



COLORADO MOUNTAIN CLUB

BACKPACKING SECTION



BACKCOUNTRY CACHE

A Newsletter for Members of CMC Backpacking Section

November 2025

CHAIR'S CORNER - Louise Campbell-Blair



What a fantastic time we had at the BPX End-of-Season Party! A huge thank-you to everyone who submitted photos, joined the celebration, and shared your stories. Along with presenting the very first **BPX Founders Awards** (see below), we recognized and celebrated our amazing **BPX Trip Leaders** who guided us into the backcountry throughout the year.

BPX 2025 Trip Leaders

Barb Edwards

Marsha Littau

Richard Schiebel (3)

Brian Burd

George Vandyke

Robert Dawson (2)

Cheryl Harmel (3)

James Borgel

Sandy Heise

Craig Townsend

John Gode

Sharon Dawson (2)

Daniel Schweissing

Linda Lawson (2)

Steve Norman

Dave Molyneaux (2)

Lisa Shroyer (2)

Terry Ploski

Emily Kachergis

Louise Campbell-Blair (2)

Tim Musil

Eric Butler (2)

Marianne Curtis

Wayne Howell (2)

Garrett Pettingell (2)

Michael Rees

Danielle Piscatelli

We also want to extend our heartfelt appreciation to every member of the **BPX Committee**. Your dedication, creativity, and hard work make all our programs possible — we truly couldn't do it without you! Please join me in thanking: Sandy Heise (Secretary), Dave Molyneaux (Trips), Leila Murphy (Communications), Susan Quechenberger (Membership), Lisa Shroyer (Trip Leaders), Craig Townsend (Routes & Places)

As this is the last BPX Newsletter for 2025, we send our warmest wishes to all BPX Members for Thanksgiving and the Holiday Season.

Stay connected with us – we love hearing from you on our socials and at cmcbpx@gmail.com.

BPX FOUNDERS AWARD 2025

🎉Congratulations to Leila Murphy!🎉

Leila is the heartbeat of BPX communication — the voice behind the **Backcountry Cache Newsletter** and the connection that keeps every member engaged year-round! From writing, editing, and designing to sharing updates and event news, she truly embodies *Building Connections* and *Championing Friendships*.

An avid adventurer and dedicated committee member, Leila goes the extra mile — on the trail and behind the scenes — making a real impact for all BPX members.

🎉 Join us in celebrating **Leila Murphy**, our 2025 **BPX Founders Award** recipient!



BPX END OF SEASON PARTY

The BPX End of Season Party was an entertaining evening catching up with backpacking buddies and trip leaders, enjoying good food and refreshments, and reliving and/or sharing "the places we have been" on this year's BPX adventures! You can view the presentation [here](#).

The BPX 2025 Year in Brief:

• Events

- BPX Trip Leader Summit
- BPX Member Summit
- BPX End of Season Party
- Educational Events
 - Introduction to Backpacking
 - Ultralight & Eco-Friendly Backpacking
 - GAIA GPS Navigation
 - Cooking in the Backcountry with Chef Corso
 - Unleash the Power of your InReach Mini

• Trips

- 47 Backpacking Trips (13 cancelled)
- 3 Camping Trips
- Trips ranged from
 - Easy to Difficult
 - 1 to 5 nights
 - CO, UT, WY
- 188 Members participated in BPX Trips



BPX TRIP REPORTS

Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

Trip Leader Rich Schiebel - Denver Group

On October 15-19 an adventurous group of hikers set out on a combination of day hikes and a backpack in the Escalante region of Utah. Rain immediately before the trip forced a change of destinations from canyon bottoms to canyon rims and cross country. Two of the five days were spent on a backpack to Reflection Canyon, an area where Lake Powell backs up into Cottonwood Gulch and follows its switchbacks upstream. The group witnessed this incredible view from nearby slickrock domes. On the remaining three days the group day hiked to locations off the Hole-In-the-Rock road, including Clear Creek (with views into the canyon just past the iconic Cathedral in the Desert), the rim of the unusual geologic feature known as Cosmic Ashtray, and magnificent Broken Bow Arch.



BPX TIPS OF THE MONTH

This month we are featuring 3 tips:

- With winter on its way, here is a link to an article written by Krista Beyer of the Colorado Avalanche Information Center on [Responsible Trip Planning](#)
- All CMC Trip Leaders have a current certification in Wilderness First Aid. But if you take your dog into the backcountry, they may require first aid as well: [Adapting Skills For Our Canine Companions](#). There are also Dog First Aid classes you can take--just do a Google search.
- Puffy jackets are a backpacker's best friend. Here are some tips to maximize the performance of yours:
 - Avoid compressing your puffy for too long since this can crush its insulation. Instead, loosely pack it into your backpack's main compartment and at home store it uncompressed. This will preserve its loft so it can continue to keep you warm.
 - Don't wear your puffy as a hiking layer. Designed to trap heat, they are great for rest stops and sitting around camp. But wearing them while hiking can cause you to sweat and overheat.
 - Down-filled puffsies lose their insulating properties when wet, so always pack a waterproof shell or rain jacket to wear over it in wet conditions.
 - Dirt, sweat, and oils from your skin can degrade your puffy's fabric and insulation, so wash it periodically using a detergent designed for technical fabrics and down, hang dry, and then tumble dry on low with tennis balls to restore its loft.
 - Campfire embers can easily burn holes in your puffy, so keep a safe distance for the fire and watch for changes in the direction of the wind.
 - Make the right choice of the puffy to bring on a trip based on weather conditions and your activity level. This way you won't end up with an ultralight down jacket in freezing temperatures or a heavy-duty jacket on a warm-weather trip.
 - Repair damage to your puffy as soon as possible using something like [Tenacious Tape](#) or adhesive patches before a small tear turns into a big hole.
 - Choose a puffy designed for backpacking, with features like compressibility and high warmth-to-weight ratios, minimizing weight and space in your pack.
 - Test a new puffy on shorter outings so you can evaluate its fit, comfort, and performance before heading out on a big trip.

Reference: Rasmussen, Derek. "Top Mistakes Backpackers Make with Puffy Jackets (And How to Avoid Them)". Outdoor Vitals, 10 Jan. 2025, https://outdoorvitals.com/blogs/ovtribe/top-mistakes-backpackers-make-with-puffy-jackets-and-how-to-avoid-them?utm_source=Klaviyo&utm_medium=campaign&tw_source=Klaviyo&tw_profile_id=01J4T33DVTM1M11JZVJGHY94QN&tw_medium=campaign&_kx=TjhuAV3aeIHRONfS3GdK4fjOITQ7L5Jp1iacSaOYKRk.RNBq9R

TREAD LIGHTLY

Sustainability, Recycling, Leave No Trace

Have you thought about how to practice Leave No Trace during winter camping season? Here are some great tips from Mark Wetherington at 'Backpacking Light' – 'snow hides our tracks but not our impact'. [Click here for the article.](#)



Photo Credit Bob Dawson



BPX WINTER TRIPS

Not ready to store your camping gear for the winter just yet? Wayne Howell has just added 2 BPX winter trips--no crowds, no bugs, no bears; just a cozy night beneath the winter sky for a true cold-season adventure.

Dates / Registration Date	Difficulty	Trip
Jan 10-11 Sat-Sun / Dec 10	Easy	Lost Lake from Hessie TH (Roosevelt National Forest)
Apr 2-3 Thu-Fri / Mar 2	Moderate	Wind River Basin from East Portal TH (RMNP)

Continue to check the CMC Website since Leaders add trips throughout the season.

SCHOOLS

DENVER	
DAY HIKER SCHOOL	More info here
CPR/AED FOR OUTDOOR ENTHUSIASTS	Dec 2
AIARE L1	Starts Jan 13 Jan 16 Feb 6 Mar 6 Mar 13
WINTER CAMPING SCHOOL	Starts Feb 10
INTRO TO HIKING SAFETY	Mar 25

PIKES PEAK	
AIARE 1	Starts Jan 5
AVALANCHE TERRAIN AVOIDANCE	Starts Jan 14
WILDERNESS FUNDAMENTALS	Starts Feb 23
AIARE AVALANCHE RESCUE	Mar 8
WINTER WILDERNESS SURVIVAL	Starts Mar 9

NORTHERN COLORADO	
AVALANCHE TERRAIN AVOIDANCE	Dec 10
AVALANCHE RESCUE	Feb 14
AIARE L1	Starts Feb 27

WESTERN SLOPE	
AVALANCHE TERRAIN AVOIDANCE	Jan 11

STATE	
WILDERNESS FIRST AID/FIRST RESPONDER	Multiple Offerings - Check CMC Website here
TRIP LEADER SCHOOL	More Info here
TRIP LEADER SCHOOL SCENARIOS	Boulder Denver Pikes Peak Western Slope

Continue to check the CMC Website for additional courses.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

My Favorite Backpacking Things

Raindrops on a Cuben fiber tent at night
Bright colored clothes and a warm sleeping bag
A lightweight pack on a fresh summer day
These are a few of my favorite things

Instant mash potatoes on a cold rainy night
Some crunchy Fritos in a bean burrito wrap
Three Oreos after climbing a high mountain pass
These are a few of my favorite things

Warm and dry sleep socks in a down sleeping bag
A bear cannister I don't have to hang in a tree
My sun hat and shades on a nice clear tundra day
These are a few of my favorite things

Cold filtered spring water on a hot sunny day
Eating ramen and curry and watching the sun set
Stroopwafels and a mocha café at the start of my day
These are a few of my favorite things

When the thunder cracks
When the miles hurt me
When I am feeling lonely
I simply remember my favorites things
And then I don't feel so bad

Lyrics by Randy Blosser

Melody "My Favorite Things" by Rodgers and Hammerstein from The Sound of Music

BPX MEMBER INFO

BPX MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL: When renewing your CMC Membership, remember to choose the Backpacking Section for an additional \$20 on the SELECT YOUR SECTIONS page. You can also join/renew your BPX membership any time by calling the CMC Office at (303) 279-3080.

CMC Backpacking Section Supports Leave No Trace

[View BPX Calendar](#)



The Colorado Mountain Club

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