a loving and caring family man he was. The fact that he was loved as much by his in-laws as by his own family says a lot. Peter McGill was a colorful Rambler who will be missed but not forgotten.

-Wally Drew

# Plateau Mountain

Submitted by: John Schleinich  
Calgary, November 1999

By rights I should have asked Bob St John for permission to put this report into the Packrat since it was his trip. But I know he is a man that takes chances, so he will understand. You know most of it from Bob, when he gave his own trip report on Wednesday after our unsuccessful attempt. All I want to do here, is to let the Ramblers know that there were other events, beside the 'dollar thirty five' pints of beer in the "Black Diamond supper Pub."

Calgary was in Sunshine when we left, but as we approached our trail- head the weather deteriorated drastically. We were driving into some sordid looking weather. Heavy, dark clouds covered the skies ahead of us and it started to snow. As we came closer, the more miserable the weather became. We started to walk on a wide road with little elevation gain at a comfortable pace. But it did snow. Heavily. And as time went by the snowfall became worse and visibility due to the wind swept snow, less.

Back in Saskatchewan we would have called such weather a blizzard. But we were not in Saskatchewan and not out on the prairies. Here in Alberta it is usually called heavy snowfall with strong winds and little visibility. But who cares. I was happy, the world agreed with me. Everything else was just fine: a) I was going up a mountain I never been up before, b) distance and elevation gain were minimal, c) due to time change I could sleep in an extra hour d) we started out on an easy trail, first time after many weeks, e) and I was warm and snug. Like a bug in a rug.

So the weather was bad. Yes, bad but not dangerous. We had several experts on our trip. People who know the outdoors and how to handle snow situations, two electronic space-locators and tons of equipment. My confidence was endless.

But not everybody's. One relatively new hiker, dressed in blue-jeans, after a short while decided he had enough and was going back. Can't blame him. Would have done the same in his situation. But that was not the end of the world, one out of nineteen. Naturally he asked his driver for the car-keys, so he wouldn't have to freeze unprotected from the wind outside the car. But the driver refused to give him the keys.

Still not the end of the world. There were four other cars.

Everything stopped. Everything except the snowfall and the wind. The hikers had an opportunity to reflect on the situation. That was mistake no.1. Logical conclusions followed: no visibility means no views on the top, trails might be hard to find when covered with fresh snow, doing the loop as scheduled will be impossible, therefore what's the use.

But all these points could be countered: it is great to be outdoors, good exercise, great activity, loop not necessary and it certainly beats Television.

The devastating blow, however, came when someone in the group (a lady hiker) mentioned the pub in Black Diamond and cheap beer. Then our fearless leader (who is also known to like beer) made mistake no.2. He put the issue to a vote. The result was 18 to one in favour of the pub or a warm home.

From here on you know the story, except for the little comment the driver made when asked why he didn't give the cold hiker his car-keys: "The "blue jeans" man could not have survived by himself."

Very forceful logic. Let him freeze outside the car.

"All rising to a great place  
is by a winding stair.

—Sir Francis Bacon

## Cross-Country Ski Clinic

Submitted by: *Danielle Tardif*

This course is intended for new skiers or as a refresher.

Instructor: Dawn Jones

Cost: \$50, incl. outdoor clinic

Nov 26, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., **in-class instructions on:**

- what to carry in a pack
- how to dress
- fitness
- what to eat
- skis and equipment: what to buy or rent
- waxing
- location: Dawn Jones' house, 1402 Crescent Rd NW
- bring pen and paper

Dec 4, 9 to 4 p.m., **outdoor clinic**

- morning: walk on skis, use of poles, glide, how to fall and get up
- afternoon (optional): ski on hills
- location: probably Ribbon Creek or Elk Pass, depending on snow.
- bring own or rented equipment

For more information, please call Dawn Jones

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## Avalanche Awareness Course

This course is intended for new skiers who want to raise their avalanche awareness, and for those who want to make the transition from track set to backcountry skiing.

Instructor: Keith Morton

Cost: \$65, incl. GST

Location: Classroom sessions at Bow Waters Canoe Club  
1975 – 26 St SE  
Field day location to be announced

Dates: Course 1: Classroom Nov 30 and Dec 7      **FULL**  
Field day Dec 11 or 12      **FULL**  
Course 2: Classroom Jan 6 and 13, 7 to 10 p.m.  
Field day Jan 15 or 16 (and Jan 22 if group larger than 16 people)

For more information and to register, please call Bow Waters Canoe Club at 235-2922

This is a very popular course, please don't delay.

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## Safety Committee

I am looking for club members interested to get involved in the Safety Committee. I particularly invite new members who have fresh ideas for the betterment of the Club. This is a great way to start your involvement in the Club. Time commitment is approximately one meeting every 2 months and some work in between as required.

The Safety Committee advises the Co-ordinators Council on safety issues and promotes safety awareness within the Club. For more details, please read section 3 of the Members' Manual, or contact Danielle Tardif

### Things done in the past:

- Safety policies survey on avalanche rating and minimum participants on a trip
- Coordinator course requirements.
- Avalanche awareness seminar offered as a Wednesday night program.
- Skills Review Day (summer and winter).
- Group management forum.
- Review of recent incidents on club trips.

### Ideas for this year:

- Suggestions of safety oriented programs to be presented at the Wednesday meetings by Club members or experts in the field.
- Suggestions of safety oriented courses to be offered to Co-ordinators and Club members at large.
- Incident report in the event of an accident on a Club trip.
- Your suggestions on any other topics.

The Safety Committee is eager to hear from you.

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## Some Weekend Ski Trips by Dave Mulligan

1. **January 29/30, 2000: Lake O'Hara/Tokumn Creek Traverse,**  
J160, MN 7, 40 Km, 1000 m.  
2 days, 1 night in Elizabeth Parker ACC Hut,  
minor glacier travel, max 7 persons.  
Cost Approx. \$20(hut) + 6(park pass) + 20(gasoline) = \$46.00, car shuttle.
2. **February 26/27, 2000: Waterton: Summit & Forum Lakes,**  
P130,P140,OT 5,12 Km,350 m each.  
2 exploratory telemarking day trips from 1 overnight in  
Waterton Youth Hostel, max 10?  
Cost approx: \$20(hostel) + 20(gasoline) = \$40.00

Please contact Dave Mulligan for more details. (\$20.00/trip deposit guarantees a spot)



# SKI SEASON IS HERE!

**WARNING! WATCHOUT FOR  
"THE PHANTOM SKIER"**

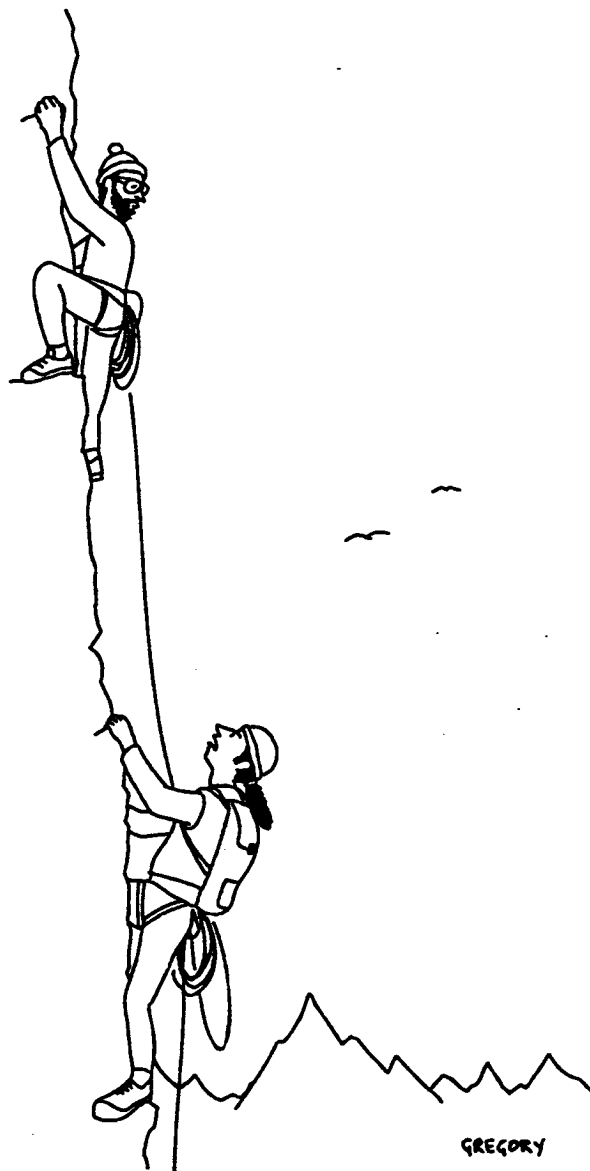


**The Phantom Skier knows all .....  
Sees all,,,,, hears all! (and tells all!)  
He's everywhere! He's everywhere!**

## **ITEMS FOR SALE**

1 PAIR CRAMPONS  
1 ICE AXE (WOOD HANDLE)  
LADIES DUVET DOWN JACKET (SIZE 14)  
LADIES FULL LENGTH DOWN COAT (SIZE 14)

CALL ESTHER MCGILL



GREGORY

*"I don't mean to dampen your enthusiasm, but your use of the phrase 'or die trying' is a tad unsettling."*

## **CHRISTMAS DINNER**

***Welcome to the home of Dawn Jones for Christmas dinner.***

The Flanagans, the ones who have been having Xmas dinner, are away this year.  
The dinner will start at 5 pm at 1402-Crescent Road NW.  
Please phone Dawn and press #2 for more details.  
Then if you want to leave a message press #1.  
Everyone can contribute a food dish and \$3 and I will supply the turkey  
and all the fixings plus tea and coffee.

Let's have a good time!

# MILLENNIUM ITALY TRIP

I enjoyed my month long stay in Italy so much last summer that I'm going back again in June and July of 2000. This time I'm inviting fellow travellers/explorers to join me. If you've been trying to think of a truly unique way to celebrate the millennium, this could be it. This is the land that saw the beginnings of democracy, the birthplace of the renaissance and great achievements in architecture, philosophy and art. Much of the foundations of the millennium began here.

## JUNE 17-JULY 9 (21 DAYS)

- 6 days hiking village-to-village on the Italian Riviera Coast including the famous "Cinque Terre" trail
- 7 nights farmhouse holiday in Tuscany (Chianti wine country)
- 3 days Florence
- 1 night Pisa

### - 2 nights Venice

- 2 days Lucca
- 4 days Rome & Pompeii (Add-on option)

### THE TRIP WILL INCLUDE:

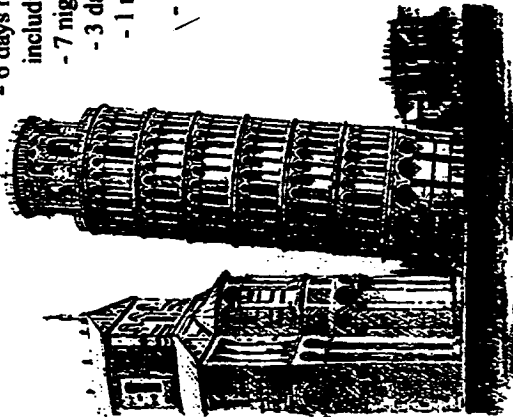
- 8 days car rental
- 10 breakfasts
- all lodgings
- authentic Italian cooking lesson
- wine tasting
- all train fares
- all taxes (land package)
- itineraries with maps for all cities visited

**\$2100 Dbl. Occup.\***



**NEW DETAILS!**

- Rome/Pompeii Add-on
- Price - \$460.00
- Farmhouse Pictures Available
- Slideshow Planned



This is not a "Hilton" holiday. It will be a unique adventure trip! While at the farmhouse we'll have cars to explore Tuscany's medieval hill-top towns, fortresses, monasteries and churches. Try some bicycle touring. Visit the incredibly preserved ancient town of San Gimignano and its' multitude of towers. Explore the medieval gem of Siena, one of Italy's finest and partake in the pageantry and heraldry of its' famous horse race rivalry known as the "Palio".

\* Price and itinerary are preliminary and may vary slightly. • For more info: Ken Park 244-6809

**\* Registration Deadline: January 31, 2000**

## Calling all Downhill Skiing Ramblers

*Submitted by: Carl Potter*

Yodel-e-dihoo! The downhill season is here. Sure, I could join one of those big downhill ski clubs and go on bus trips with 50 people, but I like skiing with small groups of my friends, and I would especially like to ski with some of my Ramblers friends this winter. I know there are several downhill skiers among us, enough in fact to make downhill trips feasible. The trick is to be able to concentrate the interest into a common place and time. Consequently, I would like to put out the following survey of interest. Please see me at a meeting, call me at 281-8040 or e-mail me at "potterca@cadvision.com" to declare your interest. I would like to call various downhill trips, and the idea would be to first keep a sharp eye out for when the conditions are just right, then call those who have expressed interest in the particular trip. If at least three people are interested,

then I would announce the trip on a Wednesday night or the last-minute line to ensure that anyone I missed has a chance to know about it. I expect small groups and would not elaborate on the trips at meetings. As I have been stung before by bad weather on trips booked long ahead, I prefer to go on relatively short notice (as we do for our hikes and xc trips). Trips would be for competent intermediate (blue square) or advanced (black diamond) skiers. I like to have skiers pair off with a chair buddy of comparable style and regroup at predetermined time and place, rather than have the whole group wait for the slowest skier every run. I prefer to stop for supper when skiing in Banff, due to the long drive. All trips except Castle Mountain are discounted with the Louise + card.

**Downhill Skiing Survey:** If you would be interested in downhill trips with the RMRA, which trips appeal to you:

Level Blue \_\_\_\_\_ or Black Diamond \_\_\_\_\_

Weekend days \_\_\_\_\_ Weekday \_\_\_\_\_ Overnight trips \_\_\_\_\_

Night skiing at Wintergreen (free with Louise+ card) \_\_\_\_\_

Nakiska \_\_\_\_\_

Fortress \_\_\_\_\_

Norquay \_\_\_\_\_

Lake Louise (supper in Banff) \_\_\_\_\_

Castle Mountain (really cheap motel packages) \_\_\_\_\_

Fernie (Snow Valley Motel) \_\_\_\_\_

Kimberley \_\_\_\_\_