**President’s Message – 2015 KMC – Year in Review and a look ahead**

This is intended to provide an overview of the club’s activities and issues in 2015. The KMC executive will present their respective portfolio reports in more depth at the **Annual General Meeting, commencing at 6PM, November 20, 2015, @ Super 8, Castlegar.** Please notify P’nina that you will attend (email: p.nina@shaw.ca).

**KMC Trips:**

2015 was a year of low precipitation – not good for winter trips but excellent for summer trips….until the forest fires and smoke started.

The KMC trips are the club’s bread and butter. Club excursions into the scenic West Kootenay back country, along with the physical challenge they present, are the main attraction for members. The friendships that are fostered on club outings are often enduring and help cement members’ allegiance to the club.

Peter Oostlander and Chris Cowan, KMC summer and winter trip directors, were diligent in assembling the 2015 schedules, ensuring a good mix for all levels. Nearly 100 trips proceeded, down somewhat from our 50th anniversary last year due to the lack of snow and the many winter trip cancelations. However, the total number of participants increased by more than 20%, illustrating increasing member enthusiasm for participating in the trips. Kokanee Glacier ski week saw the Alpine Club increase the weekly fee and allow an increase in registration from 12 to 15 participants. The extra numbers seemed to work out, perhaps because the park was one of the few places with great skiing. Chris Cowan is standing for election tonight as Equipment and Trails Director. If successful, he will step aside as Winter trips director and Executive will appoint a replacement to complete the term.

As an aside, a Vicki Hart continued her summit register initiative and several members placed 10 new mountain summit registers. Now you can record your ascent and Henry David Thoreau type comments for others to enjoy on even more peaks.

**Mountaineering School:**

Peter Oostlander also served as the Mountaineering School director. Over the past six years, in every position Peter has served, he has been relentless in trying to improve the club’s product for benefit of its members. The mountaineering courses have been gathering more interest and attendance is increasing. These courses are selected to enhance members outdoor experience and to help everyone return safely home.

**Membership:**

Our Membership director, Jocelyn LaFace reports that the KMC has a total of 388 members. This is up from 352 last year and from 336 the year before.

KMC continues to be a member of the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC, which includes 30+ clubs across the province. FMCBC advocates on behalf of outdoor clubs and also obtains insurance for its member clubs.

Jocelyn, working with our technical guru, Tim Clinton, is now able to electronically forward our membership listing monthly to the stores that give KMC members a discount on their purchases. This compares to the previous once per year mailing of a paper copy to the stores. On the matter of KMC discounts, it should be mentioned that those members, who do not wish to have their names included on the KMC membership list, are making it difficult for themselves to obtain the KMC discount, as the stores determine eligibility by referring to the membership list.

On a sad note, Rossland resident and one of the KMC pioneers, Graham Kenyon, died during the past year. He will be remembered in an upcoming Newsletter issue.

**Treasurer:**

Ross Bates will present the club’s 2015 financial report and the proposed 2016 budget for approval at the AGM. These documents accompany this email. The KMC is in excellent financial shape and membership fee increases are not being proposed.

**Newsletter/Website:**

Tim Clinton does yeoman service as both Newsletter Director and Website Director. He put together 4 newsletters in 2015 and continues to refine the club website after completing major modifications in 2014.

**Secretary:**

Dan Derby fulfills the secretary functions for the club. Exec’s approved minutes are posted on the website.

**Conservation:**

2015 saw the nail in the coffin of the Jumbo Valley project…or did it? Rumblings of it returning as Jumbo Valley ‘light’ are being heard. Another concern of many members was the proposed heli-skiing tenure on the south boundary of Kokanee Glacier provincial park. Conservation Director, Peter Jordan, outlined concerns on behalf of the KMC which were forwarded to the Province and keeps an eye on these and other environmental issues.

**Hiking Camp:**

Hiking Camp continues to be a roaring success. The three one week camps in the Monashees were filled.

Leon Arishenkoff and Mark Hatlen are stepping down from Executive this year. Mark was the Hiking Camp director. Leon represented Equipment and Trails but was often called upon to speak to Hiking Camp issues, as Mark traveled extensively.

**Trails:**

We have begun to be more aggressive in removing vegetation impeding trail and road access. You can expect to see efforts increasing on this initiative in 2016.

**Entertainment:**

P’Nina, KMC Entertainment Director, served in this position for a few terms and put together many memorable events over the years. From my observations, P’Nina worked hard to make these events fun, on a break even basis. She has decided to step down from Exec, but even though the AGM is her last function, she has included a 10 minute power point presentation on a member’s tour of Romania to ensure some entertainment is enjoyed.

As there is one year remaining in the Entertainment director’s term, Executive has happily appointed Laurie Helyer to fill the vacancy.

**Huts:**

Graham Jamin, Cabins Director, maintains the club’s four huts in the Bonnington range with minimal assistance from club members. I don’t think club members appreciate how huge an attraction to out-of-region, out-of-province and out-of-country skiers that these huts have become - not only to recreational skiers but to commercial guided trips, as well.

The huts are providing KMC with a substantial source of revenue. In 2015, even with poor snow conditions, over $11,000 revenue was generated by the huts. While 70% must be retained for maintenance and upgrading of the Bonnington huts, 30% can be put towards other worthwhile mountaineering ventures as decided by the KMC (with the Province’s permission). Some of these discretionary funds went towards the 2015 hut build in the Rossland Range Recreation Site.

**FORR hut:**

Some members of Friends of the Rossland Range, who are also KMC members, approached executive with a request for funding assistance to build a new hut to replace two unauthorized and dilapidated huts in the newly minted Rossland Range Recreation Site. They were pleasantly surprised by the ground swell of support for the project, as the club voted overwhelmingly in a Special Meeting in May to provide the entire amount needed ($10,700). KMC support for the project was also evident in the number of volunteers present during construction. Kudos to Dave Watson and Bob McQueen for taking the lead in this endeavour and completing it on time and on budget. I encourage KMC members to get out to Mt. Lepsoe to enjoy this well built structure.

The final report on the hut will be presented at the AGM. As well, the hut’s name will be decided at the AGM by vote of members present.

**Looking Ahead:**

The upcoming winter trip schedule has already achieved its targeted goal of trip numbers, but more is better. Please consider leading a trip that you find enjoyable, whatever the level of difficulty…Again, trips are the best part of being a KMC member!

As will be seen in Treasurer Ross Bates’ report, the club is in great financial shape. Next year, the executive will start getting its head around how it wishes to use these funds. Member input will be needed in these considerations.

**Election of 2016 Executive:**

As per our constitution, Executive has put together the following slate of nominees to fill the two-year term positions coming up for renewal. Nominees can also be put forward from the floor of the AGM.

President: Doug Clark  
Vice President: Sandra Fuller  
Hiking Camps: Nominee to be forthcoming from Hiking Camp Committee  
Climbing Camp: Vacant - have not found any interest in filling this position  
Mountaineering School: Peter Oostlander  
Equipment and Trails: Chris Cowan  
Newsletter: Tim Clinton  
Membership: Jocelyn LaFace

**Last thoughts:**

The individuals on of the KMC executive are competent and effective. As a result, my workload has not been onerous. Every director willingly rolls up their sleeves and gets down to business to move the club ahead and gives their support to other directors if needed.

Beyond executive, there are many members who make KMC a success. To mention a few, they include trip leaders, hiking camp committee (a huge job), car pool drivers, volunteers on brush clearing, those who take the time to bring their concerns and suggestions forward, and all those who show up for KMC trips with a cheerful, can-do attitude.

Thank you,

Doug Clark

President,

Kootenay Mountaineering Club