



October 2018 | No. 250

Pikes Pique

The Newsletter of the CMC Pikes Peak Group

Pikes Peak Group Program – October 18

Joel Gratz Presents: *Winter Forecast & Insider Tips for Chasing Snow*

Let's talk weather! We'll look at the forecasts for this winter (and if we should trust them), how certain weather patterns and wind directions bring more (or less) snow to certain mountains, and discuss where to find the deepest snow around the globe. Plus, Joel will (try to) answer all of your weather-related questions.



Joel Gratz is the founding meteorologist and Colorado forecaster for OpenSnow.com, a website and mobile app that provides snow forecasts and travel advice to over 2.5 million skiers and snowboarders annually.

Joel graduated from Penn State with a degree in meteorology and then earned his MS and MBA from the University of

Colorado. As a die-hard skier and powder seeker, Joel spent years studying local weather patterns and made his first public snow forecast in 2007 to an email list of 38 people. In 2011, Joel left his day job to work on OpenSnow.com full time. The site has grown since then and now includes skiing weather forecasters across the country.



When he's not forecasting and running the business, Joel talks excitedly about weather to anyone who will listen and he also finds plenty of time to enjoy the outdoors through skiing, biking, hiking, and even chasing and photographing thunderstorms and tornadoes. Joel, his wife Lauren, and son Levi live in Boulder, CO, but when the snow flies, they hit the road to personally test his forecasts.

Join us at the Ute & Yeti, 21 N Nevada Avenue, on Thursday, October 18th at 6:30 for Joel's winter forecast. (*Please note the change in day and venue from our usual monthly program.*)

the PPG
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Interested in serving on the Pikes Peak Group Council? Please contact the Chair.

Welcome New Members!

Melanie Elson
Marcus Fairchild
Abigail Knight



WFA Instructors Needed

Would you like to help the Pikes Peak Group teach Wilderness First Aid? If your answer is yes, now is your chance. Although experience in the medical or rescue field is desirable, we will train you in that area if you are an enthusiastic instructor. We teach four days a year and our instructors rotate so the actual time commitment is about one to two days a year. Please consider helping your group and contact [Paul Schoell](#) for more information.

Conservation Corner

Sandstone Ranch Open Space



Earlier this year, Douglas County purchased a spectacular 2000 acres just south of Perry Park. They are developing a master plan for use of this new park, and one of the possibilities is creating trail access into the National Forest. This could include short loops into the foothills and/or trails leading to the top of the Rampart Range, maybe even through routes toward Rampart Range Road.

New all-season trails would be a great amenity for hiking, biking, snowshoeing, etc. The scenery back there is spectacular!

DougCo is inviting public comments for their master planning process through mid-October. Please [take the brief survey](#) and select access to the Pike national forest as a desired public use. There is also space for comments at the end where you could emphasize opening trails into the forest and foothills.

Adventure in the Canyons of Cedar Mesa, Utah

BY REBECCA MACNAMEE

"That was a character building day," said Mike as we finished setting up camp. I don't think there was a better statement to summarize how we all felt at that moment. Our hike started at 10am with an 800 foot descent into Fish Canyon. By 3pm we'd gone just 4 miles. To make it to our campsite, we had 6 more miles to go.

Hiking 4 miles in 5 hours sounds like it should be easy. And yet, as many of us have experienced, not all miles are created equal. For many sections of the canyon, using the word "trail" was an overstatement. Often the trail had been washed out or just didn't exist, and required navigating and scrambling. Where there was a trail, it was often overgrown or deep, soft sand—it was like walking with weights on your feet. Because of the environment we packed extra water, which made our packs that much heavier. And even in the morning, it was hot.



Photo credit Mike Cromwell

Let's back up. We were in Southeastern Utah. The plan was to hike in Fish Canyon to the junction of Fish, Owl, and McCloyd Canyons, then set up base camp. Day 2 we would explore lower Fish Canyon, day 3 explore McCloyd Canyon, then day 4 exit through Owl Canyon. However, as the wilderness often necessitates, we were contemplating plans B and C. We were low on water, and we hadn't seen any for a few hours.

We finally reached our stopping point on day 1 (not our original base camp plan, which won't surprise you if you did some math on the pace of our first four miles). We had enough water to dry camp for the night, and having just walked for 2 hours without stopping, we were ready to stop moving. So, we set up camp, ate a lot of food, and hung our bear bag (extra carefully, since we'd spotted bear scat and fresh bear prints on the trail in the sand).

Although it can be hard to let go of the original plan, in this case there was an easy answer to what our next day would look like. We were low on water. We knew there was water up

Owl Canyon from other hiker's reports, but we were not certain of water in the lower canyons for our planned day hikes. Given the signs we'd seen, it didn't look promising. So, on our second day, we hiked out Owl Canyon back to the cars.



Photo credit Rebecca MacNamee

This is the joy of exploring and trying something new. There is no guarantee that your plan will pan out (actually, that applies to both new and familiar adventures). Yet, it is always a success, because you got outside and did some exploring.

I've mentioned what made this trail challenging, but there are so many more aspects that made it all worth it. Why would we spend our vacation time in the desert, carrying 40+ pounds, in 90 degree weather? It's for the simple yet stunning view of the canyon in the light of a full moon, so bright that the trees look like they have lights strung on them. To spot and explore cliff dwellings, and imagine what life was like for the people who lived in them. To build appreciation for things in our everyday life that we take for granted, like running water. To discover that a "mud puddle" is much more than that, and contains an abundance of life. To get through tough obstacles as a team. All culminating in that feeling of absolute exhaustion that somehow leaves you wanting more.

I suspect many of you share this feeling. Our adventures don't just get us to a summit or an overlook. Sometimes I think this is why I do it, but it's not really the root of it. You are learning how to be flexible, on the trail and in life, to navigate obstacles you didn't (and often can't) predict. You are looking for ways to push yourself—to find something in you which you didn't know you had—so you can have confidence in your next step and look for new opportunities. I could make a much longer list of reasons why we go outside that go far beyond reaching a certain point on a map.

We get outside to explore beautiful places, but ultimately, we venture to bring all those experiences back into our lives. I hope you soon get to experience a character building day.

Upcoming PPG Classes

Pikes Peak Intro to Desert Hiking and Canyoneering

Starts September 19

If you have only been hiking in the high altitude for your spring, summer, and fall, there is another world out there. When you have climbed enough peaks to wonder what other environments might be out there, the next step for you may be desert terrain. Come learn the proper gear, safety, and entry level techniques for basic desert hiking and basic canyoneering. There are many nuances to this environment that warrant a safe approach such as provided by this class. The classroom session is on 19 Sep from 6:00p to 9:30p. There is a one day field session in Colorado Springs to cover some basics and evaluate fitness levels scheduled for 23 Sep, then we go on a five day trip to the desert scheduled for 26 through 30 Sep. This year's desert trip is planned for the San Rafael Swell in Utah. A strong fitness level to go on full day hikes with scrambling on moderate exposure in hot terrain, squeezing through narrows, hiking in loose sand, and wading through water is required for the field sessions. The field sessions will be progressive in nature to build on skills. Attendance at the classroom session and local field session is required to attend the Utah trip. Cost: \$100 for Pikes Peak Group members and leaders, \$125 for all others.

Pikes Peak Group Trip Leader Training

Starts October 3

This classroom course provides Part 1 of the necessary training and satisfies some of the requirements of becoming a CMC trip leader (for the Pikes Peak Group). Currency in Wilderness First Aid and CPR/AED plus Part 2, which is practice trip leading, are the other requirements for becoming a trip leader. The classroom sessions are on 3 and 11 October from 6:00 to 9:00 pm. Please keep the morning of 13 October open for your first practice at leading a trip. Prerequisite: Must have taken BMS Wilderness Fundamentals and BMS Land Navigation or posses equivalent demonstratable knowledge/experience (and be a PPG member for at least one year for PPG trip leader candidates). Cost: \$25 for Pikes Peak Group members, free for leaders, \$30 for all others.

Wilderness First Aid (WFA) with CPR/AED in Colorado Springs

Starts October 20

This two-day, eighteen-hour ECSI accredited course presents dynamic instruction devoted to teaching you how to respond to medical emergencies in remote settings where definitive medical care is not readily available. Day one consists of classroom presentations and hands-on training in a variety of medical situations that may be encountered in the backcountry and wilderness areas, including CPR. Day two continues with classroom presentations followed by realistic scenarios in the field that simulate the type of medical situations people face in wilderness settings, when calling 911 is not an option. This course satisfies a requirement for trip leaders. The sessions are on 20 October from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm and on 21 October from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm. A link to your comprehensive e-textbook will be emailed prior to class and a field guide will be distributed during the first session. You will receive your WFA with adult CPR/AED certification card emailed to you upon satisfactory course completion. Cost: \$90 for Pikes Peak Group members, \$80 for leaders, \$95 for all others.

PPG ARCPPro Introduction to Self-Rescue

Starts October 27

Ever wondered how you might react if your climbing partner were injured? What about if you were injured – would you be able to get down safely as a team? In the PPG ARCPPro Intro to Self-Rescue Class, you will learn tips and techniques to deal with unexpected situations in the mountains. Whether you are an alpine climber seeking endless ridgelines, looking to break into multipitch ice this year, or a seasoned rock climber with regular days at our local crags, this course is for you! The Self-Rescue Class offered by Pikes Peak Group is a key element of our Advanced Rock Climbing Program. Students learn the skills to deal with many of the situations that can occur in a climbing scenario. This class does not deal with any of the medical components and implications of an injury-based rescue; that is far beyond the scope of the program. This class teaches participants the safety components and transitions that can assist a climbing team to extricate themselves from a number of situations. Prerequisites: Your climbing experience does not need to be extensive. In fact, we recommend that even rookie climbers begin their career with this knowledge. Participants should have basic rock climbing knowledge and skills, such as those gained by taking our BMS Rock Climbing class. We encourage all levels of climbers to register – to learn new skills and to brush up on rusty ones. Cost: \$95.

PPG Basic Mountaineering School – Wilderness Fundamentals

Starts November 26

The Wilderness Fundamentals class is an introduction to important skills and backcountry knowledge to enable participants to independently plan and safely implement a day's outing in the great outdoors—away from civilization and all it provides. Class lecture covers the fundamentals of choosing back country gear (the Ten Essentials), trip planning, nutrition, conditioning, Leave No Trace (LNT) conservation practices, mountain weather, safety, emergency planning protocol (what to do when things go wrong), and a case study of a recent, Colorado wilderness accident. This class is a pre-requisite for many of our other PPG courses and will provide participants with a copy of *Mountaineering: Freedom of the Hills* that will be referenced in other courses! Make sure you have this one under your belt. Cost: \$45 for Pikes Peak Group members, \$55 for all others.

October PPG Trips

Shafthouse Overlook

Saturday, 10/6/2018

Moderate B

Leader: Thomas Mowle, 719-216-3932, tommowle@yahoo.com

Trail Mileage 10, Elevation Gain 1500, Driving Distance 110. Location: Goose Creek Trailhead, in Lost Creek Wilderness. Details: There's nothing quite like the rock formations along Goose Creek—unless it's adding splashes of aspen and riparian color in the fall. Originally, this trip was going to go to above the canyon to Harmonica Arch, but the Forest Service has asked CMC not to visit that location because of its overuse. All but the very end is a relatively easy trail hike. The final approach to the Shafthouse overlook requires a little class 2 bouldering and dropping down into a very narrow passage (narrow = walk sideways without a pack on). We will pass the old cabin ruins on the way out, hang out at the overlook for a while, and visit the final upwelling of Goose Creek on the way back. We may follow a fisherman's path along the creek for part of the way back before rejoining the main trail. Walking pace will be moderate, but overall pace likely will be fairly slow. This is a fabulous hike for autumn photos, so we will be free to pause as desired. Please don't sign up if you just want to move fast all the time. However, 10 miles is 10 miles and days will be getting short, so when we are moving, we will want to move reasonably quickly between points of interest so we can spend plenty of time at them. Thus also please don't sign up if you just want to move slowly all the time. No dogs or other non-human companion animals. *No tickets left.**

Hankins Pass, Lake Park Trail, McCurdy Trail Loop

Saturday, 10/6/2018

Moderate C

Leader: Denise Snow, 719-687-9576, denisedansnow@q.com

Trail Mileage 17, Elevation Gain 3000. Location: We will start at the Spruce Grove TH. Details: This is a beautiful, although strenuous, loop hike in the Lost Creek Wilderness. Starting at the Spruce Grove TH, we will hike the Lizard Rock trail to the Hankins Pass trail and then to the top of Hankins Pass. From here we will head north on the Lake Park trail to Lake Park, keep climbing to the top, continue back west, intersect with the McCurdy Trail and follow this trail back south to the Spruce Grove TH. *No tickets left.**

Florissant Fossil Beds

Saturday, 10/13/2018

Moderate AI

Leader: Christie Lee, 719-243-1821, Christie80905@gmail.com

Trail Mileage 6, Driving Distance 75. Location: Leave 31st and Colorado Safeway at 8:00 am.

Cucharas Canyon Backpack

Saturday, 10/20/2018

Moderate C

Leader: Eric Hunter, 719-266-9647, EHunterCMC@gmail.com

Trail Mileage 8, Elevation Gain 400, Driving Distance 250. Location: Cucharas Canyon. Details: Come enjoy an overnight to one of the remote desert canyons of Colorado. We will backpack from the Wilson Crossing TH south and upstream to the Sheeps Crossing TH. This will require setting up a shuttle on day one. We will find a good spot to camp overnight about half way through the canyon. The trail through the canyon bottom is faint at best requiring many stream crossings and fighting through underbrush and tall grass. Long pants and full grain leather boots recommended. This canyon contains history from recent cattle industry, older sheep herding cultures, and much older Apishapa Phase history. Come see if we can find any or all of it. Do not let the trail mileage fool you. Travel off trail in a desert canyon takes much more energy output than one might expect. This trip is primarily for Pikes Peak and Pueblo Group members. All others will be waitlisted. Register with leader.

Cheyenne Canyon Upper Columbine Trail

Saturday, 10/27/2018

Moderate AI

Leader: Christie Lee, 719-243-1821, Christie80905@gmail.com

Trail Mileage 3, Elevation Gain 250. Location: Leave Ivywild School at 6:30. Details: Cheyenne Canyon to upper Columbine Trail. We will go out for 1.5 hours (hopefully covering 3 miles at moderate to fast pace) and turn around and head for breakfast at Ivywild School... fun morning!

Apishapa Canyon Backpack

Saturday, 10/27/2018

Moderate C

Leader: Eric Hunter, 719-266-9647, EHunterCMC@gmail.com

Trail Mileage 8, Elevation Gain 400, Driving Distance 250. Location: Apishapa Canyon. Details: Come enjoy an out and back overnight to one of the remote desert canyons of Colorado. We will backpack from the historic ranch near Buckleton Canyon south and upstream to a spire and camp near a historic shepherd cabin. The trail through the canyon bottom is faint at best requiring many stream crossings and fighting through underbrush and tall grass. Long pants and full grain leather boots recommended. This canyon contains history from recent cattle industry, older sheep herding cultures, and much older Apishapa Phase history. Come see if we can find any or all of it. Do not let the trail mileage fool you. Travel off trail in a desert canyon takes much more energy output than one might expect. This trip is primarily for Pikes Peak and Pueblo Group members. All others will be waitlisted. Register with leader.

*You may want to get on the waitlist in case participants cancel.

Member Discounts

Adventure Medical Kits
 Ajax Bike and Sport
 American Mountaineering Museum
 Atrevida Beer Co (was Great Storm)
 Bentgate
 Breckenridge Nordic Center
 City Rock
 Friction Labs
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 The Mountaineers Books
 The Trailhead
 TrailRunner Magazine
 Vagabond Ranch Huts
 Wilderness Exchange Unlimited



Why I wear a helmet when mountaineering.



To register for classes or trips,
 go to www.cmc.org

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Pikes Pique is the monthly newsletter of the Pikes Peak Group of the Colorado Mountain Club. It is a forum for enhancing skills for backcountry travel in the Colorado mountains and communicating information, news, and upcoming events to members and interested parties.

The purpose of the CMC is to unite the energy, interest, and knowledge of the students and lovers of the mountains of Colorado; to collect and disseminate information regarding the Rocky Mountains on behalf of science, literature, art, recreation; to stimulate public interest in our mountain areas; to encourage the preservation of flora, fauna, and natural scenery; and to render readily accessible the alpine attractions of this region.

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cmc.org/About/CMCGroups

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- Ads: ¼-page - \$25, ½-page - \$50

Non-members:

- Text: \$3 per line, \$15 minimum
- Ads: ¼-page - \$30, ½-page - \$60

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Have a fun story or trip you want to share? Please submit your articles, along with pictures, to be considered for publication in the next *Pikes Pique* newsletter.

Please send to:

David Anderson, editor
danderso@uccs.edu

The deadline for submissions is the 14th of each month.

Use the above contact information for corrections and comments as well.