



# Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

January  
December, 1993-1994

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## MEETING

**Time and Place:** !!!NOTE - SPECIAL MEETING PLACE THIS MONTH!!! Due to the large crowds expected to appear, the January meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 12, in the Montana Power Building at 1903 Russell Street in Missoula. We apologize for any confusion which this may create. Normally the Club meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month in the County Commissioner's conference room, which is located on the second floor of the Annex (new portion) of the Missoula County Courthouse.

**January Program.** Dan Mazur, a Missoula climber, will present a slide show on his 1993 climb of the West Ridge of K-2. The January 1994 issue of Outside magazine, on Page 22, described the expedition as follows: "It took them a marathon 75 days, but an Anglo-American expedition summited K2 in an eleventh-hour effort last September 2, becoming the only team to make it up the perilous route since a Japanese team first did it 13 years ago. Expedition leaders Dan Masur of the United States and Jonathan Pratt of Great Britain stayed on the mountain long after the rest of their nine-member squad had retreated, gambling that an unusually late weather window would last a few more days. Then, starting from Camp V, above 26,000 feet, the pair ascended to the 28,250 foot summit and returned in an epic 32 hours. In a harrowing season on K2 last year, (see "K2, Still the Hairiest," Dispatches, November 1993), the Mazur/Pratt team was the only expedition to summit without losing a climber. . . ." Need we say more? Don't miss it.

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## TRIP CALENDAR

**January 9, Sunday, St. Mary's Peak.** Day ski trip to St. Mary's Peak in the Bitterroots. The trip will involve skiing about 5 miles along a road, trail, and/or ridge to reach the 9,351 foot summit of this peak, which contains a lookout tower. This trip is of moderate difficulty for the average telemark skier. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for details.

**January 15-16, Sat-Sun, Lion Creek.** Join us for an overnight backpack ski trip up Lion Creek in the Swan Range. The trip will involve skiing 7-8 miles along a wide, gentle trail, past a spectacular waterfall to an area in the vicinity of Swan Peak. There are several open slopes in the basin with great skiing opportunities. Avalanche danger is unknown at this time, but will be assessed when we arrive. Call Cheryl Beyer at 251-2344 for details.

**January 22, Saturday, Lookout Pass Ski Area.** Carpool to Lookout Pass Ski Area which is one of the smaller local ski areas, but it has several nice runs on all sides of the mountain. This will be an excellent opportunity for one to learn to telemark ski or practice your turns for the backcountry. Lift tickets not included. Call Gerald Olbu, 549-4769, for details.

**January 29, Saturday, Gash Point.** Ski to Gash Point, one of the better places in the Bitterroots for telemark skiing. The trip will depend on conditions and access (i.e. whether the road is plowed); an alternate Bitterroot location may be chosen. We will try to do a loop, beginning at Bear Creek overlook, to Gash Point, then ski down the bowls. This will be a moderately strenuous trip for the average telemark skier. Call Dave Pengelly at 728-6512 for details.

**February 6, Sunday, Trapper Peak.** Ski to Trapper Peak, the tallest peak in the Bitterroots. The trip will require some road skiing, followed by 6 miles along a ridge to the 10,157-foot peak. The upper half of the mountain is characterized by gentle terrain with widely scattered trees or completely open slopes which should have great skiing opportunities. This will be a long strenuous trip for the average telemark skier. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for details.

**March 5, Saturday, Stemple Pass to Fleisher Pass.** Cross-country ski trip between Stemple Pass and Fleisher Pass, which are located southeast of Lincoln, and are separated by 12-14 miles of rolling terrain along the continental divide. This door-to-door crossover trip is being coordinated with the outing club from Great Falls. The groups will meet in Lincoln and swap

cars, each group will go to a different pass, and the groups will pass each other while heading for their own cars at the other pass. This will be a chance to see some new country and meet some people from out of town, although only briefly. Call Ed Monnig for details at 721-2707.

Wanna lead a trip? If you are interested in leading a trip, help is only a telephone call away; Gerald Olbu, 549-4769, will be delighted to sign you up.

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TRIP REPORTS

Alberton Gorge, December 5. Just your typical winter weekend in Montana. On Saturday Art Gidel, Colleen Hunter and I went telemarking at Big Mountain, and on Sunday, December 5, Art, Mike Worrall, and I went kayaking on the Alberton Gorge. There was an inch of new snow on the ground, but the sky was blue and sunny. During the day the snow burned off much of the open south slopes above us, but remained untouched down in the gorge and under the trees. A week of mild weather had taken much of the ice off the river, but we had to slide our kayaks across one ice bridge between Boateater and Fang, and two ice bridges below Fang. A fourth ice bridge between Tumbleweed and Surfer Joe blew out just as we got out of our boats to inspect it. The surfing was great at Triple Bridges, but we had to post a sentry above the rapid to warn the surfers as large (4-12 foot diameter) cakes of ice floated through. Most icebergs are very difficult to spot from down in the rapid. They are only visible for a short time as they come over the horizon line at the head of the rapid. Even the really big cakes get covered by water and disappear as soon as they hit the first wave. We all got conked numerous times by little chunks of ice, and Art went right over a four foot diameter slab, but nobody got clobbered by a big berg. Dry suits and fancy new waterproof rubber gloves with polypro liners kept us warm and comfortable all day. On the way back to town we passed Doug Kolwaite and a friend as they were getting dressed for an hour of surfing at Triple Bridges. They were dumbfounded to meet anybody else on the river. In 1993, Art and I kayaked in every month but February; in 1994 we are shooting for all twelve months. - Peter Dayton.

Discovery Ski Area, December 12. In spite of all the scary stories we heard about there being no snow, Dave Bixby and Gerald Olbu drove to Discovery Ski Area to find out for ourselves. We were very pleased to find mostly good conditions. Most runs had a firm base with about two inches of powder, which I found to be ideal. The best thing of all was that there were very few people there; we almost had the whole slope to ourselves, which was great for my wide tele turns. - Gerald Olbu.

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OFFICERS

Gerald Olbu, President - 549-4769  
Dave Pengelly, Secretary-Treasurer - 728-6512

Peter Dayton, Newsletter Editor 728-8101  
Rick Murney, Vice President - 543-7586

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Check one: Individual (\$6.00/year) \_\_\_\_\_ Family (\$8.00/year) \_\_\_\_\_

Mail a check payable to  
"Rocky Mountaineers" to  
Dave Pengelly  
P.O. Box 4262  
Missoula, Montana 59806

THE MOUNTAIN EAR  
P.O. BOX 4262  
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(STAMP)

FIRST CLASS MAIL