

Thin Air  
The Student Mountain Club Newsletter  
Spring 2012  
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#### From the President

Welcome to the first edition of the SMC Newsletter! We hope it will create a reliable medium for keeping in touch with you about club activities and events. In this newsletter you'll find announcements about club activities as well as other information we hope you'll find useful and interesting.

Our officers have some exciting programs and trips planned for this year. I hope you'll enjoy all of them!  
Chris Jones, President

#### Fall Trip to Mount Washington

During Thanksgiving break, several club members drove to the Presidential Range in New Hampshire to climb Mount Washington and surrounding peaks. The conditions were excellent — clear skies, above-freezing temperatures, and wind velocities under 50 mph. That was quite a pleasant surprise: Mt. Washington holds the wind velocity record, and snow starts to fly in early fall.

Club members camped in tents in a nearby national forest. They hiked to the summits of Madison, Adams, and Jefferson, following the Appalachian Trail for nearly forty miles. All members of the group spotted moose along the trail. The club will definitely consider the Presidential Range for future trips.

#### Trail Volunteers Needed

Volunteers for clearing trails are needed in several state and national forests and parks. This is a great way to learn about a mountain ecosystem while preparing the trails for the summer season for your fellow hikers. Spend your spring break in the Rockies or the Appalachians where the streams run clear, the trees open their canopies, and the rhododendrons bloom. Housing is provided free, and carpooling is available. Contact Steve at 782-5555 for details.

#### Dressing for the Climb

Climbing a "fourteener" in Colorado can be an exhilarating experience — if you're prepared. Most novices, however, make the mistake of underestimating the brute force of nature above the timber line. That can be a big mistake — even a fatal mistake.

At this February's monthly meeting, Fred Carlson will conduct a seminar on dressing for the climb. Fred, who worked for the National Park Service the past three summers, has lots of experience outfitting backpackers and climbers. Join us and let Fred help you plan your next mountain adventure.

## Spring Trip to the Big Horn Mountains

The Big Horn Mountains in northern Wyoming are one of the best-kept secrets in the West — uncrowded, challenging, and rugged. That's why we've chosen them as the destination for this year's spring trip.

Here's our itinerary: We'll leave from the Union on Monday, March 19, and stay overnight in Sheridan, Wyoming. Tuesday afternoon we'll be on the trail in the Big Horns, heading southwest. We'll camp four nights, then return on Saturday from Buffalo. The approximate cost for members will be \$175. Sign up soon so we can line up transportation and supplies.

## Congratulations to Jerry, Brenda, and Fred

Last June, Jerry Smith, Brenda Talbot, and Fred Carlson climbed Mount Rainier in Washington State. Although they were caught in a snowstorm on their descent, they made it back safely. "We had a clear view at the top," said Jerry. "It was worth every step — an incredible experience! I can't wait to go back!"

## Welcome New Members and Officers

Last fall we added nearly 20 new members, both from around the country and around the globe. Welcome!

This year's officers include Chris Jones, President; Sally Smith, Vice President; Al Foster, Secretary; Karl Neuberg, Treasurer; and Brenda Sikes, Field Trip Coordinator.

## Annual Fundraiser

We'll be selling mountain T-shirts, mugs, and calendars for our annual fundraiser. These items make great gifts any time of the year. We need volunteers at our booth displays; contact Sue Strom (782-2222) if you can help.

## Planning the Summer Break Tour

Our annual summer tour (the week before classes begin) is still in the planning stages. Scotland, Norway, Switzerland, Chile, and Hawaii are just a few of the many destinations under consideration. Give us your ideas and input! We need to finalize our plans by the end of March so we can get you the airfare discounts you need. Email Brenda Sikes at [bsikes@mountainclub.org](mailto:bsikes@mountainclub.org) with your ideas and preferences soon!

## Mountain Lectures

Thursday, February 16, Dr. James Spitzer, "Which Mountain Will Be the Next St. Helens?" Find out about the geology of the Cascades and how it's likely to change within the coming decades.

Wednesday, March 14, Dr. Kamika Woodling, "High Terrain Mammals." Learn about the amazing adaptive qualities of bears, marmots, and other mountain creatures.