



# Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

April 1991

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## MEETING

Time and Place: Meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month in the Montana Power Building at 1903 Russell Street in Missoula. The March meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 10, 1991.

Program: Ann Gidel and Ken Platt from Helena, who are Art Gidel's sister and brother-in-law, will present a slide show on a trekking and easy climbing trip to the Torres del Paine National Park and the Fitzroy and Cerro Torre Area in Patagonia. WARNING: Officers will be elected at the April meeting. If you don't show up to defend yourself, you might get elected to an office.

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## TRIP CALENDAR

General Contacts for Skiing. If you want to go hiking or skiing some weekend, but can't make (or don't like) the scheduled trips, call Dave Pengelly (728-6512), Peter Dayton (728-8101), Art Gidel (543-6352), or Ralph Flockerzi (549-7150). Chances are good that they can either suggest or organize an unscheduled trip.

General Contacts for Kayaking. One reason for the reduced number of ski and mountaineering trips this month is that a lot of the active members of the club expect to be kayaking, rafting, and canoing instead. Day trips, extended wilderness trips, and trips in the evening after work are planned. Call Peter Dayton (728-8101) or Art Gidel (543-6352) if you are interested in doing some floating.

April or May, Teton Traverse. Martha Yale wants to organize a north-south ski traverse of the west side of the Tetons, through Alaska Basin and Hurricane Pass. Call Martha at 549-2163 for more information.

July or August, Ptarmigan Traverse. Martha Yale wants to organize a backpacking trip along the Ptarmigan Traverse, a 5-7 day high traverse in the North Cascades in Washington which involves glacier travel, with opportunities for peak bagging en route. Call Martha at 549-2163 for more information.

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## TRIP REPORTS

Hyalite Ridge Trip, March 23-25. On Saturday, March 25, Steve Niday, Eric Jones, and Peter Dayton met at Big Sky for an attempt on the Hyalite Ridge, which is located between Bozeman and Yellowstone Park, and is the divide between the Gallatin and Yellowstone Rivers. After dumping one car at Portal Creek, we drove the other to the Hyalite Dam. We headed off across the reservoir about noon, and skied about nine miles up to Hyalite Lake, which is at the base of Hyalite Peak. The canyon is very attractive, with cliffs and frozen waterfalls on both sides. Unfortunately the many waterfalls in the creek, which are so attractive in the summer, were reduced to trickles or covered by snow. Part of the trail had been broken by snowmobiles, so we made fairly good time. The next morning we climbed straight up the north face of Hyalite in a snowstorm to the 10,299 foot summit. The route was mostly on surfaces exposed by the wind, and thus appeared to be safer than the conventional route up the bowl to a saddle, which was overhung by a cornice. We saw four bighorn sheep below the summit. They

didn't seem disturbed by us at all, and watched us climb past them for about twenty minutes before wandering off. After signing the register, which showed only two other climbs this winter, we headed off through a serious white-out for the ridge. With the assistance of Steve's surveying skills we were able to navigate by compass down the south side of the mountain to the proper ridge. From there the ridge undulates along between 10,100 and 9,200 feet for about fourteen miles to Windy Pass, where we intended to head out to our car. The first several miles of the route are the sharpest part of the ridge. The going was pretty slow and arduous, as we were constantly climbing up and down over cornices in crummy visibility, wind, and snow. After a couple hours the clouds opened up and we got some good views. At Crater Lake we decided not to try to get all of the way to Windy Pass, and headed out down the South Fork of Swan Creek. Although parts of the route were through open trees or on trails, other parts involved some serious bushwacking. Ropes for our skis would have come in handy. At lower altitudes we encountered spotty snow, and had to keep taking our skis on and off. We camped part of the way down the drainage Sunday night, and made it out to the road around noon on Monday. Unless the snow conditions were outstandingly fast, you should probably give yourself four or five days for the trip from Hyalite Reservoir to Windy Pass and out. We encountered low to moderate avalanche conditions; this looks like a real bad trip to attempt in hazardous avalanche conditions. One of the memorable aspects of the trip was that we were completely unable to make my MSR Whisperlight stove work, despite repeated overhauls. As a result, we ended up eating a lot of cold food and snow, and melting water over fires. You can bet that next time I'll try my stove out before I leave home! - Peter Dayton.

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#### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

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

Mail a check payable to  
"Rocky Mountaineers" to  
Arnold Finklin, P.O. Box  
4262, Missoula, Montana  
59807

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

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#### OFFICERS

Dave Pengelly, President - 728-6512

Steve Niday, Vice President - 721-3790

Arnold Finklin, Treasurer - 543-8705

Ralph Flockerzi, Refreshments - 549-7150

Peter Dayton, Secretary and Newsletter Editor/iazilator- 728-8101

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