



# THIN AIR

Volume 21, No 1

January, 2009

## HAMS

### CREVASSE RESCUE CLASS



Practicing Crevasse Rescue on Loveland Pass. Photo: Brenden Oldham

*PRACTICING  
CREVASSE  
RESCUE  
ON LOVELAND PASS*

By Jeff Brown

Last Memorial Day weekend I attended the Advance Crevasse Rescue class, in anticipation of my summer trip to Mont Blanc, with several other members of the Colorado Mountain Club. I wanted to get a better understanding of techniques to avoid crevasse danger, and most importantly to learn how to rescue myself and other team member from an unexpected crevasse fall.

The classroom work was very informative. We were able to review on paper with instructors (Brendan was head instructor) exactly what happens to you and your fellow team member(s) during a fall, and depending on your position on the rope, what the non-fall member needs to do immediately to arrest the fall and to begin the anchor/pulley rescue. By far the best part of the classroom night was the actual rope/pulley walk-through. We were demonstrating 3-

Crevasse Rescue Class, continued on page 6

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## UPCOMING HAMS PRESENTATIONS

### FEBRUARY HAMS PROGRAM: (Feb 24, 2009, 7pm)

“Culture and Climbing in Bolivia: A Visit to the Cordillera Real”

Chris Pruchnic

Refer to Page 2 of “Thin Air” for more information

### MARCH HAMS PROGRAM (date TBD)

“Rescue and Medicine at 14,000 feet on Denali”

Dr. Skeet Glatterer

Presentations at the

American Mountaineering Center at 7 pm

710 10th Street, Golden, CO



# **The High Altitude Mountaineering Section of the Colorado Mountain Club Presents:**

**Chris Pruchnic**

**Culture and Climbing in Bolivia**

**A visit to the Cordillera Real**



**February 24, 2009, 7pm**

**Free and Open to the Public**

**American Mountaineering Center**

**710 10th Street**

**Golden, CO**

When Chris isn't working 9-5 as a Disaster Preparedness Manager, he's living the dream. Whether it's mountain biking, running ultra marathons, scuba diving, or climbing in South America, Chris always seems to be out there. Sometimes, way out there.....

Come see how he fits it all in as he talks about his 2008 trip to Bolivia.

## HAMS SCHOOL IS IN SESSION

The purpose of the High Altitude Mountaineering School is to give fellow CMC'ers training in the basics of expedition climbing so that they may plan, organize and climb on expeditions around the world. The school does this by providing a lecture series each October covering the theory of expedition planning and a series of field trips each January/February covering skills required in expedition climbing

We have 17 well qualified students, a couple of which just returned from climbing Orizaba on a private trip led by Dave Covill. Dave will be an asst. instructor this year as well. Gerry Roach was on the Covill team and he succeeded for his 6th summit of Orziaba - once in each of his decades since his teenage years. Bob Dawson and Dave Pellegrini will be the senior instructors for the second consecutive year.

### HAMS SCHOOL SCHEDULE

**Wednesday, January 21, 7:00 to 10:00 p.m., American Mountaineering Center (AMC), Golden Introduction to HAMS School. Conference Rooms A & B**

**Saturday, January 24, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., AMC - Introduction to Crevasse Rescue.**

**Exercise will also be conducted outdoors, the Climbing Wall and Conference Rooms A & B**

**Saturday, January 31, 6:00 a.m. (all day), St. Mary's Glacier – Snow Practice Review.**

**Wednesday, February 4, 7:00 to 10:00 p.m., AMC - Crevasse Rescue Review and Expedition Camping Planning Session. Conference Rooms A & B**

**Saturday or Sunday, February 7 or 8, 6:00 a.m., Site to be announced (all day) - Introduction to Ice Climbing.**

**Saturday and Sunday, February 14 & 15, 6:00 a.m. at St. Mary's Glacier/James Peak (all weekend session) :**

**Saturday – Overnight Expedition Camping**

**Sunday - Crevasse Rescue**

**Makeup Date (if necessary) - Saturday, February 21, 6:00 a.m. at site to be determined (all day)**

This day will be used to make up any missed activities due to extreme weather conditions or traffic problems. Generally, HAMS School sessions are **not** canceled.

**March 20 – 2009 Petitions for Graduation ..... must be postmarked by the 20<sup>th</sup>.**

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## Call for Submissions for the 2008 HAMS "Climbers List"

HAMS is accepting submissions of names and climbs for the fourth annual list of higher or "exotic" peaks climbed by HAMS members.

Submit your climbs to [HAMS.Expeditions@cmc.org](mailto:HAMS.Expeditions@cmc.org) (or mail to the CMC, attention: HAMS), please include, as a minimum: Your name, peak name, summit elevation, location, & date climbed.

This is similar to "The 14'ers List" and "Beyond the 14'ers," published annually in the Trail and Timberline, but a bit more -- well -- arbitrary. The rules, such as they are, include:

- 1) Climbs must be submitted by February 28, 2009.
- 2) Only climbs during calendar year 2008 will be listed.
- 3) An effort will be made to recognize valiant attempts that failed to reach the summit. If this describes your climb, please also indicate the approximate elevation reached, and reason for turning back.
- 4) For all climbs, commentary and/or photographs are appreciated, and may be published at the discretion of the editor as space permits.
- 5) Finally, what constitutes a "higher or 'exotic' peak"? This is where it really gets arbitrary:
  - a) No Colorado peaks. Colorado has lots of peaks and routes which clearly deserve to be called "exotic," but HAMS doesn't want to be in the position of deciding which are, and which are not. If you've climbed one of these, you are invited to write an article for *Thin Air*.
  - b) Any peak outside of Colorado of 14,000 feet or more.
  - c) Lower peaks outside of Colorado that present a degree of difficulty, either in climbing or access. For example, Granite Peak (12,745) Montana, counts, Mount Sunflower (4,039) Kansas, probably doesn't. Unnamed 3,353, the highest point in Gabon, does.

## SUBMIT YOUR OWN TRIP REPORT.

If you would like to submit your own trip report to be published in *Thin Air*, please send to Darin Spykerman at: [spykerd@comcast.net](mailto:spykerd@comcast.net). I'm sure others would love to read your story.

WANT MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HAMS?

VISIT THE RECENTLY UPDATED HAMS WEBSITE AT: [WWW.CMCHAMS.ORG](http://WWW.CMCHAMS.ORG)

INTERESTED IN LEADING YOUR OWN TRIP, TREK, OR EXPEDITION??

If interested, contact Jim Rickard [[HAMS.Expeditions@cmc.org](mailto:HAMS.Expeditions@cmc.org)]

## Upcoming Trips

Upcoming trips approved by the ExCom, as well as tentative trips in the planning stage are listed below. For more information, and for other trips offered by Adventure Travel, be sure to check listings on the CMC website at [www.cmc.org/events/events](http://www.cmc.org/events/events).

To request an application for approved trips, or for even more information, contact the leader at the phone number or email shown.

**Don't forget to submit your story to Thin Air!**

You do not have to climb an exotic peak in a foreign country to be eligible for a submission! Please submit your latest adventure or other article to

[spykerd@comcast.net](mailto:spykerd@comcast.net)

### APPROVED HAMS TRIPS

**Kilimanjaro, 19,340' Feb 7-21, 2009 \$5250, Including air,**



**Leader: Steve Bonowski (TRIP IS FULL)**

**SPECIAL SAFETY NOTE:** as this is written on Feb. 1, '08, the present political violence in East Africa is confined to Kenya. Tanzania is not affected, and due to different tribes and government philosophy, likely will not be. We will offer the optional 3rd week extension to Mt. Kenya again if the situation in Kenya stabilizes.

We're back with the 7th Kilimanjaro trip sponsored by the Club's High Altitude Mountaineering Section. Kili is the world's largest free-standing mountain and is one of the fabled Seven Summits. We again will do the Machame Route and stay at the famous Marangu Hotel, first visited by Club members in the 1950s. The trip includes a four day budget safari to Serengeti, Lake Manyara, and Ngorongoro Crater. A series of training & get-acquainted hikes will be offered beginning in October. Nights are a mixture of a rustic hotel with full amenities, travelers camps, and tent camping. Excellent physical conditioning is required, and a high comfort level with 3rd world travel. Posted price includes air fare, lodging, ground transport, visa costs, Park fees, most meals, leader expenses, and CMC fee. Cost does not include shots, medications, travel insurance, bar tab, excess baggage fees, and a few meals. Final cost may vary slightly depending on air fares and currency exchange. Trip packets are available by regular mail only after March 15 from the trip leader, Steve Bonowski, at [nztrekker@earthlink.net](mailto:nztrekker@earthlink.net), or P.O. Box 280286, Lakewood CO 80228. No phone calls please.

Trip is approved and is now accepting applications



**Parinacota (20,801'), Nevado Sajama (21,484')**

**Trek the Cordillera Real, June 17-June 29, 2009; \$3445**

Here is your chance to climb in the spectacular Cordillera Real of western Bolivia as we tune up and adjust to the altitude. After a three day trek and some time in La Paz, we then head to the southwest corner of the country for climbs of two beautiful extinct volcanoes, including Sajama, the highest in the country. As we drive to the peaks, the high altiplano slowly gives way to the fringe of the Atacama Desert, the driest on the planet.

We will camp out in tents, with meals provided by a La Paz based outfitter. The outfitter provides all transportation, guides for the trek and mountains, and logistics support from porters and mules. Our four nights in La Paz will be in a comfortable two star hotel. In addition to the outfitter and hotel, the posted trip cost also includes air fare (currently running about \$1,500 round trip Denver- La Paz), Bolivian visa, most meals, gratuities, leader expenses, and CMC fee.

Cost does not include shots (yellow fever vaccination is required to enter Bolivia), personal medications, personal gear & equipment, meals in La Paz, travel/evacuation insurance, bar tab, and airline baggage fees. Final trip cost may vary slightly depending on air fares and currency exchange rates.

Participants will be asked to attend a planning meeting in January, 2009 as well as a number of conditioning hikes and climbs next spring.

Trip packets are available by regular mail from the trip leader:

Steve Bonowski, P.O. Box 280286, Lakewood CO 80228 or [nztrekker@earthlink.net](mailto:nztrekker@earthlink.net). No phone calls please.

*"Crevasse rescue" continued from page 1*

man rope team, and we practiced all 3 different positions, and setting up the appropriate C-Drop or Z-pulley systems. Great night, but the real test came on the weekend!

That Sunday, we went to Loveland pass, where a huge overhang-cornice awaited us. With my team, we dug and set-up the anchor and all reviewed what would happen when one of us goes over the edge, to simulate a crevasse fall. When my turn came to "jump" over the edge, it was a bit frightening I must admit, but knowing that my 2 rope mates knew what to do to arrest my fall, I made the leap with a big smile on my face. As I hung there, with snow in my face, I started to practice what the victim could do, by placing the Texas foot-prusicks on and attempting to climb-up. It was very difficult. After about 10 minutes hanging there and not making much upward movement, I was glad to see that my team members had successfully set-up a 3-1 Z-pulley, and quickly hoisted me up to the top. Great experience, as we all took turns with each position.



*A member of the HAMS school practices crevasse rescue*

*Photo: Brendan Oldham*

After the class, I felt 100% more informed as to what I need to do to in the event of a crevasse fall. Clearly, knowing that fellow rope members have the same experience will certainly make Glacier travel much safer and enjoyable. Brendan and his fellow instructors did a fantastic job teaching us. Thanks again!!!!

**THIN AIR**

**The High-Altitude Section of the Colorado Mountain Club**

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