



# MOUNTAIN EAR

**Monthly Newsletter of the Rocky Mountaineers**

The Rocky Mountaineers is organized as a nonprofit Club for the mutual benefit of its members to promote all phases of recreational use of mountainous areas.

**\*\*\*February 2003\*\*\***

## Local Trails, Fire, Weeds and more

We have an interesting talk scheduled for our February 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. The speaker is Don Carroll - District Ranger, Missoula Ranger district on the Lolo National Forest. Mr. Carroll has been a Ranger at Missoula since March of 2000. From 1989 - 2000 he was a Ranger at Medicine Bow National Forest, Saratoga, Wyoming, and had a career in Colorado prior to that. He enjoys fly fishing, hiking, mountain biking, skiing, cooking and travel, and he and his wife enjoy doing one or two local peaks each summer.

He will cover several subjects this evening, including: The Future Trail System at the Rattlesnake, Blue Mountain and Pattee Canyon, Trails of Rock Creek, What's Up with the Lewis and Clark Celebration?, Weeds and More Weeds, and Fire on the Mountain. There will be time for questions. Take advantage of this opportunity to exchange ideas with the Forest Service.

In March we will have a mountaineering slide show on the Alps by that cross country enthusiast and former club President, Bill Myers. These slides are outstanding! In April Jamie Jonkel, grizzly specialist with Fish, Wildlife and Parks, will show a video and talk about safety in bear country. May is our annual election. Our bylaws call for new officers after two years. Time for some of the rest of you to think about sharing the burden.

Meetings are on the second Wednesday at 7 PM September through May. They are held on the second floor of the Courthouse Annex on Pine St., and are free and open to all.

## Recreational Survey

So far we have only gotten two responses from the Member's Survey sent out last month. Interestingly, ice climbing and trail running were the two activities not marked as items of interest. Trips of any length for couple and individuals, but not families, were marked. More thorough descriptions in the newsletter were wanted. There was a split on the club focusing on recreation, or becoming more environmental. We need more input, and so we have changed it to a Recreational Survey. There is a box at the bottom to check if you are a club member. All are encouraged to respond. Current and future leaders would like to have a better idea on what people would like to do.



## Baja Kayak Trip

Alexandra Gorman of Women's Voices For The Earth informs us that there is an upcoming sea kayaking trip to Baja March 1-8, 2003. This is part of the GUTS (Girls Understanding Their Strengths) program, and will be an excellent outdoor learning experience. The trip will be limited to 12 women and will cost \$850.00. For more info: [wve@wildrockies.org](mailto:wve@wildrockies.org), or 406-543-3747.

## and this month's thank you . . .

to the anonymous donor or donors who sent in \$25.00 to the cabin fund. We got decent turnout at our work parties last year. If we could just collect more "users fees" we could keep the cabin in excellent shape.

## TRIP REPORTS

### January 5<sup>th</sup> Pack Creek Road

Fred Schwanemann, Lois Crepeau, Susan Sestric, Beth Peluso, Zona Lindermann, Julie Warner, Dave Kahl, and Will Butler skied Pack Creek Road starting at Lolo Pass at 11:30 AM and reaching Rt. 12 around 2:30 PM, eating lunch along the way. Skies were cloudy starting out and clear at 2:30 PM with no precipitation. The snow was good all the way along the eight mile route. It was a perfect day. - Fred

### January 12<sup>th</sup>

Karen, Reita, Susan, Bobbie, Beth, Will and myself headed for Lost Trail with the thought in mind to do some back country skiing from the designated ski area. Unfortunately the weather was blowing snow quite badly so we headed for Chief Joseph thinking it would be more protected there. We skied to the warming hut which for several was a first time visit. We had a hot drink then headed out on the Whoopee trail, on to Windy corner, then to the Vista View trail to the cut-through trail and back to the warming hut for another hot drink. The conditions were great and a good time was had by all. Saddle Mountain will be another trip before the ski season is over. - Lois

### January 18<sup>th</sup>

I packed up the little barbeque and camp stove along with Zona and Karen and headed for Lolo Pass for a full moon ski. What a gorgeous, clear night. No wind as we cooked the brats and ate the scrumptious soup and hot chocolate and peppermint Schnapps in the parking lot, which by the way is an excellent place to tailgate for full moon skiing fun. We skied out Packer Meadows to the two mile marker, then up that road to the cattle guard. We met the snowmobile groomer out in the meadow as he was heading for the parking lot, which made the trip even nicer. Two mile road was groomed and it was so light out we didn't have to use the head lamps. At the cattle guard we stopped for a snack and heard a Pygmy Owl. Strangest noise I have ever heard in the back country. Sounded like a squeaky wheel. More fun!!!!!! - Lois Crepeau.

### January 19<sup>th</sup>

The snow wasn't very good for skiing at Lolo Pass on this sunny Sunday, but it was great for sledding. Mike Burleson (11), Mollie Newton (11), Gharrett (8) and Hannah (5) Warner brought sleds and snowboards to the hill by the junction of Pack Creek and Elk Meadows Roads. Hannah was more interested in building snowmen and playing in the snow with a snow block maker than riding sleds. Mike, Mollie and Gharrett were into long runs on sleds and Mike was getting pretty good on his snowboard. When they tired out they joined a tailgateing party in the parking lot

with hot chocolate, bratwursts and hot dogs with Cathy Burleson, Steve Schombel, David Kahl and Julie Warner. Steve had actually snowshoed over to check out the approach for his upcoming trip to Mt. Fuji. The day was rounded out with a stop at Lolo Hotsprings for more fun. And ended with very tired kids. - Julie

### January 25<sup>th</sup>

There was a great turnout but poor conditions for this snowshoe trip at Lolo Pass. There was a lot of new snow and severe avalanche warnings for areas as high as Mt. Fuji. The mountain top was invisible behind clouds, so we decided to play it safe and trek through the Glade Creek Meadow to the road leading up to the "Back Forty." (called the North Dallas Forty by some.) The rain and deep wet snow chilled and tired us enough that we decided to call it quits part way up this road, and to save the summit of Fuji for a better day.

Participating from the Rocky Mountaineers were: Bret Doucette, Ron Pierson and Steve Schombel. From Stevensville: Betsy Ballard and Jerry Calkins. And from the Bitterroot X-C Ski Club: Mike McKeegan, Kay Fulton, Janis Cooper, and Mel Mooers. Some of us are certain to get together again. - Steve

### February 2<sup>nd</sup>

The rain and poor snow kept a lot of people away, but Bret Doucette and Will Butler decided to give the Seeley Lake area a try. We had to park near the groomed trail area, and had to go around a lot of puddles on the main snowmobile road, but we were able to ski all the way to Blind Canyon. There were only a few snowmobile tracks from the turnoff. As the day warmed up I had severe snow sticking on my skis. Luckily, Will had some "Easy-Glide", which saved the day. We got up to the avalanche chute, only to find that no snow has slid down this year. What an unusual winter! We estimated that we had only seen four snowmobile groups and one dog sled lady all day. We like this area and hope for more normal winter conditions. - Bret

### CLUB CONTACTS

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# MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND LIABILITY WAIVER

Family Yearly Membership: \$13.00  
Make checks payable to: "Rocky Mountaineers"  
and send to: Rocky Mountaineers  
P.O. Box 4262  
Missoula, MT. 59806

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

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

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

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read this release and indemnity agreement and have fully informed myself of its contents before I have signed it. When I join or renew my membership I also sign on to this agreement.

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian if Participant is Under 18 Years of Age \_\_\_\_\_

I, (print name) \_\_\_\_\_ hereby state that I wish to participate in courses and/or activities offered by The Rocky Mountaineers, a non-profit organization. I recognize any outdoors activity may involve certain dangers, including but not limited to the hazards of traveling in mountainous terrain, accidents or illness in remote places, forces of nature, and the actions of participants and other persons. I further understand and agree that without some program providing protection of its assets and its leaders, the Rocky Mountaineers would not be able to offer its courses and activities.

In consideration of and as part payment for the right to participate in the activities offered by The Rocky Mountaineers, I agree to RELEASE, HOLD HARMLESS, AND INDEMNIFY The Rocky Mountaineers and its members from any and all liability, claims and causes of action arising out of or in any way connected with my participation, or the participation of any minor that I am signing on behalf of, in any activities offered by The Rocky Mountaineers. I personally assume all risks in connection with these activities. If I am signing on behalf of a minor, I further agree to RELEASE, HOLD HARMLESS, AND INDEMNIFY The Rocky Mountaineers and its members from any liability, claims and cause of action, which the minor may have arising from the minor's participation in activities. The terms of this agreement shall serve as a release and indemnity agreement for my heirs, personal representative, and for all members of my family, including any minors. (Parents or Legal Guardians must sign for all persons under eighteen (18) years of age).

## Recreational Survey

We would like to end the year by asking people to tell us what you do or don't like about the Club's weekend activities. Please put an X next to each of the following that you are interested in, and circle the ones you'd do as a group activity, and send the response to: Rocky Mountaineers, P.O. Box 4262, Missoula, MT 59806; or e-mail to: [rockymountaineers@hotmail.com](mailto:rockymountaineers@hotmail.com).

Hike \_\_\_ Camp \_\_\_ Backpack \_\_\_ Rock Climbing \_\_\_ Mountain Biking \_\_\_ Trail Running \_\_\_

Peak Bagging \_\_\_ Whitewater \_\_\_ Plants and Wildlife \_\_\_ Old Lookouts \_\_\_ Ski Touring \_\_\_

Backcountry Skiing and Telemarking \_\_\_ Ice Climbing \_\_\_ Snowshoeing \_\_\_ State High Points \_\_\_

Other Interests \_\_\_\_\_

Do you prefer activities to last: A day or less \_\_\_ Overnight \_\_\_ Multi day \_\_\_?

Would you like the activities to be: Close to town \_\_\_ A few hours away \_\_\_ Long distance \_\_\_?

Would you like activities that are: Family oriented \_\_\_ For individual adults \_\_\_ Couples \_\_\_?

Would you like more details in the Newsletter, like distance and elevation, and ranking trips easy, moderate, hard? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Would you like the club to get more involved in conservation and environmental issues \_\_\_, or focus on recreation \_\_\_?

Are you a member of the Rocky Mountaineers? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Thank you for helping us plan our activities.

## UPCOMING TRIPS

### February 9<sup>th</sup>

Ski tour in the Lolo Pass area. Some tips can be given to beginners, or just have a laid back and enjoyable day with some good company. Lolo Pass has a good base and should be excellent skiing for several more weeks, weather permitting. Call Julie Warner at 543-6508 for information.

### February 15<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup>

The trip leader is going to spend Saturday night in Sula soaking and enjoying a fine dinner. If anyone wants to drive down and meet at the Chief Joseph warming hut on Sunday call Steve Schombel at 721-4686. We can ski tour many of the fine groomed trails in this area maintained by the Bitterroot x-c Ski Club.

### February 23<sup>rd</sup>

This trip leader has many years skiing and hiking in Western Montana, and is diligent about calling and asking about snow conditions. She will have a good idea of a neat place to go with some of the best snow. If you want a very enjoyable day call Lois Crepeau at 728-5321 for information. She has also been organizing moonlight skis for friends.

### February 26<sup>th</sup>

If anyone is up for a long, midweek outing, Fred Schwanemann is willing to lead a ski around the 14-mile Moose Pass Loop near Lolo Pass. This follows a groomed snowmobile route and crosses a high ridge with a great view of the Bitterroots. Call Fred at 542-7372 for the details.

### March 2<sup>nd</sup>

The Montana Wilderness Association has announced that they are grooming some cross country trails in the Monture Creek area. They are using "non-motorized" grooming, and say that the road to the trailhead will be plowed regularly. This is a beautiful area to hike in in the summer, but otherwise we know little about it. If you are curious call Steve Schombel at 721-4686.

### March 9<sup>th</sup>

Spend another day with your kids. It is amazing how fast a group of kids can make friends when they are having fun. Just the tonic for the ones bored with their parents. Ski and snowboard at Lolo Pass, or hike around Blue Mountain if it is too warm. Call Cathy Burlison at 543-9558 or Julie Warner at 543-6508 for information.



**Rocky Mountaineers**  
**P. O. Box 4262**  
**Missoula, MT 59806**

**FIRST CLASS POSTAGE**