

# Outdoors

## CLIMATE CONTROL



### *A ski bum's Glacier getaway*

Photo by Phil Carlstedt

**Above:** Jessica Stugelmayer hikes up Logan Pass with her snowboard in early July. Skiers and snowboarders looking to beat the heat can play in Glacier's snow until it melts in August.

**Jessica Stugelmayer**  
Leader reporter  
reporter3@leaderadvertiser.com

The sun beat down, making me sweat and warming my skin. As I sat in the early July heat, I sunk my hands into the refreshing white stuff below me— snow.

That's right. Snow.

Surrounded by soaring peaks and stunning arêtes, I took a deep breath of the fresh Rocky Mountain air. The brisk oxygen chilled my nostrils as I inhaled.

I exhaled as I stood up. With my board strapped to my feet, I jumped, turned and accelerated down the slushy hillside to a chorus of cheers from an on-looking crowd.

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Ski bums and winter warriors long for soft, fluffy powder mornings when the summer heat kicks in. Oregon's Mount Hood offers summer trips up the mountain that have long been a favorite in the ski and snowboard community. Trips cost a hefty \$700 to \$2,000 per session, grossly over many ski bums' budgets. Free is more in the price range.

If free is an amount you can ante up, look no further than our own backyard. Logan Pass is nestled at the top of Going to the Sun Road in Glacier National Park. While admission to the park costs money, access to snow on the pass is complimentary with entry.

Phil Carlstedt has ridden the snow in Glacier more than once. He said he heard stories about people skiing in the park years before he actually did it himself. Carlstedt's first time down Logan Pass was in 2008 with a group of friends, who went in with backcountry gear.

Carlstedt said the great thing about summer snowboarding in Glacier is that anyone with skis or a snowboard can do it. Better yet, there



Photo by Jessica Stugelmayer

**Phil Carlstedt goes off a jump made from snow on Logan Pass in Glacier National Park.**

aren't mobs of people rushing up the hill to get in summer turns.

Backcountry skiing and snowboarding

typically requires a specific setup. A split board, a snowboard split down the middle that can be used as skis then snapped back

together, or alpine touring skis are used to help advanced ski aficionados get up mountains to access fresh powder. With this equipment skiers can get farther back into Logan Pass, but the snowfield can be reached in regular gear.

The boardwalk on Logan Pass leads tourists right up into the snowfield. With a little more trekking, you can reach the top of the snow and be on your way down the icy and slushy landscape.

While the slope isn't the adrenaline-laced, thrill ride most skiers and snowboarders crave in the winter, the uniqueness of snowboarding in July makes up for it.

"Being able to slip into your sandals from snowboard boots is amazing," Carlstedt said.

Snow is usually present on the pass until August, so there is still some time to cool off from the heat wave Western Montana received this July. Sleds and inner tubes are also allowed on the snow for less daring adventurers. Park rangers ask revelers keep off the grass, where the growing season for the small yellow wildflowers is short and the blooms are fragile.

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The snow flew up behind my board as I cut and turned through the slush, frozen globs hitting the bare skin above my boots. A quick turn to the right and I avoided a patch of mud with wildflowers sticking out. I sped on and hooked a left, weaving my way through a group of tourists, who shouted in earnest at the sight of two snowboarders whipping down the slope.

A couple minutes later, we were at the bottom of the hill that took nearly 45 minutes to climb on foot with gear strapped to our backs. We sunk into the slush near the top of the boardwalk as we came to a stop. Turning back, I could see the serpentine trails we left in the snow.

By the next day, our lines would melt away.



Photos by Phil Carlstedt and Jessica Stugelmayer

**Left:** Stugelmayer rubs oil on the snowboards to reduce friction. **Center:** Glacier National Park's historic buses chauffeur tourists to Logan Pass. **Right:** A lone snowman stands in the sun.

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