



Kootenay Mountaineer

November-December 2008

The KMC Newsletter
Next Deadline: Jan. 21/09

Issue 6

Inside

► **Information:** Pulpit Rock Purchase, Draft Trails Strategy for B.C. Call for Community Feedback, Mountain School Tech Tips: Can You Dig It? Efficient and Effective Excavation of Avalanche Victims, Skaha Update, Whistler Access Issue

► **Activities:**

Club Trip Reports: None submitted.

Other Trip Reports: White Grouse Mt., Philharmonic Peaks Traverse, In Search of Trafalgar Mt.

Pulpit Rock Purchase

Overlooking the West Arm of Kootenay Lake, Pulpit Rock offers spectacular views of the gentle peaks and valleys characteristic of this region and an inspirational birds-eye view of Nelson.

The trail is used by people of all ages. Families with small children, expectant moms, fitness enthusiasts, hikers, tourists and those seeking the inspiration and the solace of the outdoors all make the pilgrimage up the trail to Pulpit Rock.

Al Dawson and the Friends of Pulpit Rock Society have been working together since April to come up with a solution that will secure permanent access to Pulpit Rock. On November 25, 2008 a sales agreement was signed authorizing the purchase of property by the RDCK. This property will provide a permanent corridor to the Pulpit Rock Trail. The RDCK will take possession of the property on or before March 1, 2009. Please see the "Map" Section for an overview of the property.

For more info, visit their website www.savepulpitrock.com

Draft Trails Strategy for British Columbia: Call for Community Feedback

(Sandra McGuinness submission)

On November 28, 2008, the Trails Strategy Committee held an open house in Castlegar to present their draft Trails Strategy. A number of KMC members were in attendance. Factors identified as affecting trails were changing demographics (aging baby boomers looking for more day trips and more trails close to urban centres), urban/community expectations for local trails, and technology. Identified trends were diverse user groups, economic benefits accruing from trails, trails being used for transport and concerns regarding motorized use versus non-motorized use.

A vision statement for the development of a network of trails across BC has been developed and calls for, among other things, a "world renowned network of sustainable trails ...". The Trails Strategy Committee has set forth a series of fundamental principles to achieving the vision of a trail network for BC and includes such activities as collaborative planning, improving legislation and enforcement of regulations guiding motorized users, addressing liability issues, working on funding, and integrating resource road decisions (i.e. deactivating logging roads) into recreational trail use.

Feedback from the public is being invited until **December 31, 2008**.

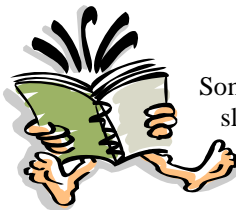
The Draft Trails Strategy can be viewed here:

http://www.tca.gov.bc.ca/sites/trails/docs/Provincial_Trails_Strategy/DraftTrailStrategy_110608.pdf

and feedback is welcomed using this form:

http://www.tca.gov.bc.ca/sites/trails/docs/Provincial_Trails_Strategy/FeedbackForm.doc

Presumably, you can also send feedback to the Committee email at RecInfo@gov.bc.ca



KMC Library News: Winter Reading

Some people like to spend all winter swooshing down snow-covered slopes, while others want nothing more than to curl up in front of a wood stove with a good book and some hot chocolate. Whatever your penchant, the KMC library has the books you need.

If ski touring is your bag, check out our range of ski touring books, which span from the west (Vancouver Island) to the east (Rocky Mountains). We also have avalanche books, ranging from the simple (*The ABC of Avalanche Safety*) to the complex (*The Avalanche Handbook*). For ice climbers, we've got Joe Josephon's *Waterfall Ice Climbs of the Canadian Rockies*. And, if you just want a good story to read, browse through our large selection of mountaineering and Canadiana literature (on the web at <http://www.kootenaymountaineering.bc.ca/library.html#Stories>).

December 2008 Mountain School Tech Tips: Can You Dig It: Efficient and Effective Excavation of Avalanche Victims

On January 7, 2008, three young snowboarders were involved in an avalanche in the backcountry outside of Fernie. Two of three were caught in the avalanche, but only one was buried – but what a burial – fully 2 metres deep. Live recoveries from this depth average only around 10%, but in this case, the victim was recovered alive, thanks to efficient and effective shoveling techniques that the three had learnt just one month before in an avalanche course.

There are two main shoveling techniques now being taught in avalanche courses. The first, known as *Strategic Shoveling*, first appeared in the avalanche literature in 2006. The second, the *V Shaped Conveyor Method* appeared more recently in 2008. Both techniques share a couple of commonalities. First, once the transceiver search is completed, probing for the victim should be **systematic**. The standard probe method is to probe in a spiral with each probe hole 25 cm from the one before, inserting the probe **perpendicular** to the slope.

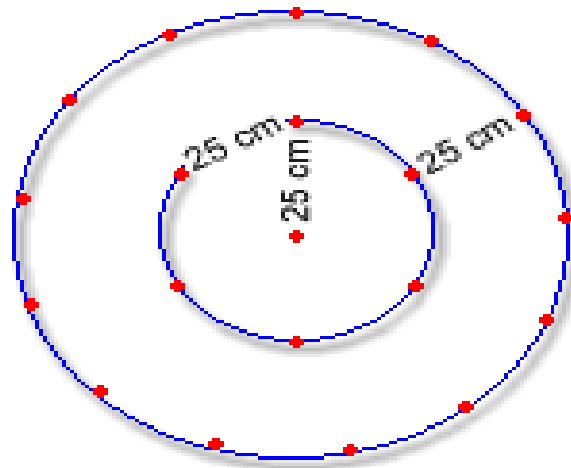


Figure 1: Spiral probing

Second, once you touch the victim with the probe, the probe is left in situ. Third, and what this is really all about, the actual digging, both methods recommend beginning excavation downslope of the victim one to two times the burial depth from the probe strike location. On flat slopes, begin digging two times the burial depth below the victim, on inclined slopes (around 20 degrees or more) begin digging downslope the depth of the burial. The width of the hole should be equal to the burial depth or about 1.5 to 2 metres wide. Rescuers are arranged in a V constellation with the narrow end of the V closest to the victim. Snow is removed in stages from the head of the V to the tails.

Fourthly, snow should be cut out in blocks for more efficient removal. Anyone who's built a snow wall around their tent when winter camping will be familiar with this method of digging and knows that for speed and efficiency walls go up way faster than simply shoveling out bucket loads of snow. Simply, the blocks are chopped out of the snow on all four sides and underneath, then lifted out by shovel. The rescuer at the head of the V will be cutting blocks, those behind will be passing them down the line.

Fifth, both methods recommend frequently rotating shovelers. The person at the head of the V will be working hardest and should be spelled off frequently. It's a simple matter to move everyone to the right every two to four minutes.

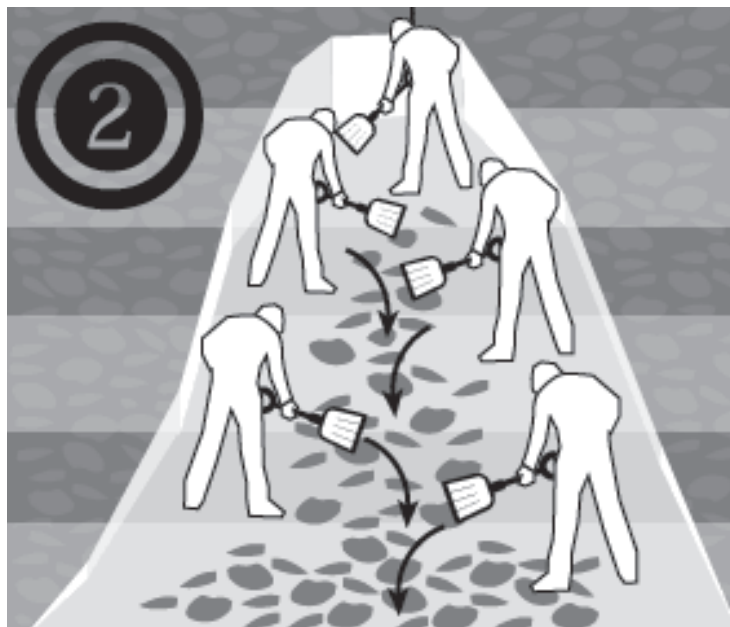


Figure 2: Arrangement of Diggers in V Shaped Conveyor Method

You can read more about both these methods of shoveling on the web at: <http://backcountryaccess.com/english/research/index.php> for *Strategic Shoveling*, and www.ikar-cisa.org/ikar-cisa/documents/2008/ikar20080406000196.pdf for the *V Shaped Conveyor Method*. Reading, however, is seldom as effective as actually doing, so the best thing would be to grab a friend and practice these new techniques. Your ski buddies will thank you.

Dehydration (hypohydration) is the removal of water from an object. In physiological terms, it entails a relative deficiency of water molecules in relation to other dissolved solutes. Dehydration, thus, is slightly different from hypovolemia which defines water deficiency only in terms of overall volume rather than in terms of solute concentrations.

In humans, dehydration can be caused by a wide range of diseases and states that impair water homeostasis in the body. Dehydration symptoms generally become noticeable after 2% of one's normal water volume has been lost. Initially, one experiences thirst and discomfort, possibly along with loss of appetite and dry skin. Athletes may suffer a loss of performance of up to 30% and experience flushing, low endurance, rapid heart rates, elevated body temperatures, and rapid onset of fatigue. The symptoms become increasingly severe with greater water loss.

Dehydration is the excessive loss of

water from the body. For adults over age 50, the body's thirst sensation diminishes and continues diminishing with age. (From wikipedia.org)

Don Lyon submissions: From the A.C.C. Newsnet Nov. 14/08 <NewsNet@AlpineClubofCanada.ca>

Skaha update

Construction on the new parking area at Skaha is well underway.

There will be approximately 80 parking stalls available, and completion is planned for spring of 2009. "Alternative parking options for busy times will be available. BC Parks is currently working on a draft management plan for the Park, however no climbers are involved with its creation to this point. Thanks again to the local Skaha climbers for their work on the ground with The Land Conservancy and BC Parks." (Source: <https://admin.alpineclubofcanada.ca/link/to/698-70169-32-02>)

Whistler access issue

"Apparently the Whistler Olympic Park

(W OP), the new Callaghan Nordic centre, is planning to charge \$6.00 per person per day for the privilege of skiing 100 - 200 meters through their tenure area for backcountry skiers wishing to get to the backcountry beyond their CRA (commercial recreation area). To our knowledge this would be the only place in B.C. to charge a fee for backcountry skiers to cross/ exit the CRA of a commercial operator." Find out more at <https://admin.alpineclubofcanada.ca/link/to/699-70169-32-02>

Ski Touring in Rogers Pass, Revised Edition

Thanks to the hard work of the authors and Friends of Mt Revelstoke and Glacier Park, this popular guidebook is back in print with an extra 42 pages. Copies are now available through the ACC National office. A perfect complement to this guide is Murray Toft's "Touring at Rogers Pass" map. To order, phone 403-678-3200 ext: 1, or visit the ACC's online store at <https://admin.alpineclubofcanada.ca/link/to/728-70169-33-02>



Notes from the 2008

Kootenay Mountaineering Club AGM

The KMC AGM was held

November 21st at the Fireside in Castlegar, with 39 persons attending. Doug Brown presided.

Kim Kratky gave a eulogy to Steven Horvath (1946-2008) killed in a mountaineering accident on July 31, 2008. Steve had been a KMC member since 1973 and had many ascents of local and international mountains over the years including numerous first ascents.

President's Report: The club was very active in 2008 running 55 summer trips, 26 winter trips, 4 courses, 3 full weeks of hiking camp, one full week of climbing camp and various social activities.

Treasurer's Report: The 2008 financial report was approved. The proposed 2009 budget was accepted. The 2009 annual club fees remain unchanged.

Vice President's Report: Executive is developing emergency event guidelines. Guidelines are at the draft stage and will be reviewed at the next executive meeting before being released to the general membership.

Climbing Camp: This year's climbing camp had 16 participants and was held in the Adamant Range.

Website: the newsletter will be delivered electronically unless specified by members that they wanted to receive a paper copy. It was suggested that the website could have some new photos.

Conservation:

- Jumbo Glacier Resort has been in the works for 18 years. A recent opinion poll shows that 63% of local residents are opposed to the resort.

- The Nature Conservancy of Canada bought Darkwoods, a large tract of private land south of Nelson. Current plans include a continuation of logging activities and grandfathering mechanized recreation. - Friends of the Rossland Range are tentatively looking at pursuing some kind of community tenure for specific areas of the Rossland Range including the Old Glory and Plewman areas and the Seven Summits Trail.

- Some cable cars and danger trees are threatening access to Earl Grey Pass trail

from the west. These will be repaired and/or removed and the trail should be back in shape in 2009.

- A fundraising effort is underway to purchase the Valhalla Mile, a tract of private land on the west side of Slokan Lake that is abutted on three sides by Valhalla Provincial Park. It was suggested the KMC make a contribution to the fund-raising effort. A note on the email list will be encouraging members to donate to the Valhalla Mile. It was moved that the KMC provide the Friends of the Rossland Range with a statement of support in principle.

Equipment, Trails and Cabins: No one is currently managing the club equipment; the club has one rope, at Sandra McGuinness house in Blewett, and ice axes are available in Trail from Eric Ackerman, Nelson from Don Harasym, and Castlegar from Al and Pat Sheppard. The cabins booking system is working well and feedback has been positive. All cabins had club work parties this year with support from MoTSA and all are fully stocked with firewood. Booking and payment system have enabled the club to upgrade supplies at the cabins; all cabins now have fire extinguishers, lanterns, Coleman stoves and various cooking supplies. More club members are now using the cabins.

Library: Located in Blewett; the catalogue is on the web page. Any book members would like can be purchased and books you wish to borrow can be delivered to you.

Mountain School: Four courses were held over the past year. Plans for the coming year include summer and winter trip leaders courses, as well as avalanche transceiver training and climbing nights at the Gravity Climbing Centre.

Membership: Membership numbers are relatively stable with approximately 303 members.

Hiking Camps: Three camps this summer were held at International Basin, with many challenges with the helicopter company. The hiking camp is facing two issues, firstly the increasing difficulty of finding locations where a fly-in camp can be located due to more and more parks and protected areas being declared and land-use plans that govern where helicopters can land. Secondly, the role of the hiking camp committee has traditionally been to get participants into camp, but not to take responsibility for any individual or groups hiking plans/activities once they are in

camp. Participants are encouraged to hike at a level commensurate with their own level of ability. There have been issues raised as to whether hiking camp should supply equipment, such as glacier travel equipment or should be somehow screening participants regarding their ability to attend camp.

The general feeling was that hiking camp should not provide equipment and should continue to operate as has traditionally been done and participants should be informed of the hazards of the environment they are entering including glacier travel hazards.

Winter Trips: The schedule will be sent out once per month and advance notice will be given for longer trips (Wapta or Bonnington Traverse) so members can make plans in advance. More trip leaders at all levels are needed. There were 22 applicants for the 12 Kokanee spots. For information about upcoming avalanche courses, please contact Dave Watson. Clarifications were given that "club trips" are those vetted by the summer or winter trips chair (as appropriate) and the trip has been approved as being to an appropriate location and led by an appropriately qualified individual. "Common adventure" trips have not been vetted in any way. Insurance is available on club trips, not on common adventure trips.

New Business:

- Four bylaw alterations were approved.

- Nancy Selwood gave a short presentation on the status of the Pulpit Rock trail. A deal is to be signed this weekend purchasing enough land to provide for a new trail to be built to join with the old trail higher up. Highways will be providing a larger parking area. A webpage from the "Friends of Pulpit Rock" will be up this week where you can find out more and make donations. There will be an agreement with the RDCK re trail maintenance.

- Newly Elected 2008 Positions:

Secretary: Kay Medland,

Treasurer: vacant at this time but in January a new treasurer will be appointed by the executive. Norm Truant will continue in this position until January.

Cabins: Graham Jamin

Conservation: Kim Kratky

Entertainment: Bryan Reid

Equipment and Trails: vacant

Hiking Camp: Bill McNally

Membership: Bobbie Maras

Summer Trips: Vicki Hart

Website: Norm Truant

Winter Trips: Dave Watson.

(Non-club) Trip Reports

These reports of “common adventure trips” are submitted by club members; they are not on the club trips schedule.

WHITE GROUSE MOUNTAIN (2642 m, 8668')

August 28, 2007

Map: St. Mary Lake 82F/9

Many KMCers have seen White Grouse Mtn., but few have scaled its mighty slopes. Those who have climbed Haystack Mtn. have likely seen this blocky peak lying above upper Meachen Creek to the east of Haystack. On August 27, 2007, Howie Ridge, Peter McIver and I drove to St. Mary Lake via Kimberley and continued on Lakeside Road and St. Mary/Hellroaring FSR to camp at km. 10 on the St. Mary/Meachen FSR.

The next morning, we are away at the rugged hour of 8:30 to drive the mostly 2WD Meachen Creek road to about the km. 29 sign, where we take a left spur near the signed trailhead for Hourglass Lakes. We continue on this for about 7 km. through cutblocks to park at 6250' (381-849). At 9:25, we leave the truck and head straight up through fairly open timber to gain an increasingly steep west ridge, which we follow to an 8300' sub-peak at 393-852. At this point, we turn left and follow the long, easy southwest ridge to the summit by 12:30. After this totally non-technical walk-up, we survey our broad, grassy summit and, finding no cairn, build one. During our hour on top in fine weather, we enjoy some new perspectives on Haystack, Snowcrest Mtn., Mt. McKay, and the headwaters of the Goat River.

For our descent, we return via the southwest ridge, cutting off the sub-peak, and reach a delightful grassy col at 7550' (394-841). From this point, we head down to the west, find and lose a sketchy trail, continue down a big slide path, and regain the trail, which exits onto the road 50' south of the truck. When we reach the vehicle at 3:30, I get a good ribbing for not locating the trail on the way up. Still, I am a happy guy after climbing a peak I have eyed for more than ten years.

Kim Kratky

PHILHARMONIC PEAKS TRAVERSE, July 29, 2008

Map: Glacier 82N/5

These were the last ascents that I made with our long-time climbing friend Steve Horvath. By writing about this outing, I choose to honour our companion and his memory.

On Saturday, July 26th, six of us fly about 20 km. north of Albert Canyon Hot Springs, which is on the Trans-Canada Highway northeast of Revelstoke, to establish a snow camp on the Dismal Glacier (7235', 367-839). On Tuesday, our fourth day of camp, we decide to make a traverse of the peaks along the divide between Fang Creek headwaters and the Dismal Glacier. All of us in camp—Paul Allen, Scott Allen, Bert Port, Andrew Port, Steve Horvath, and I—agree on the destination.

As usual, Steve ambles away first, claiming, “Because I go so slowly, you’ll catch up soon.” Of course, we all know

this ruse and understand we’ll have to just about run to catch up with him. I depart right after Steve at 7:45, and we walk along together, heading south on snow and bound for Dismal Pass (7450'). Below the pass, we scale Ruedi Beglinger’s aluminum extension ladder bolted to the rock, and scramble up painted ledges. Once through the col, we wait by some rocks for the others to catch up. At this point, Paul takes over the lead and kicks steps on snow to a rocky outcropping on a ridge crest in 1 hr. 45 min. After a break under sunny skies, we walk south over easy broken rock to the summit of Downie South. While I search for a cairn record, the others race down rock of the SW ridge to the base of the NE ridge of Philharmonic Peaks. The NE summit is scaled easily by a steep, narrow snow rib followed by a scramble on good granite (2 hrs. 45 min. from camp).

After a brief stop, Steve, Bert, Andrew and I continue southwest along a mostly horizontal ridge toward the southwest summit of Philharmonic. Paul and Scott descend snow on the south side of our peak, planning to meet us at the base of Eagle Peak, next one after the Philharmonic ridge. As I amble along the connecting ridge, which has a couple of towers and a narrow neck where Ruedi has placed some bolts, I enjoy the sight of Steve and Bert ahead of me climbing smoothly and rhythmically on the excellent granite. At the 3 ¼ hour mark, we reach the southwest summit, wait briefly for Andrew, who is hampered by his clunky plastic boots, and descend boulders and trashy rock to the Eagle-Philharmonic col at 8650'. Here, I fall in behind the Allens, ascending snow and rock of Eagle’s northeast ridge. At a grotty-looking rock step, our party puts on the rope for a short pitch. Meanwhile, Steve solos straight up a much better, cleaner line to our right, climbing with efficiency and confidence. A bit more scrambling, and we are all at the cairn on Eagle’s summit by noon.

During our stay, we note a front approaching from the west and pick out the Durand Chalet, mounts Durrand, Ruth, and Salbyt, and, 4 km. to the west, Tumbledown Mtn. Deciding not to re-trace our steps over Philharmonic, we walk down the SE ridge of Eagle to gain snow and the Eagle-Philharmonic col once more. Thence, we descend to the north on snow and head northeast across the glacier below the north side of the long Philharmonic ridge to gain Point Juliana, just north of Downie South. From this point, we follow our up-tracks to camp by 2:15 for a 6 ½ hour day. Having arrived 10 min. ahead of the others, Steve and I have just long enough to remove our boots, crack open a beer, and drink a toast before the rain and bad weather hit camp. We quickly retire to our tents, Steve to read his *New Yorker* article on Barack Obama and I to savour memories of an excellent outing and listen to the rain patter on the tent fly.

Peaks climbed on July 29th:

DOWNIE SOUTH (known locally as Mt. Fang) 2708 m. (8885') GR 355-828

PHILHARMONIC PEAK (NE SUMMIT) GPS'd at 2706 m. (8979') GR 353-823

PHILHARMONIC PEAK (SW SUMMIT) 2727 m. (8947') GR 351-822

EAGLE PEAK: 2730 m. (8957') GR 348-820

Selkirks North rates the traverse of the four peaks at 5.5 PD (peu difficile).

Kim Kratky

IN SEARCH OF TRAFALGAR MOUNTAIN

August 30, 2008

Maps: Slocan 82F/14 & Kaslo 82F/15

As I have about four named peaks left to climb in the Kokanee Range, a fine day in late August seemed appropriate to tackle one, Trafalgar Mtn. This is a distinct pyramid-shaped 2554 m. peak at the headwaters of Bjerkness Creek, behind Mirror Lake. It can be clearly seen from the forest road north of Riondel. Having discussed this peak with Terry Turner, who has climbed it, and having made a recce of the road and trail access, I thought I could day-trip it. That was a mistake.

On the evening of Thursday, August 29th, Paul and Scott Allen and I drove up Fletcher Creek FSR (turn off Highway 31 two kilometers north of the Woodbury Marina; go right at km. 1.2 and follow the main line) to camp on the road near its driveable end at 5680', 16 km. from the pavement.

Saturday morning, we got away at 7:00 in fine weather, walking the old road through a cutblock to pick up the signed "Abbey Trail" at a switchback in the block's far end. In 90 min. of walking on this excellent trail, we reached the height of land at 7000', some 500' above the upper Fletcher Lake. From this point, the trail took us down a couple of switchback to the north and then, growing more sketchy, in a long descending diagonal around the upper Fletcher basin. From the basin, we ascended northwest to gain a north-south ridge which

we followed north toward an unnamed blocky peak straddling the upper reaches of Fletcher and Bjerkness creeks. Reaching a point at 8000' (991-207) on this peak's east ridge after about 4 ½ hours' travel, we were able to survey the terrain ahead, which didn't look inviting. A thousand feet of steep descent led to the lower of the Bjerkness lakes, followed by a climb up out of a deep hole to gain the easy west ridge of Trafalgar. As the summit seemed about two hours away, we calculated we would be returning to the truck by headlamp, not a happy prospect.

Instead, we had a lunch break and then consoled ourselves by hiking up the easy southeast slopes of the peak we were on, reaching the cairned summit (990-208, no record) at 12:10 (5 hrs. 10 min. up). I GPSed this unnamed peak at 8268' or 2520 m. (my 1:20 000 scale trim map shows this as a surveyed summit but gives no elevation). In mild temperatures and under p/c skies, we hung around for 55 min. on this excellent viewpoint, then returned, mostly via our ascent route, to the truck by 4:15 for a 9 ¼ hour day. In sum, the upper Fletcher and Bjerkness creek basins are much more broken and rugged than I had thought. An attempt on Trafalgar in June, when much travel can be done on snow, might be wiser. There is one caveat: this fall, MoF are de-activating the last kilometer of the Fletcher Creek road to an ATV track.

Kim Kratky

"Walk away quietly in any direction and taste the freedom of the mountaineer. Camp out among the grasses and gentians of glacial meadows, in craggy garden nooks full of nature's darlings. Climb the mountains and get their good tidings, Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves. As age comes on, one source of enjoyment after another is closed, but nature's sources never fail."

- John Muir

HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON



2010 Ski Week at Kokanee Park Lodge

Each year the FWKP gets a preferential ski week at the Kokanee Park Lodge (as does the KMC). Most years we do not get enough of our own members to fill the week so it just goes back into the lottery run by the ACC (Alpine Club of Canada). This was the situation for 2009.

This year we would like to offer places to KMC members on a first come, first served basis. We currently have about 8 places filled from the FWKP and four (maybe 5) left for others. Our system is explained briefly below:

1. The week will be Feb 6 to 13, 2010. The backup week will be Feb 13-20, 2010 in case the first week is already taken by another preferential week holder.
2. The cost will be at least \$900 (this year's price). Payment of \$300 in the form of a cheque payable to the ACC must be received by me by Jan 19, 2009 at my home address (417, Hoover St., Nelson, BC, V1L 4W8).
3. If I receive all 12 cheques I will forward them to the ACC and book the week.
4. If I do not receive the 12, I will return them all to their owners and the week will be forfeited back to the ACC.
5. If the week is booked by me, the remaining \$600 must be sent to me in the form of a cheque payable to the ACC by Sept. 9, 2010, and I will forward these to the ACC. Anyone who does not forward this cheque to me will have to find a substitute and get it to me by Oct. 1, 2010.

If they do not, I will advertise the place for \$600 and sell it to the first responder.

6. I will act as coordinator unless any other participant wants to do this.

I will be away from Nelson from Dec. 7, 2008 to Jan. 12, 2009, so if you are interested you must contact Maurice de St. Jorre before Dec. 6, 2008. Email me at seychelle@telus.net or phone 250 352 2401. Your name will go on the list in the order in which I receive them. I will contact everyone on the list on my return in January 2009.

The KMC 2008-09 Executive:		Contacts:
Chair	Doug Brown	<p>▶ Membership Annual Dues: Individual (19 yrs & up) \$41 Couple/Family \$40+\$6/person Send complete membership/waiver form to KMC Membership 2711 Granite Rd Nelson BC V1L6V3 To receive membership information by e-mail or to give us your address/e-mail/phone changes please contact membership@kootenaymountaineering.bc.ca</p> <p>▶ Library Sandra McGuinness library@kootenaymountaineering.bc.ca</p> <p>▶ To be included in E-mail update Contact members-owner@kootenaymountaineering.bc.ca</p> <p>▶ To send E-mail to KMC membership: members@kootenaymountaineering.bc.ca</p> <p>▶ KMC President president@kootenaymountaineering.bc.ca</p> <p>▶ KMC website www.kootenaymountaineering.bc.ca</p> <p>▶ Newsletter submissions Eliane/Steven Miros E-mail newsletter@kootenaymountaineering.bc.ca</p> <p>▶ KMC (Correspondence) Box 3195 Castlegar BC V1N 3H5</p> <p>▶ Newsletter Editorial Policy: We encourage all submissions of writings, cartoons, drawings, book & website reviews and trip reports. Suitability for publication is at editors discretion. Articles and advertisements may be edited for clarity and length. Advertising must be thought to be of interest to members in regard to the outdoors, especially locally. Will use discretion for commercial endeavors.</p>
Vice	Dave Grant	
Treasurer	Vacant (Till January 09)	
Secretary	Kay Medland	
Conservation	Kim Kratky	
Winter Trips	Dave Watson	
Summer Trips	Vicki Hart	
Cabins	Graham Jamin	
Mtnrg. School	Sandra McGuinness	
Hiking Camp	Bill McNally	
Climbing Camp	Stephen Langley	
Website	Norman Truant	
Entertainment	Bryan Reid	
Membership	Bobbie Maras	
Newsletter	Eliane & Steven Miros	

The Extreme Tribe; A Designers Point of View

[PART 2]

Continued from the July-August 2008, Issue 4 of *The Kootenay Mountaineer* [Pages 6 and 7]

Two Extremes: True extreme sport, and sports with an extreme image

True extreme sports are practiced by a very small number of top-level athletes. They are physical and mental performances taken to the limits of what is possible, and can only be done in favorable conditions. By favorable conditions I mean for example the snow conditions needed for extreme skiing. Steep slopes might remain unskiable during some winters either because lack of snow, or because the snow is too prone to avalanche. An extreme athlete does not only have complete control over his body, mind and equipment, but also of his surroundings. The amount of knowledge needed for an extreme performance can only be gathered through years of personal experience and staying attentive to other sources. With all these factors added to the equation, one can only draw the conclusion that there are not many people who do their sport at a truly extreme level. On top of this extreme athletes are known not to make any big noise about themselves, and it is usually only when they are introduced to the bigger public by a sponsor when they become idols of the larger crowd.

An athlete doing an extreme-image sport can also be a professional and an idol for many. The difference is that his performances do not fill the criteria of true extreme sport. Either he performs at a less risky level compared to the extreme athlete, or he is involved in a sport, which is only labeled extreme in the media and in the public mind. To be labeled extreme, a sport does not necessarily have to involve great risks. It is enough if it is fast, youthful and exciting. This kind of image is often built up to support product marketing, as the extreme can be an image with strong appeal. This is a way to profit from the extreme phenomenon without having anyone actually risking life and limb for it, and there is also a bigger chance to attract positive attention on a larger scale from the extreme tribe.

Should the word "extreme" be used when speaking about extreme-image sports? My personal opinion is yes, as long as it is used to describe a certain type of sports on a broad scale. Complications of definition occur when the term is used about some specific sport or performance. In principle only a limit breaking performance posing serious risk of death or injury should by definition be called extreme. On the other hand the word "extreme" has been used in so many circumstances, that it's true meaning has been somewhat devalued. Using this undefined image is probably here to stay when it comes to marketing campaigns. If such image marketing is ethically correct is something which has to be evaluated on a case by case basis.

The Extreme Paradox

Evoking positive images for marketing purposes is perfectly natural. However, an interesting question is whether extreme sports should be seen as something positive. Why do people look up to those who live to stretch the limits? There are certainly enough grounds to condemn extreme sports as self destructive activities giving bad influences to impressionable youths. To some extent extreme sports are being condemned, for the above mentioned, as well as other reasons. This slight rebellious streak might actually play in favour of the extreme image, though, and has probably been the reason why some sports are being branded as extreme.

Members of society who break rules and boundaries have always been scorned as well as looked up to. As in all parts of life, the most extreme actions evoke the strongest reactions, both for and against. It is safe to assume that extreme sports will never receive the full acceptance of society due to their inherent danger. Extreme-image sports on the other hand are more easily approachable, and thus they are a growing subculture in society. By definition extreme sports can't give in to public pressure and conform, as they then wouldn't be truly extreme anymore. This ability to conform has been adapted by the extreme-image sports, which are easily developed to attract larger thrill seeking audiences. Extreme-image sports do not necessarily require total commitment from the athlete, but these sports can still be portrayed as dangerous, exciting and border breaking. In other words, as a good growing ground for the idols of the masses.

Design Challenges of the Extreme Phenomenon

The extreme phenomenon poses interesting challenges for product marketing. A product does not necessarily need any close ties to extreme sports in order to be accepted by the extreme tribe. Mainly it is a question of well planned and aimed image marketing. However, the relationship between the image and the actual product needs to be seriously considered, if the product is marketed for extreme use. In image marketing some inconsistency can be accepted, but a product directly marketed at the extreme sport scene

also has to stand up to the requirements of such use. A lack of information, or wrong information, between the client and the manufacturer can prove fatal for the aforementioned.

For product design the extreme phenomenon offers both opportunities and challenges. Even though the product image is mainly created through marketing means, it is important to include this desired image into the product at an early stage of development. The extreme tribe consists mainly of young adults, and a designer developing products for this segment has to be very aware of the current trends and values. The extreme tribe is used to fast media, and information flows within the tribe on a global scale. If a product does not live up to the expectations of the tribe, the news will spread to a substantial part of the tribe in a very short time. designer who isn't aware of the expectations and actions of the extreme tribe can cause much harm and negative publicity to a brand.

Courting the extreme tribe can be very profitable for a brand. Personally I have a hard time in believing that any product could be designed to suit the tribe's taste, but for example mountain bike component manufacturer Syncros is doing a good job of proving me wrong: The salt and pepper dispenser manufactured by them has enjoyed some success at least among mountain bikers. Is it then ethically correct to cash in on an image? That is a question designers have to ask themselves often, and not only when it comes to exploiting the extreme image.

It is good to remember that "extreme" is only one image among many that can be attached to a product. It is up to the individual designer to choose whether this is done seriously, or just for show. The final judgment will always come from the end user, which in the case of this study means a member of the extreme tribe. The product manager of Lapin Kulta beer, Ann-Mari Korhonen said the following about creating a brand image: "Understanding the customer is the key to everything. You can't do anything if you're not aware of the image they have now, and of what they expect". This statement applies to product design as well, and I hope this study will give the reader some idea of what the expectations of the extreme tribe are, and what lies behind these expectations.

*This article is from the unpublished Masters Thesis entitled **EXTREME.Studying a Cultural Phenomenon From a Designers Point of View** by Mikael Leppä University of Lapland, Faculty of Art and Design, Department of Industrial Design. Spring 2005, Translation: Spring 2006.*

Additional references noted above and cited by the author include:

- Skimbaaja -magazine, Helsinki Media (Publisher) Mainly issues 2/2001, 4/2002, 6/2002, 2/2003.*
- Varhela, Markku, Markkinointioikeuden käsikirja, Oy Edita Ab, 1998*
- Sorsa, Kaisa, Suomen markkinointioikeus, Oy Edita Ab, 1998*

KMC Members who joined or renewed between June 1 – Nov 30, 2008

Name

Vivien Bowers & Eric White

Sharon Cooke

Tim Dueck

Brandon Hughes

Karen Kelly

Jocelyne Martin, Dominique Preney & Tristan

Dawn Mehain

Margaret & Bruce Milner

Andrea Morris

Peter Oostlander

Matt Walton

Elizabeth & John Wass

Kate Woodhouse