



The Packrat



October / November 2001



Monarch Ramparts, AB, by Tony Forster

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2** President's Message
- 3** Calendar of Events
- 3** Biking for Beginners
- 4** Egypt Lake 4 Day Backpack August 3 to 6, 2001
- 6** Tibetans, Toyota and Trauma
- 8** RMRA Notice of 2001 Annual General Meeting
- 9** Year of the Great Bear
- 11** Highlights of Executive Meeting - August 27, 2001
- 11** Fall Co-ordinator's Meeting
- 12** Awards Dinner and Dance Nomination Form
- 13** Backpacking in the Wind River Range
- 14** Riddles
- 15** RMRA Annual General Meeting - October 17, 2001
- 16** RMRA Executive Committee 2000 / 2001

Editor's Note

Another thick issue filled with interesting articles!

First, a biking trip just West of Calgary followed by a 4 day backpack to Egypt Lake. Then we are going to Tibet for the continuation of "Treks, Teahouses and Thars", published in the previous issue. A second backpacking trip report brings us south of the border to the Wind River Range in Wyoming. If you are a wildlife enthusiast, don't miss the article titled "Year of the Great Bear". You will find some information about two field trips with a bear expert where you can learn about bear habitat, behaviour and conservation. The Annual Dinner and Dance is coming soon, so don't forget to send your nominations for the Awards.

Finally, don't forget the AGM on October 17th. ❖

President's Message

By D. Reimer

It's been a busy season with good weather for the many hikes and backpacks that have been called including a superb bus trip to Lake Louise on a golden day – one of the few times I've had lunch on Sentinel Pass without wind! A 'softy' backpack to Lake O'Hara (11 km on a bus, for goodness sake) and a smoky weekend at Many Glaciers in Glacier Park, Montana were highlights on the Labour Day weekend.

We had some great times but there were also the not-so-great outings. With so many new members, it sometimes happens that communication between Hikers and Co-ordinators fails. Sometimes the hikers aren't listening to trailhead instructions (or forgetting what was said). Sometimes the Co-ordinator assumes those in the group know more than they do (as one Instructor told me, 'Assume they know NOTHING!'). The result can be people strung out all over the trail, not recognising changing weather conditions, ending up on different ridges, even getting lost.

The Message here is - Listen carefully at the Trailhead. Ask questions. If you're fast, try to slow it down and make sure you wait for the others at frequent points. If you're slow, try to speed up, don't take as much time for breaks, and avoid trips you know will be too fast. The minimum of 3 on a trip should apply on the trail, not just at the meeting place.

On to the Environment. We managed to register our comments with Alf Skrastins regarding the Evan-Thomas Recreation Area Draft Management Plan. We hope our small voice will have some weight especially in encouraging K-country to do more in the area of Monitoring use. Basing trail closures on studies done years ago doesn't seem like the most realistic solution.

Hiking is not finished yet but the Farmer's Almanac is predicting an early winter plus a snowstorm on Christmas Day (though how it knows, I'm sure I can't guess). So perhaps it's time to get out the skis and snowshoes and check them over, clean them up, etc.

Soon it will be year-end with the Annual General Meeting Oct. 17 followed by the Dinner-Dance Oct. 26 so this will be my last 'message' as your President – hard to believe it has been nearly a year since I began.

If you have a yen to find out about the nuts-and-bolts of running the Club, give thought to standing for one of the positions. Garry Denman heads the nominating committee with Anita O'Reilly and Bob St. John so put the word in their ear (ears?).

It has been a fascinating year for the Executive. We haven't always agreed but we have enjoyed working hard to make your Club one that you can all be proud of. My thanks to Danielle, Ron, Dave, Carl, Denis, Joyce, Barbara, Alistair, and Bob for their ideas and enthusiasm. Especially HUGE THANKS go to Keith for all the website work and for his patience with our sometimes muddled requests. Thanks also go to you, the Members, for sharing so many good times on the trails, turning up for meetings and programs, and spreading your cheerful good will among us all.

Now, I think I'll go find my skis, redo the bases, and then maybe go look at what's new in ski boots.

Here's to beautiful fall colours followed by sparkling snow. ❖

Car Camp Cancelled!

Due to the closure of Kananaskis Country, the car camp has been cancelled for this year. Although the parks are now reopened, as of Wednesday, September 5th, most of the trails were still closed and a decision had to be made in order to get a refund of the deposit.

**Deadline for next Packrat is:
November 14, 2001**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

ANNUAL DINNER AND DANCE

OCTOBER 26, 2001 COST: \$30 - \$35 (based on attendance)

Once again the Annual Dinner and Dance will be held at the Calgary Winter Club, 4611 - 14th Street N.W. The evening will start with the cocktail at 6:00 p.m., Dinner will follow at 7:00 p.m. Awards will be presented throughout Dinnertime and the evening will continue with some music and dance

The RMRA is looking for donations for the Awards. So, if you have any good contacts, please let any member of the executive know.

FIRST AID COURSES OFFERED TO CASC GROUP

EMERGENCY FIRST AID (EFA)

OCTOBER 27, 2001 COST: \$55 (GST INCL.)

This is an 8 hour course on life threatening priorities, airway, breathing and cardiovascular emergencies, CPR for infants, children and adults. Severe bleeding, shock, and secondary survey

STANDARD FIRST AID (SFA)

OCTOBER 27 & 28, 2001 COST: \$85 (GST INCL.)

This 16 hour course includes all topics covered by Emergency First Aid (EFA) on the first day. Second day is a more comprehensive instruction on fractures, heat and cold injuries, poisoning, moving and transporting casualties. Short introduction to Automatic External Defibrillation (AED).

To register: call Ethne Dickinson at Oakland Educational Services at 262-3906, or email ethne.dickinson@oesl.com. Payment upon registration by cheque or credit card.

Registration deadline: Oct 19, 2001. When registering, please identify yourself as a member of CASC, and state course date and level desired (EFA or SFA).

Course location: Foothills College of Massage Therapy, 400 - 7330 Fisher Street S.E.

Biking for Beginners

By Marianne Flanagan

We just got back from our first barely-backcountry bike trip, muddy but unbowed! A little worse for wear, definitely. Guess who looked like little Ms Mudpie, and who was the person with great deal of clean leg skin still showing! (How does Tom do it?) Sad but true again. I call it "really getting to know the environs", and he calls it "being careful".

The trail we chose began with a gravel road west of Calgary. We parked in the lot used for cross-country skiing in the winter. We especially picked the Tom Snow Trail because it is sort of flat- once you get to it. Having 24 gears, it should be easy. We quickly learned that you not only have to have them, you also have to understand when to shift, and then be able to shift at the appropriate moment. What could get in the way of shifting? Well there is avoiding the log in your rut, deciding when to stop braking and start pedalling, catching your pedal on the edge of the trail, falling over and such.

We started out optimistically, bumped down the gravel road and onto the ski trail. Lots of bike tracks were evident, so it must be a good choice. Quickly it became apparent that winter snow covers up a lot of water sources, and these little showers in rainy June had led to even greater accumulations in puddles, ruts and creeks. Decisions again: do you try to come down the hill fast so you can perhaps make it through the long, muddy section, or do you exhibit caution so you will actually survive but fall over right in the middle of the mess? Neither way is totally satisfactory. Dismounting is difficult at the slow speed caused by braking too much before the mud, which is why your bike is just the right size for walking right in front of your pedals without dismounting. Of course, if you are at a standstill at the bottom of the steep pitch that follows the muddy section, it is nearly impossible to get your bike going up the hill fast enough so that you don't topple over again in just a few feet. Does that make us feel bad? No. After all, we're hikers, and what's more fun than pushing a heavy, muddy bike up the hill that we used to stride up before we became so versatile!

We took bird watching breaks and a lunch break, and consultation breaks, but soon that narrow little bike seat was having its effect on biking bottoms, even though the funny, padded tights were worn. And old back injuries were becoming sensitive. On the other hand, we were tired after a mere three and a half hours, where it usually takes six or seven to reach that state when we're hiking! There is something good about this sport! ❖

Egypt Lake 4 Day Backpack August 3 to 6, 2001

By Tony Forster

The quiet stillness of the forest was disturbed by a strange unfamiliar sound. A faint sound at first of four or five distant honks. At first we thought it might be an animal in distress but as the noise became louder and nearer we could tell it was no animal noise. We saw approaching us from the bend in the trail, a solitary hiker with a big smile on his face as he gleefully gave a few honks on a rubber bicycle horn he had brought along to scare the wild beasts away.

This hiker was one of a number of people we saw as we were hiking along the Healy Creek Trail heading towards Healy Pass. It was Friday August 3rd. Six adventurous Ramblers were all set for another backpack.

It was the first I'd been on in a number of years so I was weighed down with a heavy pack, which included that night's supper of Hamburger Helper that I had frozen the night before.

As we got closer to the Pass I had a feeling that all that was missing was Julie Andrews singing "The Sound of Music". We had the Alpine meadows full of beautiful flowers, the sky was a perfect blue with cotton candy clouds and the majestic mountains were everywhere we looked. Yes, these are a few of my favourite things!

As we were hiking across Healy Meadows, I couldn't help reminiscing about all the other times that I had done this trip with different Rambler friends. Each trip - summer and winter - held a special memory. I couldn't help but wonder what memories this would bring.

On Healy Pass we paused for lunch and met six other people who had paid the \$18.00 to take the Sunshine Bus up to the ski area to start their trip thus avoiding climbing a bit of extra elevation. On the Pass the glorious views of Egypt Lake and the surrounding area were as beautiful as ever. We quickly made our way down the trail to the campsite and soon had three tents set up close together. At supper, I managed to burn the bottom of Ken's pot with my frozen Hamburger Helper but that only added to the camping experience. After supper we sat around an open campfire and told stories. It rained during the night and I was thankful that I had brought the extra tent fly.

Saturday morning was another fine day. Our co-ordinator Ken had organised a day's exploring of the area. This included hiking up to Scarab Lake and Mummy Lake. At Mummy Lake the fossils were very interesting and the desolation of the area only added to the mystique.

After Mummy Lake, the party split in two. Ken slowly led his party back down to Egypt Lake. The rest of us decided to hike up to the summit of Sugarloaf Mountain. For our effort, we were rewarded once again with beautiful views of Natalco Lake, Pharaoh Creek, Whistling Pass and other favourite spots.

On our descent to the Pass we saw some people playing in the snow. These strangers, to my surprise, turned out to be friends I had done the West Coast Trail with nearly twenty years ago. After reminiscing, the three of us Ramblers took the long way back to camp via Natalco Lake (named for the **National Talc Company** which had a mine here in the nineteen twenties) and Pharaoh Creek. On Pharaoh Creek we saw a Bear Warning sign nailed to a tree. It advised us to beware of an aggressive bear that we later learned was a young grizzly who was not keen on leaving the trail so for the rest of the trip until we reached the camp site we sang every song we could think of!!!

At the camp site, it was Karen's turn to cook her offering - of chicken and rice along with a scrumptious dessert - which was well received by all. As Karen was preparing this meal, we were buzzed by a helicopter that eventually landed at the warden's cabin. We later discovered that the helicopter was looking for three overdue Edmonton hikers. We never did learn their fate.

Around the campfire that evening, one of our party had a new game for us. Two truths and a lie. Each of us in turn had to tell three personal anecdotes - two of which were true and one was false. The rest of the group had to guess which was the falsehood. This game was enjoyed by the whole group and led to some interesting conversation and raised eyebrows as we discovered more about our fellow Ramblers than you would ever get to know at a Wednesday night meeting.

continued on page 5



Shadow Lake Lodge, AB, by Tony Forster

continued from page 4

After the usual Sunday breakfast of packaged oatmeal, we downed our tents and headed up to Whistling Pass. Once again the meadows were full of flowers as we slowly made our way to the Pass. The anticipation that one gets at gazing on a new vista is always part of the thrill of hiking - and we were all richly rewarded. The view from the Pass down to Haiduk Lake (Haiduk is a Polish word meaning lively, vigorous) and Mount Ball beyond was fantastic. The Marmots on the Pass were very co-operative and stood and smiled as their pictures were being taken. We didn't have to guess why the Pass has its name as we could hear the Marmots whistling all the time. We had lunch at the far end of Haiduk Lake and then hiked down to the Ball Pass campsite where we started to meet tourists staying at the Shadow Lake Lodge. It didn't take long before we ourselves crossed over the bridge at Shadow Lake and were at the Lodge. We had a nice beer at the Lodge and then retired to the campsite to put up our tents. It was Ken's turn to cook that night - pepperoni, vegetables and rice which was very tasty.

There was no campfire but we sat around telling a few old stories and corny jokes. It started to rain - the perfect time for bed.

The arrival of Monday morning meant that there was a long day ahead. A steep ascent up to Gibbon Pass was the first order of the day. From there we went down to Upper Twin Lake where we had lunch. We followed the imposing east face of Storm Mountain towering above us on our left. After lunch we went on to Lower Twin Lake where Karen bent down and put her swollen eye in the cold stream outlet. She had an insect bite near her eye that had become severely inflamed.

During a group rest stop a bit later on a nice young female warden hiked by. She had a starting pistol strapped to her waist and told us she was out Bear hunting. She also carried Bear Bombs meant to frighten away the Bears. We said our goodbyes to her and then set off towards Lower Twin Lake. Later on at Arnica Lake, we saw a group of young army cadets that

continued on page 6

continued from page 5

had just enjoyed a swim in the lake. It was such a beautiful day that we were almost tempted to join them but time did not allow this little interlude.

The final leg of our journey involved a steep descent down the slope of the 1967 forest fire along the Radium Highway. We could see the Radium road and our parking lot but we had a long way to go in the hot sunny weather. We went down the trail to Vista Lake and then up to the parking lot where Carol treated us to an apple each as a reward for surviving the trip. From there the six of us drove back to Sunshine parking lot to pick up the other car and then ended our trip at the Grizzly Paw restaurant in Canmore.

This was another wonderful Rambler trip filled with special memories. Thanks Ken for organising the trip along with Karen, Carol, Linda and Anita for sharing the adventure. ❖



Whistling Pass, AB, by Tony Forster

Tibetans, Toyota and Trauma

By Ron Mason

(A continuation of Treks, Teahouses and Thars)

Micheline had gone. Because of a transport strike she had gone to the airport by rickshaw. I was supposed to be going to the ultimate holy mountain, Mt. Kailash, but the Chinese had closed the Tibetan border. For no reason. At least no reason they would tell. Inscrutable Orientals!

For me this was a disaster because this was the main reason for my trip. I was devastated and nothing could compensate me. The trekking company came up with an alternative -a trek east of Everest to the Kangshung face. I was doubtful but there was really no alternative. Four out of five decided to go. Another problem - because of the transport strike we would have to leave Kathmandu at once and wait, close to the border, for the papers to arrive.

We arrived at the border in the dark and our driver didn't know where to go. We later discovered that we were to meet another vehicle, but it had had a flat. Fortunately there was only one place to stay so we got it right. Now we had to wait for three days, which we spent visiting local monasteries, entertaining the kids with bubbles and games and drinking the guesthouse dry.

At last we headed off into Tibet. It took about six hours to complete the border formalities and to transfer everything into our Toyota Land Cruiser and Chinese truck. Vehicles can not cross the border. Our first stop in Tibet was totally unmemorable, except for the toilets, which were unmentionable.

After three days driving we reached our 'base camp' where we had to wait another day for our yaks to arrive. Their movements and rental are strictly controlled by the Chinese authorities. We visited a local village and staggered back after being treated to the local brew of *rakshi*. The first day trekking seemed very short by the time the yak drivers called halt. They were definitely in charge. The next day took us up and over a high pass and it immediately started to rain. Seven days later it stopped. Nobody had told us that the monsoon came up the Kangshung valley.

continued on page 7

continued from page 6

Every morning for the next week it was on with the same wet clothes and boots. The flowers were beautiful but that was about all we could see. All those wonderful views of Makalu and Everest we were promised - phat! Then as soon as we returned over another high pass - sunshine!

We rendezvoused with our vehicles to find the truck engine in pieces on the grass. The drivers were doing a decoke. I never did find out why there were two engine blocks and three cylinder heads! However everything was soon back together (one spare cylinder head) and we were off on another day's drive to Rongbuk Monastery on the north side of Everest. We stayed there for a day and had wonderful views of the North Face and the Northeast Ridge where the dramas of the twenties and thirties were carried out.

Leaving Rongbuk our driver had a bright idea to take a short cut. The problem was that it involved crossing a

river - with no bridge. The river happened to be the one coming out of the Rongbuk Glacier. This crossing turned out to be a traumatic experience. Our Toyota headed into the torrent and in the middle it stopped. The engine was still running but the driver couldn't get into LOW~LOW gear. The water rose over our feet, then over the seats. Opening the downstream doors helped. Somehow we were towed back to shore, so now it was the turn of the truck. We all jumped in the back and plunged once more into the stream. The truck stalled in midstream. Somehow we started again and then the truck towed the Toyota across. The rest of the day we sat on wet seats but we had saved about five hours driving.

After a rather quicker border crossing we were soon back in Kathmandu but our adventures had been a poor substitute for Mt. Kailash.

Perhaps another time... ❖



ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION

Notice of 2001 Annual General Meeting

Place: Rosemont Community Centre
Date: Wednesday, October 17, 2001
Time: 7:30 PM – Trip Planning Meeting
8:00PM – Annual General Meeting

AGENDA

1. Confirmation of Quorum
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Minutes of the 2000 Annual General Meeting
4. Business arising from the Minutes
5. President's Report
6. Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements
7. Trips Director's Report
8. New Business
See Motions below
Motions from the Floor
9. Nominations and election of the 2001-2002 Executive Committee
President Social Director
Vice President Programs Director
Treasurer Membership Director
Secretary Newsletter Editor
10. Adjournment

MOTIONS

- a) That the Membership year be set as November 1 to October 31.
- b) Motion that the Bylaws be amended as follows
 1. Membership
 - 1.1 para 2 to read
All members are eligible for membership privileges in the Association for a period of thirty days after the end of the previous *Association membership* year.
 - 1.5 All Association trips require a trip *signup sheet on which all participants acknowledge that they have signed the Release and Waiver of Liability.*
 2. Meetings
 - 2.3 An annual or special general meeting requires fourteen clear days notice that may be either hand delivered or mailed *by post or electronic mail* to all members at their last known address.
- c) Motion that Rules be amended as follows:
 4. Membership Categories
 - (b) Individuals joining after *September 1* who have never been members of the Association will pay the standard membership fee to become a RMRA member, and their membership will carry them through to the *end of the following membership year.*
- d) Membership fee for the 2001-2002 year be set at \$25



Year of the Great Bear

By Carl Potter

Most outdoor enthusiasts enjoy wildlife sightings, and the most exciting of these involve powerful predators like wolverines, cougars or grizzly bears. This year, a group of environmentalists, wildlife educators and outdoors operators got together to create a wide-reaching interpretation program meant to help visitors to the Rockies better understand and appreciate our most exciting animal, the grizzly.

The Year of the Great Bear is a heritage tourism stewardship and learning partnership aimed at protecting intact national park ecosystems through education and environmental stewardship.

In 2001, more than 100 public and private sector tourism partners will demonstrate their commitment to the objectives of the heritage tourism strategy by offering visitors more than 500 interpretative and educational opportunities designed to encourage better public understanding of black bear and grizzly behaviour in natural habitats. All year the Whyte Museum in Banff and the Banff Centre have been hosting numerous exhibits and programs on the grizzly. Bob Sandford of Banff is the chairman of the Year of the Great Bear.

As a private sector partner in the Year of the Great Bear, and as owner and operator of Blue Horizon Tours, I have engaged Banff bear researcher Reno Sommerhalder to lead field trips into the wilderness to provide participants with a very personal ecological education experience related to bear habitat, bear behaviour and conservation.

We are most fortunate to be able to bring Reno's knowledge and expertise to the Ramblers this fall, through a multi-media presentation and field trip.

The presentation on **October 24** will deal with the question of "Why do we need bears?" and will address how cultures around the world perceive bears. Reno will also talk about the ecological reasons why bears are important to our working ecosystems. The RMRA will make a \$75 donation to the BEAR Society, of which Reno is a director, in lieu of honorarium.



Photo by Reno Sommerhalder, Banff

continued on page 10

continued from page 9

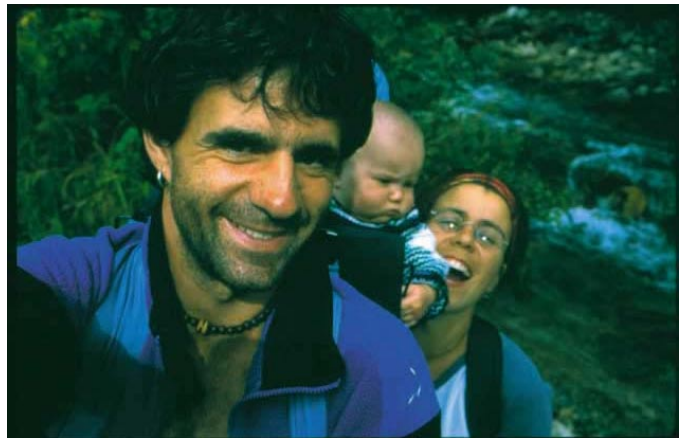
On **October 6**, Reno has agreed to provide the club with a field trip on which participants will travel through prime grizzly habitat and see the bear's home through the eyes of an expert. Reno is a Swiss-born guide accredited by the Association of Canadian Mountain Guides in hiking and backpacking and certified in wilderness first aid. He is an accomplished photographer with two photo exhibitions and credits in Canadian Wildlife and Explore magazines, as well as newspapers and postcards. He has done wildlife research in Banff, the Queen Charlotte Islands and Peru and done polar bear and grizzly watching guiding in Churchill, Manitoba and the B.C. and Alaska coasts. His bear studies have included the albino Kermode bear in Princess Royal Channel on the B.C. coast and the elusive spectacled bear in the rain forests of Belize, Costa Rica, Brazil and Peru. He helped with the reintroduction of the lynx to the Swiss Alps in 1972.

Reno will seek out the bear's food sources, tracks and other signs and teach participants to recognise these and travel safely through bear country. By limiting the group to 6 participants, all will be guaranteed a high degree of personal interaction with Reno. The trip will take place somewhere in the Kananaskis, depending on the bear situation at the time. Reno's skills include how to snare and track animals, identification of edible and medicinal plants and how to use a fire drill.

The field day will use Blue Horizon Tours' Kananaskis Country guiding permit free of charge, and the only cost to participants will be sharing Reno's guiding fee and the normal car-pooling.

Cost per person will be: \$33 for 6 people, \$36 for 5 people, \$40 for 4 people or \$47 for 3 people. Participants may make a strictly optional donation to the Year of the Great Bear. (e.g. \$10) If the Oct. 6 trip is full, a second trip will go Oct. 7.

For more information on the Year of the Great Bear, click on the symbol (if you are viewing the Packrat on line) or www.yearofthegreatbear.com . You can view an extensive list of Internet bear information sites on www.bluehorizontours.com/bears.htm. ❖



Reno Sommerhalder and Family



Photo by Reno Sommerhalder, Banff

Highlights of Executive Meeting - August 27, 2001

By D. Reimer

Present

All Executive except the Membership Director were present.

Reports

Finances continue to be good.

Membership is about 295.

The Vice-President is working on arranging an Advanced Avalanche course this winter.

The Annual Dinner-Dance will be held Oct. 26. Tickets will be printed by the Editor and cost is expected to remain at \$35/person. Donations for prizes are needed, mostly for the fun awards (e.g. most improved hiker, best joke told on a hike).

To date since Oct. 1, 292 trips went out (from 359 trips called). People are giving good feedback on the ratings, which will help with the next review. The committee developing criteria for acknowledging co-ordinators has not completed its work so there won't be co-ordinator awards again this year.

Instead of e-mailing the full Packrat, the Editor will e-mail notice and a link address so that members can download their copy from the web-site at their leisure rather than wait until it is read in through e-mail. Next deadline will be Sept 5 to allow it to be received 2 full weeks before the AGM.

New Business

October 17 will be the date of the Annual General Meeting.

It will be proposed that a Membership year be established to run Nov. 1 to Oct. 31 with a grace period for renewal to Nov. 30. This will allow members more time to renew following the AGM. The Financial year will continue as Oct. 1-Sept. 30. The one-time offer of 14 months membership to new members who join after Aug. 1 will continue but the date will be changed to Sept. 1. This will require some Bylaw and Rule changes at the AGM.

The names of 4 non-executive members were proposed to form a nominating committee for next year's executive.

Minor revisions will be made to the Application form to clarify a member's options (public name, use of e-mail address, etc.).

The President reported on results of a meeting held to develop comments to forward to Alf Skrastins re the Evan-Thomas Recreation Area Draft Management Plan. Mr. Skrastins requires input by the end of Aug. The Comments will be presented to interested members at the next Wed. meeting.

It was agreed to endorse Tony Forsters' proposal to honour Ramblers' 50th anniversary (in 2004) by producing a cookbook with favourite recipes from backpacks, potlucks plus anecdotes, cartoons, and pictures. ❖

Fall Co-ordinator's Meeting

When: Tuesday, October 2nd at 7:30 PM

Where: Ron Hunter's

Bob St.John will be filling in as Trips Director for Alistair DesMoulins after September 20th and will chair the meeting in his absence. Any Co-ordinators who wish an item to be on the meeting agenda are asked to deliver it to the Trips Director either in person or by email to trips@ramblers.ab.ca. The agenda will be posted to the General Ramblers Discussion forum on our website in the week prior to the meeting. Three items that warrant mentioning now are:

New Co-ordinators: If you wish to be a Co-ordinator, or know someone who you think would be a good candidate, then application forms are available at meetings and on our website at Members' Area / Printable Forms and Documents.

New Trips Director: Consider candidates for the election of a new Trips Director. (Alistair at this time intends to not stand for re-election.)

Minimum of 3 trips: At the Spring 2000 Co-ordinator's meeting it was decided that Co-ordinators needed to announce at least 3 trips in order to remain active, unless extenuating circumstances prevented them from accomplishing this. This year marks the first full year of this requirement. Any Co-ordinator with extenuating circumstances are asked to inform the Trips Director either in person or by email prior to the meeting.

Awards Dinner and Dance Nomination Form

This form allows you to nominate members of the club in certain categories. Awards will be handed out to the winners of each category at the club's Annual Awards Dinner and Dance on Friday, October 26, 2001. Please be thinking about these categories in the coming weeks. Nominations are not due until October 12th. Call Barbara Fischer at 286-0015 for questions.

Please complete nomination form and return to Barbara Fischer by October 12, 2001.

Best or more creative hiking or skiing outfit (whose was it and describe outfit).

Most improved hiker or skier.

Most interesting thing someone said on a Ramblers trip (who said it and what they said).

Most interesting item found in a pack (whose was it and what was it).

Best joke told on a Ramblers trip (what was it and who said it).

Best gossip/humour (who said it and what was it).

Congeniality Award:

Backpacking in the Wind River Range

By Joyce Tomboulion

The Sierra Club trip to the Wind River Range in Wyoming was advertised as a backpack for age 50+. I realised that probably meant 'strenuous', judging from the fitness levels of the persons 50+ in the Ramblers whose stamina often surpasses that of the younger people. But it was an area I had not explored before and it sounded quite spectacular, so I signed up.

On the drive down, there was heavy forest fire smoke in the Teton Pass and Jackson, Wyoming areas, but fortunately, that all disappeared by the time I got to the Hoback Junction area. I met the group, as planned, at 12:00 noon on July 28, 2001 at Calamity Jane's Restaurant in Pinedale, Wyoming. The western style lunch was hearty, and everyone was congenial. Part of the group, including me, would be doing the 65 km. trek from south to north, the rest in the opposite direction, and we had to exchange car keys.

That night we camped at the trailhead, Elkhart Park, which is at 9,300' elevation, to get acclimatised. It was good to start out so high, as most of the hike would be at elevations over 10,000' on the Highline Trail, (a.k.a. the Continental Divide Trail). There were 11 of us, including the two leaders, each of us hailing from a different part of the country. Many were flatlanders, from places as diverse as New Jersey, Iowa, Texas, Arizona, and Washington. I was the only Canadian. The eldest, Elwin, was 76 and in great shape. It seemed he'd hiked in just about every wilderness area in North America, and had a story to tell about each one.

We got a fairly early start in the morning, after some groaning about how heavy our packs were---a good 45 lb., as we were carrying supplies for a 7-day, 6-night backpack. The leaders did a great job in supplying tasty food that was very lightweight---no cans, but still, there was a lot of it to carry. That day seemed like an easy walk in the woods. We only went about 10 km. to our first camp---a piece of cake! We'd had lunch at scenic Photographer's Point on the way, that gave us views all the way up the Wind River Range. Camp was at Hobbs Lake (10,000') and we all cooled off in it, though it wasn't much warmer than lakes here in the Rockies. It had been a warm, sunny day. The

evening's entertainment was trying to get food hung in a spindly tree, because this is considered bear country, and after breaking branches and ropes several times, it was finally secured. All camping in the Wind's is random and there are no facilities of any kind, but the trails are signed and well maintained.

The next morning dawned clear and sunny and quickly warmed up, though it appeared to have been down to freezing overnight. Because it was so dry, there was no dew or frost at any time during the week's trip. Day two began to get more difficult, as we were above tree line, where we would be for the next several days. The trail was rocky and tougher going, and it was very warm. Despite being a dry year, it seemed there were beautiful lakes around every corner and over every hill. Seneca Lake was very striking. Some of the group said the terrain reminded them of the Sierras. Again, we had a short hiking day of about 10 km., camping at Island Lake (10,346'), where we were to stay two nights, so as to explore the popular surrounding area. Island Lake was lovely, but in a very rocky setting, and it was difficult to find reasonable camp spots that were the required 200' from water and 200' from trails. It was also a popular area, with a number of other campers in the area.

Next day, our layover day, a few hearty souls took off to try to climb Fremont Peak (13,745'), one of the highest peaks in the range, but never made it due to route-finding difficulties (or at least that was their story). The rest of us hiked up Indian Basin to Indian Pass (12,150)'. The Basin held numerous pretty blue lakes, and the views on the way up to the Pass were superb. The flowers were outstanding, with bright magenta patches of Parry's primrose, as well as paintbrushes, arnica, fleabane, etc. We even saw the bright blue sky pilot flower growing near the top of the Pass. As we neared the Pass, we overlooked the Harrower Glacier glistening in the sun. As usual with passes, it was cold and windy on top. It was the only time all week that I put on a parka. The view over the pass was somewhat disappointing, as we had expected to see fields of glaciers on the other side, but there were obstructions. On the way back, a few of us took a side trip to the

continued on page 14

Titcomb Lakes to have a view down toward the Titcomb Basin, a very beautiful and popular area. The glaciers have receded some, though, so I was told the view is not as spectacular as it used to be.

Day four was the killer day, as we had to hike 18 km, all above tree line, with a lot of up and down on rough trail in blazing sun. Our packs didn't seem much lighter for having eaten half the food, and hiking at over 10,000' for several days was taking its toll. The destination was Summit Lake (10,324'), but there were many stark and beautiful alpine lakes enroute. We seemed to be right up there with the peaks all day.

After Summit Lake, we began descending below tree line again. The alpine country had been spectacular, but it was comforting to have the shade of trees again. Our camp for the next two nights was at Beaver Park, around 8,100', and I think we all slept better at the lower elevation. For the first time, we had a rain shower and had to put up a tarp for dinner. Our campsite was in a beautiful meadow area. In the evening we were entertained by a young female moose

grazing nearby. On the layover day, the intent had been to climb the dramatic Squaretop mountain (11,695') that overlooks this whole end of the range, but no one had the ambition. Some climbed to Granite Lake above the camp, but others of us just explored around the area, read, chatted or otherwise relaxed.

The hike out on the last day was very scenic as we followed the Green River (which really is green) and on along the Green River Lakes. We hadn't seen many people at all as we hiked the alpine high country, but here at the lakes many were out enjoying the fine weather---fishing, canoeing, basking in the sun. We got back to Pinedale by late afternoon and headed for our motels and SHOWERS, at last. Then a parting dinner together at MacGregors, the town's fancy restaurant. We all seemed to agree that it had been a tougher trip than expected, but there were no casualties other than a few blisters and a little sunburn--a small price for the camaraderie, the spectacular scenery, and the wonderful variety of country we had experienced together. ❖

Riddles

1. A farmer purchased a mule for \$80.00. He sold it the next day for \$90.00. Thinking the mule still looked good, he re-bought the mule for \$100.00. After it kicked him he sold it again for \$110.00. How much money did he lose or gain on all his deals combined?

Answer _____

2. If 3 cats can kill 3 rats in 3 minutes, how long will it take 100 cats to kill 100 rats?

Answer _____

3. You have 2 minutes to catch a train and 2 miles to go to catch it. If you cover the first mile at 30 miles per hour, at what rate must you travel during the second mile in order to catch the train?

Answer _____

Answers to August / September's Riddles:

1. \$3 and \$2 worth of cigars.
2. 3 ducks.
3. Since the ship floats, it will rise with the tide. Therefore the water will never reach the third rung.

Time To Think x-c Skiing

**LEARN WHAT YOU NEED
TO KNOW TO X-C SKI
OR
TO REFRESH YOUR SKIING**

**COME
TO A X-C CLINIC
AND
OUTDOOR LESSON
WHEN: CLINIC: NOV 30
LESSON: DEC 8
FOR MORE INFORMATION
CALL DAWN JONES
289-2271 - PRESS # 2.
Cost is \$75**



RMRA Annual General Meeting - October 17, 2001

By Garry Denman

Election of the new executive for the 2001-2002 Rambler year will take place at this meeting.

The nominating committee is now accepting nominations for the following positions:

President,
Vice President,
Treasurer,
Secretary,
Membership Director,
Social Director,
Programs Director,
Newsletter Editor

A summary of the responsibilities of each position, can be found in the General Information Guide April 2001 edition, Chapter 3, Executive Committee, available at the membership desk, or at www.ramblers.ab.ca, reference, committees.

Please consider running for one of these positions. If you or another member you know is interested let it be known to the nominating committee:

Garry Denman	288-4065
Anita O'Reilly	281-9378
Bob St. John	237-0041

RMRA Executive Committee 2000 / 2001

President	D. Reimer	225-2499 (H)		president@ramblers.ab.ca
Vice President	Danielle Tardif	210-2501 (H)	294-6688 (W)	vicepresident@ramblers.ab.ca
Trips Director	Alistair Des Moulins	283-9943 (H)		trips@ramblers.ab.ca
Treasurer	Ron Hunter	229-3394 (H)	319-7378 (W)	treasurer@ramblers.ab.ca
Membership	J. Schneider			membership@ramblers.ab.ca
Secretary	D. Mulligan			secretary@ramblers.ab.ca
Social Director	Barbara Fischer	286-0015 (H)		social@ramblers.ab.ca
Programs Director	Carl Potter	281-8040 (H)	281-9068 (W)	programs@ramblers.ab.ca
Newsletter Editor	Denis Longu��p��e	210-2501 (H)	735-1352 (W)	packrat@ramblers.ab.ca

If we have your e-mail address, you will automatically receive an electronic copy of The Packrat in PDF format.


Acrobat Reader 4.0 or above is recommended for best results. If you don't have the latest version, you can

download it for free from Adobe's website at: <http://www.adobe.com> Click on 

The Packrat is also available on the RMRA website at: <http://ramblers.ab.ca>

Activities:	Hiking, Backpacking, Skiing, Cycling, Climbing, Scrambling, and Mountaineering, Educational and Awareness Programs, Social Functions.
Meetings:	Every Wednesday evening at 7:30 P.M. Rosemont Community Hall, 2807 - 10 Street NW
Mail:	Rocky Mountain Ramblers Association c/o Calgary Area Outdoor Council (CAOC) 1111 Memorial Drive, NW Calgary, AB T2N 3E4
Trip Info:	282-6308 Information Line and at Meetings

Printed By:



MAIL BOXES ETC.

Brad Lamarche

Box 45, 2000 Airport Road TEL: (403) 250-7001
Calgary, Alberta T2E 6W5 FAX: (403) 250-7002
E-mail: mbe271@servicesu.com

An Independently Owned and Operated Franchise