

# Denver Safety & Leader Newsletter

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*A communication for CMC Denver Leaders*



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## **SPRING LEADER/INSTRUCTOR GATHERING**

What do you do when a hiker won't listen to instructions and wants to bail out midway through the hike? How do you prioritize the wait list, or if you're just getting started, build a following among fellow CMC members?

A panel of veteran trip leaders, including Jeff Flax, Karen Hurley, Mike Zyzda, Norm Arlt, and Kevin Schaal, tackled these and other questions raised by moderator Bob Collins and an engaged audience of 60 trip leaders at the April 21 Leader/Instructor Gathering sponsored by the Denver Safety and Leadership Committee.

Trip Leader tips covered the gamut of the five trip stages –planning, trailhead, field, post-trip meeting, and follow up. After the session, one attendee wrote: "I didn't realize there were so many leadership styles and that they all can work."

Some highlights of the planning stage (the other stages will be covered in future newsletters):

### **Planning**

- If you experience members registering for multiple trips on the same day, you can check the rosters of other hikes and notify the "double bookers" that you are removing them from your trip since they are also registered on other trips.
- Pre-trip emails provided to the roster participants 2 to 3 days in advance of the trip should include basic information such as meeting location, meeting time, car pool arrangements and destination, but also include specific details related to: weather, equipment, expected trail conditions.
- The CMC email system doesn't allow attachments, so some leaders communicate via

## Planning Continued

personal email that allows them to include maps or other data or links to trail descriptions. Privacy issues are avoided by sending the message to yourself and blind-copying participants. Leaders may ask members at the trailhead if they are comfortable with sharing their email addresses via a post trip report or map.

- Request members provide critical medical information to you in advance of the trip via the pre-trip email.
- A hiker classification matching the trip classification is no longer required, but trip leaders can set prerequisites for their trips. The prerequisites can range from schools completed to relevant hiking experience. Leaders may contact new participants or those who do not have a classification equal to the trip classification to ensure the trip is a good fit.
- If you need to cancel a trip, send a cancellation notice through the CMC mail system and request each participant on the roster respond to your personal email by a specific time and date to ensure they received the notice. Call any registrant who does not respond by the stated date and time. Keep your wait-listers informed via email if you think the trip will open up.
- You can insert a registration deadline in your trip information. You can also “close” the trip to additional registrations by unclicking Active in the Edit function of the scheduling screen.
- The registration system is designed to enable those on the wait list to move up automatically

when a member on the roster cancels. However, there are situations when a leader may wish to move a member on the waitlist forward. These situations may include: need for another leader on the trip; need for a member who has a 4WD vehicle and can drive 4WD roads, need for a member who has completed WFA, etc.

- If you’re meeting your group at the trailhead, be sure to appoint a parking leader to facilitate the ridesharing. In keeping with the CMC rule that trips start at the trailhead, let people self-organize instead of assigning particular participants to specific cars.

**Trouble getting people to sign up?** Hike or co-lead with leaders who have a following and learn the trips and techniques they use. Attend/assist in schools to meet new members and let them know of the trips you have scheduled. Other suggestions— post trip social activities or special snacks on the trail.



## **SUPPORT AID FOR LEADERSHIP TRAINING (SALT)**

In January the Denver Group Council (DGC) launched a program to support training for active and potential Denver leaders. The Denver schools for which potential and active leaders may apply for tuition-free enrollment include:

Wilderness First Aid (WFA) and WFA Refresher, Trip Leader School (TLS), Avalanche Terrain Avoidance (ATA) and ATA Refresher, AIARE Level 1 and Level 1 Refresher, CPR, Navigation 1 and 2, Snow Travel 1, Wilderness Trekking School (WTS), Wilderness Survival School (WSS), Alpine Scrambling Course (ASC) and Trad Lead Climbing School (TLCS). Potential leaders need to be active Denver Group members who have participated in at least one event offered by the Denver Group in the 12 months prior to the date of application.

To qualify for tuition-free lower level schools, current leaders must lead one Denver trip posted in the activity schedule or be a senior instructor in a Denver school during CMC's fiscal year (October 1 through September 30). Higher level schools require leading a specific number of trips within a designated time frame in advance of the SALT application. Field trips led by senior instructors are

equal to non-school trips for purposes of this program.

Through May, 25 potential leaders completed WFA and TLS, two leaders completed ATA, four leaders completed AIARE Level 1, two leaders enrolled in ASC, and a sprinkling of leaders enrolled in WFA Refresher and CPR.

The first active member to have completed WFA and TLS under the SALT program, and be certified as a leader is Deb Lachowetz. Other new CMC Denver trip leaders who have completed WFA & TLS through the SALT program are: Ron Hileman, Brett Corning, and Lou Henefeld. Welcome to the CMC Denver leader cadre.

Leaders and Senior Instructors, please let your aspiring members/students know about this program by directing them to the application at: <https://goo.gl/XuhvKm>

Leader applications should be sent to: [CMCtripleader@hotmail.com](mailto:CMCtripleader@hotmail.com)

Use this link for the updated Non-Technical Trip Leader Application: <http://www.hikingdenver.net/groupresources>

## **HIKER CLASSIFICATION DOES MATTER**

Although it's true that classification status is no longer required to sign up for a CMC Denver trip through the calendar, a hiker's classification still matters. Here's why:

1. Trips are safer and more enjoyable when participants share similar abilities
2. Higher classifications are required for certain schools and trips
3. Saves leader communication time to make sure participants are qualified for a trip

4. Motivates members to set goals, go on more demanding trips, renew membership, and become leaders themselves

As a leader, you can help the process by keeping a few classification forms in your backpack for when members complete qualifying hikes. Even if the participant didn't sign-up for the hike intending to upgrade his/her hiking status, you can educate and encourage them to do so by offering to sign off on the spot.

## RATTLESNAKES REDUX



**Part one - Background.** In his excellent April 2012 article, Dr. Mike Weaver reminded us that warm weather brings out rattlesnakes in the Front Range hills. Hikers need to remain alert, particularly when traveling off trail. A motionless rattlesnake in the grass can be nearly invisible until it is stepped on and bites in self-defense.

Rattlesnakes do not always rattle in warning. They prefer to strike from the coiled position and can reach about half of their body length. A large 8-foot snake could strike about 4 feet away.

Not all strikes result in envenomation. The absence of severe pain and swelling at the bite site after one hour suggests a “dry bite.” In the event of envenomation, there is limited effective first aid. The only effective treatment is anti-venom, which is only available at a hospital, and is most effective if administered within 1-2 hours.

If someone is bitten, keep away from the snake. There is no need to kill or capture it. Keep the victim as calm as possible, since panic and movement increase the spread of the venom. Clean the wound and apply a loose sterile dressing. Immobilize the affected body part and remove constricting jewelry, such as rings or bracelets, which may be impossible to remove if swelling develops. Get the victim to a hospital ASAP, calling for a helicopter evacuation if necessary. Time is critical, and walking out may be necessary if no other option is available.

**What not to do.** Don't make skin incisions or attempt to suck or suction the venom. This is ineffective and may cause more damage. Also, a tourniquet is not recommended except in the event of severe envenomation with systemic symptoms and no chance for a timely evacuation. A tourniquet should be just tight enough to constrict the skin, but not tight enough to stop the arterial pulse. It may retard the spread of venom, but is likely to result in the loss of the affected limb .

**Part two - Update provided by Jeff Flax, WFA Director.** There have been numerous reports of snake sightings in the past few weeks as the weather is warming. **IT IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL TO TRANSPORT SNAKE BITE VICTIMS TO AN EMERGENCY ROOM** as quickly as possible. Flight for Life must be a consideration if they can transport the victim more quickly than you can drive to a hospital. You should contact 911 as quickly as possible. Snake bites are a life-threatening condition. St. Anthony's reports that they have treated several snake bite victims in the past few weeks. St. Anthony's ER is located at 11600 W. 2nd Place, Lakewood, CO 80228, 720-321-0000.

**Editors.** We've confirmed from a couple of sources that a single dose of the anti-venom, called FabAV (or CroFab), is costly, very costly, many, many thousands of dollars - but normally covered by insurance. A single dose is 4-6 vials. The average victim may need 12 vials. Dr. Weaver referred us to a fascinating 2015 Wilderness Medical Society article which updated its guidelines for the treatment of pitviper envenomations. According to the article, there were 6,919 snakebites reported to poison centers in 2012, of which more than 4,000 were by pitvipers, just one of which was fatal. Clearly, deaths from snakebites are quite rare -- 5-6 cases per year in the U.S. “[A] surprising number [of those] result from snake-handling during religious services, or other reckless actions...Denim may reduce the amount of the venom by two-thirds...The patient should be calmed, as fatalities are

## RATTLESNAKES REDUX Editors' Note Continued

rare...There is nothing that can be done in the field to significantly alter the outcome of a serious snakebite...field first aid should not delay rapid transfer to a facility capable of safely administering anti-venom...calm the patient...take a good photograph (to determine if the snake is in fact venomous); clean the snakebite with soap and water or antiseptic, apply sterile dressing; and splint without compression.”

Or, as we would put it: Assure your hiker he/she is not going to die. Take but a minute to immobilize and clean the wound. Then, one way or the other, get to a hospital ASAP.



## TIPS AND REMINDERS

- How to make reservations at the Indian Peaks Wilderness. Call the Boulder Ranger District 303/541-2500. Identify yourself as a CMC leader. Request to speak to a ranger regarding permits for a group of more than 8. Identify the destination location, date and number expected in the group (limit 12). The ranger will advise if that particular zone is available on the requested date. If available a paper permit will be sent to you by USPS; the permit must be displayed on your pack while hiking in IPW.
- Free Shuttle. Free Shuttle Service is available to the Hessie TH on weekends through October 2nd. Complete information about the shuttle service is available at this link:  
<http://www.bouldercounty.org/os/parks/pages/hessie.aspx>
- Miss Golden Cone Zone. Avoid the construction at US 6 and 19th Street in Golden by turning off US 6 to Johnson Road. Go North on Johnson Rd to South Golden Road, then to Ford (one way) and to 10th & Washington, the AMC.
- Alternate Parking Locations. The Golden Garage at 1250 Jackson, across from the side of the Golden Post Office, is filling early. Frequently there is no place to park when returning from a trip in the afternoon. Alternate parking locations include: (i) Golden Gate Canyon Road - Off Hwy 93, turn left at the stop light; next left is a gravel parking lot; and (ii) RTD Park & Ride, Jeffco Administrative Center - 605 Johnson Road. Be certain to designate on which level you will meet your trip participants.
- Use on-line Backpacker Magazine references for skills. Example: You've taken WFA or the WFA Refresher but never been in a situation where you actually used the wilderness first aid skills. How much do you remember? *Backpacker Magazine* has many on-line short videos which teach outdoor skills. The on-line skill videos are free. Some of these videos you may agree with, some not, e.g., boiling water with hot rocks in a plastic bag. Try taking this first aid quiz offered on-line by *Backpacker Magazine* at  
<http://www.backpacker.com/skills/beginner/wilderness-threats/wilderness-first-aid-quiz/>

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