



Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

February, 1994

MEETING

Time and Place: 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. The February meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 9.

January Program. Daphne Tuthill and Doug Day will present a slide show explaining everything that you need to know in order to go bicycle touring on Bali. You are thinking, let's see, isn't the Bali River in Glacier Park? No, no, no; Bali is an island out in Indonesia, off the east end of Java somewhere. So if Missoula's weird weather is getting to you, and you are tired of going to Butte for your vacations, come to the meeting and find out how to get to Bali with a bike, where to stay, and what to do while you are there.

TRIP CALENDAR

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.

February 13, Sunday, Moose Ridge. Easy to moderate all-day ski trip in the Lolo Pass area which will be a great opportunity for people wishing to do ski touring without the risk of breaking bones and other body parts on some of the more difficult trips. This will be a loop route along beautiful and scenic Moose Ridge following roads and/or trails. Call Julie Huck at 549-2226 for details.

February 19-20, Sat-Sun, Como Peak. This will be a winter mountaineering trip. We will ski to the base of the Como Peaks, which are in the Bitterroots south of Hamilton, and make our base camp. On Sunday, we will proceed as far as we can on skis. The final approach to the peak will require an ice axe, but probably not crampons. There are three Como Peaks; the south side of the east peak is the easiest. We will assess the situation when we get there. Non-climbers are welcome to come for the overnight ski trip. Call Gerald Olbu, 549-4769, for details.

February 26, Saturday, South Mission Mountains. Exploratory ski mountaineering trip along the ridge to the east of the Fall Creek (Scenic Lake) drainage to Weather and Blacktail Peaks, which lie generally between Grey Wolf Peak and Grey Wolf Lake. The scenery should be spectacular, the slopes and ridgetops are open but low angle, and the bushwacking down low could be gross. If road access or snow conditions deteriorate, we will reschedule. Call Peter Dayton at 728-8101 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.

March 6, Sunday, Mission Falls, Ice Climbing. This will be an opportunity to learn a little bit about and practice some ice climbing, which will be suitable for beginners or anyone interested in mountaineering. Mission Falls, located near St. Ignatius, is easily accessible and has been described as an "ice climbing arena" in Ron Brunkhorst's book "Big Sky Ice." There are many places to ice climb in this area and several can be top-roped. Two ice axes and crampons are required; some equipment may be borrowed or shared. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for details.

March 12, Saturday, Koch Peak. Ski to Koch Peak, which is in the Bitterroots, northwest of Como lake and south of Hamilton. This will be a long day trip and will involve some on-trail and some off-trail skiing. Depending on the conditions, if the snow is windblown off the peak and the rocks are exposed, the final approach may involve scrambling over the rocks to the peak. Call Dave Pengelly at 728-6512 for details.

April 2-16, ski tour of Yellowstone National Park. Ten to 12 days of back country skiing through the beautiful northern high country of Yellowstone Park. Those interested should commit by March 10, so all participants can take part in the trip planning and arrangements.. Call David Bixby at 721-4224 for details.

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.

TRIP REPORTS

Wisherd Ridge, January 9. When the days are short, Wisherd Ridge, which is up the Blackfoot, is a good place to go skiing because it is so easy to get to. David Bixby, Linda Bailey, Jamie Green, Karen Lake, Ed Van Aelstyn, and Gerald Olbu opted for Wisherd Ridge rather than St. Mary's Peak for that reason. We drove as far as we could, then we skied up the road 3-4 miles until we came to the outlet of the bowl, where we left the road and headed for up to the ridge top. The flat ridge top was enjoyable to ski and quite scenic with the many snow-blown white bark pine trees. After lunch we skied down the bowl which had beautiful, foot deep powder. The skiing was so great that some of us went back for another run down the bowl. The ski down the road was extremely fast. - Gerald Olbu

Gash Point, January 29, 1994: A modified version of the scheduled trip to Gash Point was enjoyed by 8 skiers, including Paul Morgan of Victor, Lisa McKenzie, Jim and Janet Surrena, Dave Gaeuman, Art Gidel, Ralph Flockerzi and Dave Pengelly. The scheduled loop trip was canceled due to the lack of snow at lower elevations. Instead we did a straightforward approach off the road system that accesses the ridge to the north of the Gash Creek drainage. We were able to drive to 5300 feet elevation. Those with real snow tires didn't even have to chain up! The snow pack is definitely thin and crusted. It snowed most of the day so we managed several runs on the top 600 feet of the ridge in good powder on top of a solid crust. The trip out was a bit more exciting when we got the combination of closely spaced trees and a breakable crust. Overall it was a good trip and a chance to meet some new folks and to introduce them to the club and to Gash Point. The only drawback was that we couldn't find a spot with enough wind for a typical lunch stop. - Dave Pengelly

Kayaking, January 1994. The demented duo of Peter Dayton and Art Gidel went kayaking in the Alberton Gorge four times in January. The weather has been pleasant and the water at good levels for playing. In particular, at the end of January the river finally got low enough to produce near-optimum conditions for endos at Split Rock, for the first time since 1992. We have hooked up with a group of kayakers who went boating even more than we did in December and January. Our advice for 1994; forget about skiing and buy a boat. - Peter Dayton

OFFICERS

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

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

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
MISSOULA, MT 59806

(STAMP)

FIRST CLASS MAIL