



Fort Collins Chapter Newsletter

April
2011



Your local resource for outdoor adventure

Vol. 2011
No. 4



Ski mountaineering school students Dustin Steffenson and Wendy Phillips (photo by Ward Whicker)

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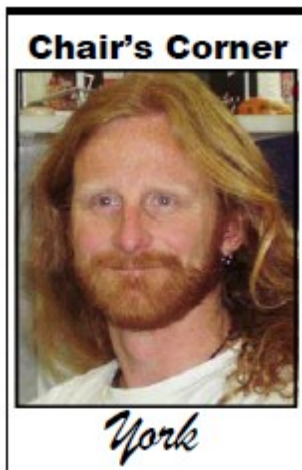
Plan for Spring and Summer / Volunteers Needed

Howdy,

It is time to plan your spring and summer outdoor activities. If you have checked out the Fort Collins Group offerings you have seen that quite a few trips have been added to the schedule. Michael Smilie coordinated a Trip Planning session for our trip leaders and the results are in the schedule. Thank you Michael for making the planning event happen and to the leaders for making the trips happen. Leaders, start thinking about and scheduling trips into the summer months so everyone can get their outdoor calendars set.

If you haven't checked out the trip schedule lately, you may do so at anytime via the FortCMC.org webpage. The activity schedule is updated from the CMC State database every morning. Please sign up for trips as soon as you are able to commit to them as we've had several members miss out on activities because the trip was already full.

The program committee, led by Kevin McCartney, will be putting the Monthly Programs into the activity schedule as well. The intent is to provide another place for you, our members, to learn



about who is coming to speak with us. The programs are always on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Check them out and plan to be there.

Kevin and Michael are just two of the volunteers that keep our group running. And like any volunteer organization, we can always use more help. Based on our bylaws, each Group Council Member may only be in a position for three years. Even though November and December seem a long way off, we have a couple of positions that will need to be filled, including a new group chair.

If you are interested in learning more about the responsibilities of the group chair or in being the

next group chair, please let me know as I'd be happy to chat with you and answer your questions. And if you are interested in volunteering for any other aspect of the club, please contact the Council Member for that area or myself to learn more and volunteer.

In the last newsletter we introduced the "Guest Pass" program. If you have used these passes, I am interested in how they worked out for you. Contact me via Email or phone to relate your experience.

These newsletters are a chance for you to relate your experiences on trips and outings with the rest of the Fort Collins Group. The newsletter is also a great place to share your expertise as it relates to Club Activities. John would love to have more contributors to each newsletter. So dust off your writing skills, check out your photos, and help create the next Fort Collins Group Newsletter.

See you on the trail.

Play and Think Hard!

York
The Red Lion

2011 Ski Mountaineering School Draws to a Close

The 2011 Fort Collins Group Ski Mountaineering School is nearing completion under the guidance of John Raich. The class has con-

sisted of several evening sessions, lots of reading, obtaining and practicing with specialized gear, and five field days, three of

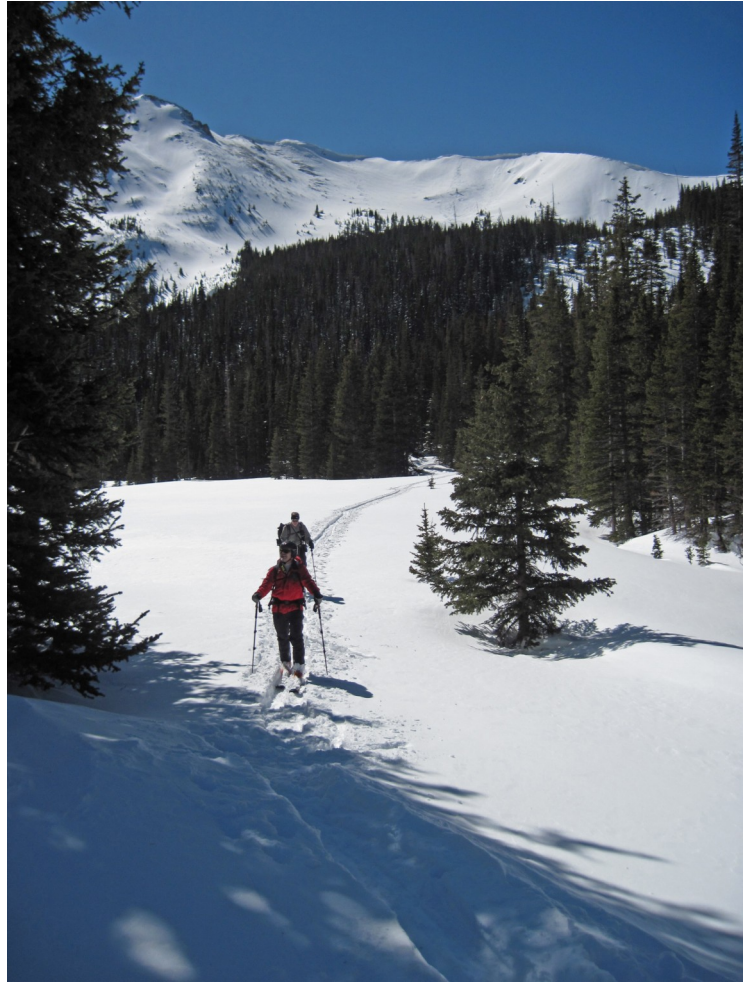
which have been completed to date. Ski mountaineering involves normal and specialized mountaineering skills that allow

skiers to safely access and experience the solitude and grandeur of our alpine backcountry.

The sport of course involves getting to places where no lifts exist, using skis with climbing skins. For every half hour of actual skiing downhill, one must spend two or more hours climbing.

Accessing advanced, exciting terrain often involves normal mountaineering hazards, but especially the risk of avalanches. So, the course includes the detailed study of avalanches and route-finding that minimizes exposure to them. Skiers routinely carry avalanche beacons, probes and shovels just in case, and must have considerable field practice to quickly locate and attempt rescues of anyone caught in a snow slide.

This year has seen considerably higher than normal snowfall, but lots of wind. This has created extra avalanche risk and often difficult skiing above tree line. But, if skiers have the nec-



Ski mountaineering school students Ward Whicker and Mark Sickles near Lake Agnes (photo by John Raich).



Ski Mountaineering School instructor John Raich on North Diamond Peak (photo by Ward Whicker).

essary skills to maneuver through treed areas, the snow conditions in such areas are usually better and often safer.

To date, the Ski Mountaineering School field trips have gone to Montgomery Pass, the huge bowl above lake Agnes, and a descent from the summit of North Diamond Peak. Students in the course include Mark Sickles, Dustin Steffenson, Tom Chapel, Wendy Phillips and Ward Whicker."

-Ward Whicker

BMC Practices Crevasse Rescue Techniques



An April 17th advanced crevasse rescue seminar was led by BMC Senior Instructor Kevin Willey.

Students and instructors from the 2010 Basic Mountaineering Course (BMC) participated in an advanced crevasse rescue field session held on April 17th near Lake Agnes. The session was led by BMC senior instructor Kevin Willey. Participants were BMC co-directors Steve Martin and Gordon Thibedeau, Instructors Russ Morgenstern, Ward Whicker, Darrin Sharp, Loren Spears, Ned Kurtz, Steve Clark, and former students Brian Waite and John Wullschleger.

The group had planned to take advantage of the substantial drop-off associated with a cornice at



Kevin Willey rigs a pulley while Darrin Sharp, Russ Morgenstern, Loren Spears and Steve Martin look on.

the head of a gully and immediately below the Lake. However, the forces that had created the cornice were still active when the group arrived, forcing a strategic retreat to an area that was somewhat less exposed to the wind. And although the calendar indicated that spring had been underway for nearly a month, a winter storm intensified as the day wore on.

The group braved 35 mph + winds and blowing snow to practice crevasse rescue techniques. A number of the participants were able to rig a "Z" haul pulley system and use it to pull a simu-



One of the two pulleys in a "Z" haul system.

lated fallen climber out of a "crevasse"; others roped up and practiced traveling as a roped team.

Although everyone managed to function under less than ideal conditions, staying warm was a challenge while laying in the snow and communications were hampered by high winds and blowing snow.

As a result, there were a number of techniques the group was not able to practice before slogging back to the trailhead. Planning for a supplementary session is underway.

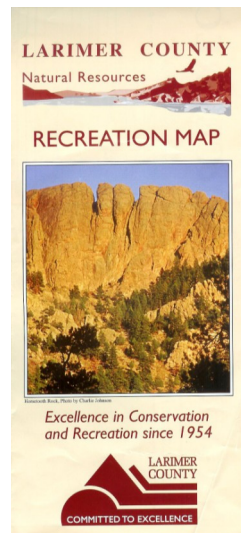


A "fallen climber" is pulled out of the "crevasse"

Larimer County Releases New Recreation Map

Larimer County Natural Resources Department has published a new Recreation Map. This map shows all the trails in Horsetooth Mountain Open Space, Red Mountain Open Space, Devil's Backbone & Rimrock Open Spaces, Eagle's Nest Open Space, Lion's Open Space & Pleasant Valley Trail, River Bluffs Open Space & Poudre River Trail, Glade County Park, Narrows County Park, Forks County Park, Sleepy Hollow Park, Hermit Park Open Space, Horsetooth Reservoir County Park, Carter Lake & Flatiron Reservoir County Park, and Pine-wood Reservoir County Park & Ramsay-Shockey Open Space.

Since a couple of the individual site maps are not oriented North



at the top, you have to check the compass indicator at the bottom of each site map to orient appropriately. The map also contains all the general regulations for

County Parks and Open Spaces. A handy table indicates the location of each park and open space and identifies the activities and accommodations available. The full-color map is printed on water resistant paper and is the same size as a standard folded road map. Best of all these maps are free and may be picked up at any park or open space location.

Check out the webpage at www.larimer.org/naturalresources to learn more about County offerings as well. Several Fort Collins Group Members provided input to the Natural Resources Department as this map was developed and turned into the final published product.

- York

Space Opens on Mongolian Trek

A September 2011 Mongolia CMC Adventure Travel trip has had a cancellation and is seeking another participant to keep the costs from going up.

<http://www.cmc.org/AdventureTravel/AdventureTravelDetails.aspx?EventID=2229>

Members are also encouraged to visit www.cmc.org/at to view other great trips, that are scheduled for this year including trips the Himalayas, Great Basin National Park and the Italian Alps.

Fort Collin Basic Mountaineering Course is a Great Resource for Members



Some of the climbs accomplished by student/instructor teams in past years include Capital Peak (a remarkable 14ner), Crestone Needle – Crestone Peak Traverse (one of the classic 14ner traverses) Ice Mountain (a high 13ner in the 3 Apostles group) and Little Matterhorn (a fun Rocky Mountain National Park ridge highpoint).

The BMC is a great way to learn the basic skills of mountaineering!

The next BMC will be offered in the spring of 2012.

Fort Collins Group members have a wonderful resource available to them; the Basic Mountaineering Course (BMC). This course, now offered every other year, provides students the basic skills necessary to safely take your mountain experience to a new level.

If you have ever wanted to try rock climbing or mountaineering, this is the way to get started. Consisting of 5 lectures and 5 instructional field trips, students learn essential knots, basic rock climbing, belaying, rappelling, ascending a rope, snow travel & snow climbing techniques with ice axe and crampons, glissading, and more.

The course ends with a high peak route-finding / snow climb and a high peak overnight climb.

-Gordon Thibedeau



Express yourself. Share your outdoor experiences with friends and fellow CMC members.

Contribute to the Fort Collins Group Newsletter

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Fort Collins CMC wishes to thank businesses that have previously supported us with paid advertising in our newsletter. However, due to a policy change , we will no longer be including paid commercial advertising.

This newsletter is published by the Fort Collins Group of the Colorado Mountain Club. Please send submissions to jgw311@hotmail.com to by the 10th of the month to include in the next month's edition. Members send address changes to *** . Also, please notify the state CMC office if your address has changed.

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