



# Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

December, 1992

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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 December meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 9.

December Program: Paul Jensen will give a presentation on a trek to the Mt. Everest base camp in Nepal and travels in India.

January Program: Tom Cook will give a presentation concerning his tour of duty in Costa Rica last year with the Peace Corps, where he was teaching the locals how to fight forest fires, which are a big problem on the west side of the mountains, which are in a rain shadow and are quite dry.

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## TRIP CALENDAR

Sunday December 6, Hoodoo Pass: Backcountry ski trip to Hoodoo Pass, a favorite early-season destination which is south of Superior on the Idaho border. Great open-slope telemarking only a short trudge from the pass. The trip might be moved to another location if conditions at Hoodoo are unappealing. Call Dave Pengelly for details at 728-6512.

Sunday December 13, Sweeney Peak: Ski trip up Sweeney Peak, which is the mountain south of Lolo Peak. Moderately strenuous to strenuous, depending on snow level (4,000-5,000 vertical feet of climbing). Great scenery, low avalanche risk, some telemarking opportunities. Call Art Gidel for details at 543-6352.

Saturday December 19, Ski Trip TBA. Backcountry skiing or ski mountaineering at a location to be determined by snow conditions, or the lack thereof, and the interests of participants. Call Peter Dayton for details at 728-8101.

Friday-Sunday January 1-3, Little St. Joe Cabin: Traditional New Year's Eve ski trip to the Club's rustic (i.e. primitive) cabin on Little St. Joe, which is located in the Bitterroot Mountains west of Florence. Good backcountry skiing on open slopes and reasonably spaced trees above the cabin; kamikaze skiing through the dense trees below the cabin unless you are clever enough to put on ropes and slog out. Call Art Gidel for details at 543-6352.

Sunday January 10, ski mountaineering trip: Steve Niday will lead a summit attempt on a destination which is dependent upon snow conditions; a southern Bitterroot peak is a possibility. Call Steve at 721-3790 for further information.

Saturday-Sunday January 16-17, Sky Pilot Peak. Overnight trip to Sky Pilot Peak, which is located west of Victor behind Gash Point in the Bitterroot Mountains. A very scenic trip which involves a fairly long approach up the South Fork of Bear Creek, followed by an open and low-angle route up the southwest side of the mountain. A group of club members did this as a tough day trip a few years ago; it should be moderately strenuous as a two-day trip. Call Rick Murney at 543-7586 for details.

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## TRIP REPORTS

St. Mary's Peak, November 8: This trip to St. Mary's Peak in the Bitterroots was rescheduled from Saturday, November 7. Rick and Jenny Murney, Dave Pengelly, and Art Gidel pushed rock skiing to an illogical extreme. No getting off the trail on this one, folks! Good snow, just not enough of it. - Art Gidel.

Rock Creek Bighorn Sheep Viewing, November 15: Ralph Flockerzi, Mary Ann McClain, Kathy York, Julie Huck, Jon Bonnicksen, Jocelyn, Connie, and Uzi (sorry, I didn't get last names) hiked up Rock Creek to look for bighorn sheep. We left Missoula in a dense fog (maybe we got up too early?) and drove about 6 miles up Rock Creek to the bighorn sheep viewing area at Spring

Creek Gulch. We were only a few yards from the parking area and had stopped to read the sign telling the history of Rock Creek when we spotted 10-12 sheep a couple of hundred yards away. Although we had accomplished our goal, we voted to keep hiking since we had only been on the trail about two minutes. We only had to hike a short distance to get above the fog, and it turned out to be a beautiful day. Several people brought binoculars and Ralph brought a spotting scope and tripod, so we got some good closeup views. We kept seeing a few more sheep and hiking a little farther, and the next thing we knew we were almost at the top of the mountain. I think the largest group of sheep we counted was 22. On the way down, Kathy, Jocelyn, and Uzi took the express route and the rest of us took an alternate route and practiced some non-life-threatening rock climbing. As we headed back to Missoula, we drove back into the fog, which was as bad as (or worse than) when we left. That made the trip seem even better knowing we were up there in the sunshine while Missoula was stuck in the fog. - Ralph Flockerzi

Hoodoo Pass, November 22: Walker Smith, Hamilton Smith, Kim Davitt, Connie Holloway, and Chad Murphy tracked out the powder on the bear grass slope south of Hoodoo Pass. The crew was joined by Rick and Jenny Murney, Paul Jensen, and Diane Hafeman later in the morning. Later in the afternoon, about 20 other skiers and snowboarders made the slope look like a designated ski area. Good snow, lots of figure eights. - Art Gidel

Targhee Ski Trip, November 26-29: Beverly Chin, Peter Dayton, Art Gidel, Colleen Hunter, and Rick and Jenny Murney met Art's sister and brother-in-law from Helena (who gave the Club a slide show on Baffin Island in November) and Chris Volk, Caroline Black, and Annie (a very nice ski dog), who are now from Boise, at Targhee ski area, which is located on the west side of the Teton Mountains. This trip has become something of a tradition due to the good snow frequently found at Targhee at Thanksgiving, and we encountered a number of other Missoula ski fanatics at the area. Although it hadn't snowed for four or five days, there was lots of powder to be found all weekend. We skied on the area Thursday, at Teton Pass on Friday, at Peaked Peak on Saturday, and on the area on Sunday, with plenty of convivial activity in the evenings. A satisfactory time was had by all. - Peter Dayton

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#### OFFICERS

Art Gidel, President - 543-6352

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) \_\_\_\_\_ Missoula, Montana 59806

Mail a check payable to  
"Rocky Mountaineers" to

Dave Pengelly

P.O. Box 4262

THE MOUNTAIN EAR  
P.O. BOX 4262  
MISSOULA, MT 59806

(STAMP)

FIRST CLASS MAIL