



Alpine Club of Canada

Edmonton Section

## the BREEZE – October 2009

### *Message from the Chair*



Mt. Alberta photo M Haponiuk

What you are reading here is the first installment of a new era in section communication. After long discussion the board has decided to go back to a monthly *Breeze* that contains both timely announcements and trip reports and photos. The new *Breeze* will be primarily distributed by e-mail. Those members who have no e-mail listed with the ACC will get a monthly hardcopy mailed; others can too but need to specifically request it.

In the near future we will also remove all e-mails from expired memberships from the e-mail list. There may be

some members who have temporarily let expire their membership because of being overseas or so and who wish to continue to receive this newsletter. They need to specifically request to be kept on the mailing list now.

I am very grateful to our long-term member and trip leader Dan Hallet, who stepped forward in response to the request for a newsletter editor. This newsletter is now in his capable hands and takes one monkey off the fragile back of the section chair.

Dan will also accept trip reports, photo submissions and other contributions to the newsletter and will publish them space permitting on a monthly basis. Remember there are draw prizes for newsletter contributions at the annual awards night.

September brought a nice extension of summer weather to Alberta but the end of the months inevitably brought fall. That should bring thoughts of skiing, winter mountaineering and ice

climbing. The winter trip planning meeting is less than a week away and hopefully many of you are thinking of trips to put on the winter schedule. We can never have too many trips and all types and levels of trips are welcome. If you have never led a trip before consider coming to the trip planning meeting and connecting with an experienced trip leader to co-lead a trip. The section has perks, awards and training opportunities for our trip leaders that are quite valuable.

We had to find a replacement speaker for the October general meeting and thankfully one of our members stepped forward to present his



Photo

D Hallet

As Ernst introduced, I am the new editor for the BREEZE. Commencing with this edition, trip reports will be part of the monthly news release. You will find trip reports included here. Please be gentle with me, as I have just taken on this new duty for the

summer adventures on Mt. Alberta. This should be a very interesting presentation.

I hope to see many of you there or even before at the Winter Trip Planning Meeting

On behalf of the Edmonton Section Board

***Ernst Bergmann***

### **Chair, Edmonton Section, Alpine Club of Canada**

---

Edmonton Section. Forward, announcements, reports and such to me for the monthly BREEZE. Our trip leaders meeting is October 6<sup>th</sup> at the Southside Boston Pizza. (see below *Announcements*).

Trip leader orientation is scheduled to prime the enthusiastic trip leaders for their winter adventures. The Edmonton Section requires a refresher every 2 years for those leading trips - it is very useful for the multitude of questions that inevitably crop up for trip leaders.

Note that the *North Face Leadership* course and the *Edmonton Section ACC Ski Leadership* courses are scheduled for January and February respectively. The [Announcements](#) section below has more details.

Nominations should be sent to Gary Arnold for ACC awards.

Volunteers are always in high demand. Choose from any of – or all of - Events & Awards Committee,

Communication & PR Committee (see *Announcements*, below) and the Access & Environment Committee. Take the opportunity to meet and deal with a variety of people in the these various roles.

Mark your calendars for the Annual Wine & Cheese and Photo contest,

November 29<sup>th</sup> 6 pm. More details to come on this.

Be sure to check out the North Face Course report and the [heart-in-the-throat](#) prose at the end of this missive.  
*ed.*

## **Mark Your Calendar:**

### **Winter Trip Planning Meeting (Ski & Ice):**

With the shoulder-season upon us, it's time to start planning our winter adventures - come and join us for a trip-planning meeting, ACC-Edmonton-style! This is an opportunity for trip leaders wanting to brainstorm/submit trips, and collaborate with past trip leaders for the upcoming winter season. **Remember** beginner / novice trips are needed just as are intermediate and advance trips always needed. Bring your ideas, or brainstorm with others. We supply the munchies, bebies, and maps.

**Date:** Tuesday October 6, 2009 7:00pm - 9:00pm

**Location:** Boston Pizza - Team Room, 4804 Calgary Trail, Edmonton, AB

**Open to:** All ACC-Edmonton Section trip leaders.

Refer to the participant and leader trip information for guidelines, waivers and such at: <http://alpineclub-edm.org/tripSchedules.asp#Participants>

### **General Meeting October 20<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 pm: UPDATE:**

There are 54 peaks above 11,000 feet in the Canadian Rocky Mountains. Mount Alberta is the sixth highest of this group and technically the most difficult to climb. The peak is usually in climbing condition for only a few weeks each year, and sometimes several years pass between successful ascents. Join Mike Haponiuk for a presentation trying to get to the top of his 50<sup>th</sup> 11,000er.

**General section meeting November 17<sup>th</sup>**, with guest speaker: Brad Harrison (to be confirmed)

**Topic:** What's new in Avalanche Prevention at the CAA

**Date:** November 17, 2009 7:30pm - 9:00pm

**Location:** Varscona Hotel on Whyte 8208 106 Street Edmonton, AB

**Open to:** All ACC-Edmonton section members.

**Trip Leader Orientation, November 4<sup>th</sup>**. Location to be announced.

## Announcements:

**The Alpine Club of Canada winter TNF course** will run from January 17 to 24, 2010. Information and applications can be found on the ACC National website ([www.alpineclubofcanada.ca](http://www.alpineclubofcanada.ca)). The deadline for applications at National is November 1<sup>st</sup>. Applications should be submitted to the Edmonton Section Leadership Course Coordinator ([leadership@alpineclub-edm.org](mailto:leadership@alpineclub-edm.org)) by mid-October.

**The Edmonton Section ACC Ski Leadership Course** will run from February 12-15, 2010. For more information, visit the Leadership Course section of the Edmonton Section website: <http://alpineclub-edm.org/coursesLeadership.asp>

**Wanted: Website author and mailserver maintenance, for ACC-Edmonton Section website**

We're looking for a volunteer to join our team that updates content on our website, and broadcasts our latest events to our membership. You are familiar with HTML, ASP, and know how to create and maintain a listserv/mailserver.

Our website is our primary means to reach our membership: your work will help to keep our membership informed about upcoming and past events, and help to improve what our section can offer.

Please contact:

Dave Kymlicka  
Director of Communications, ACC Edmonton Section  
email: <[d.kymlicka@gmail.com](mailto:d.kymlicka@gmail.com)>  
phone: 780-951-1812

**The section has acquired two light-weight “SPOT” personal satellite locator beacons. These devices can be used to activate a rescue in an emergency pretty much anywhere in North America. They are available immediately but exclusively for trip leaders on club trips.**

**A couple of sat phones are also available through the Edmonton Section for trip leaders on club trips. Contact the Equipment Manager *Luc Fortin*.**

**Reminder:** Leo Grillmair will be the Patron of the 2009 Guide’s Ball at the Rimrock Resort Hotel on October 24, 2009. Ticket information is available on the Alpine Club of Canada website at

<http://www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/support/guidesball.html>

The Access & Environment Committee is also looking for a director and more members to help with their activities. Rumors have it these future activities may take place in the mountains. Contact Chris Dyck [dchris@ualberta.ca](mailto:dchris@ualberta.ca)

Please return the waivers from all summer trips to the Safety Director Duncan McColl. We need to archive the waivers from the section trips. Turning in your waivers is also required to be eligible for the draw prizes for trip leaders at the November Awards night.

### 2009 General Meeting Schedule

| <i>Date</i>       | <i>Speaker</i> | <i>Topic</i> | <i>Location</i>   |
|-------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------|
| October 20, 2009  | Mike Haponiuk  | Mt. Alberta  | Varscona on Whyte |
| November 17, 2009 | Election Night | TBD          | Varscona on Whyte |
| December 15, 2009 | tba            |              | Varscona on Whyte |

### Wall bookings for 2009 (6:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.)

Sunday October 11, 2009  
Sunday October 25, 2009  
Sunday November 8, 2009  
Sunday November 22, 2009  
Sunday December 13, 2009

We have exclusive use of the wall from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm on these nights. There is no charge to Edmonton section members other than belay test fees that are required at Urban Uprising. Please mention that complete information is posted on the ACC Edmonton section website. These nights are a great time to get some exercise and meet other members, not to mention plan the odd outing.

**NOTE:** that the last e-news which was sent out had two incorrect wall climbing dates: there are **no** club night bookings on Oct 4 and Nov 29.

For additional information, please contact [Duncan McColl](mailto:Duncan.McColl@alpineclub-edm.org) **\*\*Please check the website for complete, updated details:**

<http://alpineclub-edm.org/climbingFacilities.asp#cnauu>

## **The Summit Series**

Dear Friends and Mountain Enthusiasts:

### **RESEARCH WITH ALTITUDE!**

Please come to the inaugural programming event of a new research collective at the U of A: the Mountain Studies Initiative. This group of faculty members, postdoctoral fellows, and graduate students from six Faculties seeks to make interdisciplinary mountain studies foundational to the University's project, and to that end we are offering a four-part series of talks, THE SUMMIT SERIES, on mountain environments and cultures. The first set of talks, sponsored by the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, took place Thursday, September 10th, at 3.30 - 5.30 p.m. in Room E-120, Van Vliet Centre. The series continues on the first Thursday of the month in October, November, and December and features:

Dianne Chisholm, English and Film Studies: "Home, Home on Deranged: A Field Guide to the Colliding Landscapes of Alberta's Front Ranges"

Alastair Hodges, Physical Education and Recreation: "Human Physiology at Altitude: Lung Function and Gas Exchange as it Relates to Performance and Altitude-related Illness" Jeff Kavanaugh, Earth and Atmospheric Science, "Slip Slidin' Away: Investigations into the Motions of Glaciers"

Wine & Cheese to follow in the East Wing Lounge!

Everyone welcome!



*Photo: Carsten Moldenhauer*

**The North Face – Alpine Club of  
Canada Summer Leadership Course  
2009**

by Ian Curran and Clifton Potter

Twice a year, The North Face (TNF) supports and subsidizes leadership training camps through the National office of the Alpine Club of Canada (ACC). The courses are designed to provide training for active section trip leaders, General Mountaineering Camp (GMC) amateur rope leaders and camp managers, in order that these participants can develop the skills that enable them to safely lead trips through the alpine.

The 2009 Summer Leadership Course was held during the ‘tear-down’ week (August 8<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>) of the GMC in the spectacularly beautiful Neptune –

Trident area of the Northern Selkirk Mountains. Two extraordinarily respected ACMG Mountain Guides, Cyril Shokoples and Helen Sovdat, provided professional instruction for the ten camp participants. Additional mentorship was offered by amateur leader Roger Marchand and camp manager Brad Harrison. The two cooks, Annick and Laurie provided fantastic meals every day. Despite the long days, no one was looking any lighter by the end.

On our first day, a sunny day dawned with the group practicing short roping on a cliff behind the camp. A variety of belay stances and techniques were reviewed, practiced and then tested by seconds jumping off small boulders and steps until all young belayers

were well aware of the hardiness of their predecessors.

Three days were spent climbing in the alpine setting surrounding the camp. On Tuesday, we traveled up to and then across the Escarpment Glacier en-route to three objectives. Team one headed for Mount Nereus, team two to Priapus and Janus, and team three was to summit Escarpment Peak. Rain, fog, wind, and then wet snow was soon upon us providing us with a ropes' length visibility. Before things got really sporty one team took a weather break under their tarp, another turned around straight away and a third team had their leader punch a leg through the corniced ridge. The end result was that at the noon radio call, everyone was already heading towards the toe of the glacier and no longer had to fear berating from their more stalwart colleagues. Back in the kitchen tent drinking hot tea and coffee, all participants were able to realize how lucky they were to practice their white-out navigation skills on their very first field day.

It had been reported from earlier weeks that the highest peak in the range, Mount Neptune (3193 m) was out since remaining bridges over the bergschrund had been vaporized by five straight weeks of fine weather. Thus, after an evening stuffing ourselves at the dinner table in a now finely entrenched tradition, it was resolved that we would attempt Trident Mountain (3136 m).

Our route employed all of our hard and soft skills as we took turns leading the group hiking, scrambling along exposed ridges, rappelling from a

hanging belay, short-roping steep snow slopes, crossing gaping bergschrunds on airy snow bridges and some moderate climbing on verglas covered granite. Though the view from the summit was of little else than our fellow climbers, the day was filled with striking vantages of pairs of climbers navigating the snow, ice and rock of this remote alpine ridge. The descent was fast and straightforward, though we held little envy towards the first ascent party who fought their way up the mountain via this route on the South Face.



Photo

Dylan Cooper

On Thursday, we awoke to a clearer day and were headed up to our snow and ice school on the lower reaches of the Porpoise Glacier. After some refinement of our French and German techniques, we ascended some mellow ice, practicing pitched climbing with protection in the form of ice screws and snow anchors. After some revision and discussion of crevasse and rock rescue techniques, we got a couple hours of practice hauling our partners around despite their best efforts to resist.

On Friday, we had planned to go for Porpoise Peak, but overnight snow up

high followed up by some early morning rain made the granite on the summit ridge less desirable despite “the best rock in the group” beta, so we went for Rhea Peak (2932 m) instead. The trip involved a scramble up an old moraine and glacier travel where we threaded our way through snow covered crevasse fields to the col between Neptune and Rhea. After gaining the ridge, we traveled northerly to a snow gully, then gained the rock and short-roped to the summit. The greatest views on the summit were of our flashy new North Face jackets. Descent was as per the ascent.

On our final day, we tore down camp and caught a very brief glimpse of what it actually takes be a Harrison. The respect we all held for the efforts that generations of the Harrison Family have put into making the GMC a reality, was reinforced. We would personally like to thank Brad for continuing his family’s tradition of serving the club and its members as the GMC camp manager. As the blaze from the torn down lumber died down, it was time to say goodbye and load the helicopter. After an aborted flight to look at a “tempting” hole in the clouds, we were back together again. After a couple hours of waiting for visibility to improve, the first three groups were out and back in their cars.

Oh, and thanks to Roger Marchand, Lawrence White and the GMC staff who waited patiently for the last flight to Golden that did not take place until the next day. And thanks to Craig from Alpine Helicopters who spent a day waiting at staging for the clouds never

to clear. We were glad to hear you eventually made it to Golden.

We thank The North Face for their generous support, which makes this camp possible. With this training, the privileged participants will return to their local sections and national camps to share their acquired skills with other members as they continue the Alpine Club of Canada’s century long tradition of members leading members through the valleys and up the mountains of Canada.

If you are interested in applying for the 2010 The North Face Winter or Summer Leadership Courses, the application and information packages are available online at [www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/activities/leadership](http://www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/activities/leadership). Applications for the winter course are due November 1, 2009.

Course participants were: Will Cadell (Prince George), Bill Cardinal (Rocky Mountain), Dylan Cooper (Rocky



Photo

Dylan Cooper

Mountain), Ian Curran (Edmonton), Peter Lloyd (Calgary), Benham Giwi (Vancouver), Carsten Moldenhauer (Edmonton), Clifton Potter (Rocky Mountain), Lawrence White (Rocky Mountain) and John-Paul Zakardonski (Saskatchewan).

## Trip Reports:

### Of Sir Isaac Newton, The Big Sister, Injuries and Innuendo.

It all begins whilst driving back from an ACC winter trip when Sheri innocuously asks, “Have you done the Three Sisters yet?” After my laughter dies down, I apologize. No, I have not done any of the Three Sisters.

Now, fast forward two or three seasons. Saturday, Bernie & Sheri do the usual extreme mountain biking. Bernie commented later that one always has some bloodletting on Sheri’s trips. Meanwhile Reinhold and Marion warm up on Rundle.

Sir Isaac Newton theorized the laws of gravity. These laws must be respected and cannot be broken. The first law states that “a body in motion tends to stay in motion unless acted upon by an external force.” So too does a body at rest, tend to stay at rest. In Bernie’s case, he obeyed the first law on his mountain bike. A large root (external force) acted upon his mountain bike, stopping it cold. Bernie’s body, on the other hand tended to stay in motion, thus obeying the first law. An equal and opposite reaction (Newton’s 3<sup>rd</sup> law) broke Bernie’s fall, landing on the rock. No *serious* casualties this time, but for the rock.

Now we’re into Sunday. The rest of the team shows up in their various vehicles and onto the trail-head, down the dusty road, so characteristic of the Spray Lakes road. A group of less informed scramblers gets ahead of us on the trail. They inquire in a strong accent if the trail-head is “up there.” Sure. Friendly enough and enthusiastic, but on the up-scramble,

how would they really be? They burn out part way up as we steadily move up past them.

The Big Sister is the tallest (thus the “BIG” sister) of a set of three near Canmore – the second of the Sisters has a lovely hiking trail, approaching from the highway side. We, on the other hand approach from the opposite, southerly side. As a result the sun bakes us on this day.

What we believe is THE crux - a down-climb, is not. Further up is yet another down-climb. Although the exposure is not bad mind you, Sir Isaac’s laws are evident. We are mindful of the inexorable gravitational pull on our bodies towards the hard rocks below.

Now that those gravitational cruxes are out of the way, the steep approach continues up the left side of a large outcrop of a rock ridge, accessorized with overhangs and loose rubble.

Lunch on the top with minutes to spare: 12:05 pm. A younger, more able group had earlier passed us on the way up, moving faster. Helmets would have probably been a good idea in hindsight, but only one of our team brought one. The other team had kicked loose rubble down upon us, as we did upon ourselves.

Now becoming apparent is the easy trail up a grassy meadow on Sister #2 along with a partial view of Canmore and the Trans-Canada Highway, far below.

Returning down the mountain, the whistling theme song of *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* comes to mind along with blinding heat, trudging downward and now a lack of water. Many people run out of water. Some graciously share what little they have left.

Dan decides to toss his hiking poles down to allow free hands on a down-climb. Once again, Sir Isaac is ever-present and the poles “take a bad bounce.” One goes merrily over a steep section and the other decides to balance precipitously over the edge of a drop-off. Dan decides the poles are worth hazarding life and limb. Under the watchful eye of Marek, Dan winds around to approach the steep section, gingerly retrieves the one pole and then gingerly down-climbs to the other adventurous pole. Using the aforementioned, retrieved pole Dan extends it – as intelligent primates do, using a tool – and coaxes the suicidal pole back from the brink.

Now back on the descent route, Dan discovers more evidence of Sir Isaac’s sense of humour: the downward angled slab is not unusual to Dan as the boots grip the face of this slab much as on the other down-sloping slabs. But, on this particular slab, lurking below the now tired Dan is ball-bearing gravel. The body stays in motion due to the lack of an opposing force – friction. Down he goes. From Marek’s point of view above, it appears Dan drops off a steep section.

Ice-axe training comes in handy, instinctively turning the body inwards to the rock. But wait. No ice-axe.

Instead, fingernails, and other various body parts grapple at regaining an opposing force – friction.

Are you okay? You’re in shock. Instead, Dr. Dan self-diagnoses that a nipple-ectomy may be imminent, as his chest had struck the slab on the somewhat controlled fall. Blood is evident now on the fingers and fore-arms. The Big Sister is uncaring and unforgiving.



The “crew”.

Photo: Dan Hallet  
L to right: Marek P., Berne J., Reinhold M., Sheri F., Kevin N., Dan H

The group questions whether this is a reportable incident? Nope, no helicopter extraction is necessary. Depends on how many band-aids . . . or is it stitches? Anyways, no injury requiring a rescue. Nurse Sheri assists in treating the wounds. As it turns out, only two of the bunch escapes the Big Sister without an injury to some degree.

This trip of 1,200 meters up and 1,200 meters down we estimate is done over

a 2 km horizontal distance making it somewhat steep.

Loose ground makes for tedious travel. Knees and joints are strained and the end never seems to come. *Are those buzzards circling overhead in the scorching heat, just as the last of my perspiration drips into my bloodshot eyes?*

Continuing down, Sheri (our illustrious trip leader) dutifully awaits the safe return of all. Then down across the dusty highway to the Spray Lakes Reservoir.

All immerse in cold, lovely water, reducing inflammation of the lower body. (No! not what you are thinking!)

After a few beers and post-mortem discussion of the Big Sister we agree there is a lot of sweat, effort – some cursing - and grunting going both up AND down the gal. She is unforgiving, and uncaring, much like an older sister . . . now I can say I have “done the Big Sister.”

***The BREEZE monthly is sent by e-mail to those listed an e-mail address with their membership. Only members without e-mail will receive mailed version unless specifically requested. Anyone that is still receiving it and wants to continue, even though their membership has expired, needs to let us know.***