



Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

FEBRUARY 1999

MEETING

Meeting: Club meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month in the lower-level meeting room at the Missoula Public Library. This month's meeting will be held on February 10, at 7:00 p.m.

Program: Starting in 1993, Julie Warner and Steve Schombel did three long multi-day backpacks into the Bob Marshall Wilderness, the goal of each being a high summit deep in the wilds. One or both of them reached these peaks: Silvertip, the north summit of the Three Sisters and Goat Mountain. On each trip they reached areas that appeared to be little visited by backpackers, and they have many slides to show. If time allows they will also talk about some day scrambles on higher peaks on the boundary of the Bob Marshall - Scapegoat Wilderness Complex: Holland Peak, Red Mountain, Rocky Mountain and Great Northern.

Reminder to Club members: Many of our Club trips are in the Mission Mountains. Much of the Mission Range is on the Flathead Indian Reservation. A permit is required to recreate on the reservation and current permits expire on February 28. The cost for a new permit is only \$11, a small price to pay for access to one of the most special mountain ranges in Montana.

TRIP CALENDAR

February 13, Saturday, Ice Climbing. Enjoy a day of technical ice climbing suitable for beginners and intermediates. The location will depend on conditions, but Como Falls, Swan Slabs and Mission Falls are possibilities. Heavy boots, crampons and two ice axes are required, however some equipment may be borrowed or shared. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for more information.

February 20, Saturday, Ice Climbing. Enjoy another day of ice climbing similar to the February 13th outing. Ice climbing experience will be beneficial or required on many of the Club's trips this spring and summer. Call Matt Grandy at 728-0647 for more information.

February 20, Saturday, Blind Canyon. Ski trip to the Blind Canyon area near Seeley Lake. This is reported to be a quiet non-motorized area. Some trail-breaking and skins might be needed. For information call Steve Schombel at 721-4686

February 27, Saturday, Ice Climbing. This may be the last chance to gain some ice climbing experience before the Gray Wolf trip. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for more information.

March 1,2,3; Mon,Tue,Wed; Ice Climbing. Daily trips to any of several ice climbing areas in the Bitterroots and Missions with the possibility of an overnight trip in an area with several ice climbs. These trips are not suitable for beginners since no top rope will be used. Call Tony Sabol at 728-7221 for more information.

March 6-7, Saturday-Sunday, Gray Wolf Peak. Winter climb of Gray Wolf Peak (9001 feet), which is in the southern portion of the Missions and is perhaps the most impressive peak in that range. A summer climb of Gray Wolf can be described as a "classic snow climb" and a winter climb will be no less. Experience with an ice axe and crampons is required for this two-day trip. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for more information.

March 14,15,16; Sun,Mon,Tue; Ice Climbing. Another series of daily ice climbing trips similar to the March 1-3 outings. Call Tony Sabol at 728-7221 for more information.

Want to lead a trip? If you are interested in leading a trip, contact Matt Grandy at 728-0647 or e-mail him at matthewg@montana.com.

TRIP REPORTS

Sweathouse Falls, January 16. A mile up the Sweathouse Canyon trail, Steve Schombel and Doyle Gerrard put on snowshoes and Brett Doucett, his skis with skins. The snow was firm and the trio climbed steadily to Sweathouse Falls. Near the bottom of the falls, the creek flows through a triangular opening in the ice, then beneath a snow bridge. Half mile farther up at the rim of the basin, a few old larch trees staked at the gauzy clouds. The trail can use an ax and machete in places short of the wilderness boundary, but the five-hour round trip went pleasantly in moderate weather. - Doyle Gerrard.

Ice Climbing Exploration, January 16. In a search for ice near Missoula, Laura Bickell, Matt Grandy and Gerald Olbu set out for an ice climb of Grain Eater on the north side of the Rattlesnake Mountains near Evaro. We hiked up the trail to the ice falls but found that the ice was not completely formed. Temperatures had been in the 40's the week prior. It was a pleasant, but short day and we were back in Missoula by noon. - Matt Grandy.

Lolo Pass, January 24. No members of the general public called to go on the trip so Steve Schombel and Brett Doucett joined Jo Ellen Lyng and myself on a ski of the Lee Creek trail, from Lolo Pass to the Lee Creek Campground on Lolo Creek. We took two vehicles and left one at Lee Creek the other at Lolo Pass. Despite it being cold, probably not warmer than 20 degrees, it was a beautiful day with an intense blue sky and snow shrouded trees. The trail was well traveled in most places and going was fast for the eight miles, though we didn't tarry long over lunch at the Lee Creek saddle. It was a nice day with good company. - Julie Warner.

Ice Climbing, January 30. Gerald Olbu and Matt Grandy climbed Swan Slabs, a moderate ice climb up Blodgett Canyon in the Bitterroots. The 200 feet of 50-degree ice are a perfect training ground for those new to ice climbing. We normally top rope this climb when we have beginners along, but as it was just the two of us, we employed a running belay. We had a great time enjoying a peaceful climb. - Matt Grandy.

OFFICERS

Matt Grandy, President - 728-0647
Tony Sabol, Vice President - 728-7221
Steve Schombel, Vice President - 721-4686

Julie Warner, Secretary-Treasurer - 543-6508
Gerald Olbu, Newsletter Editor - 549-4769

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

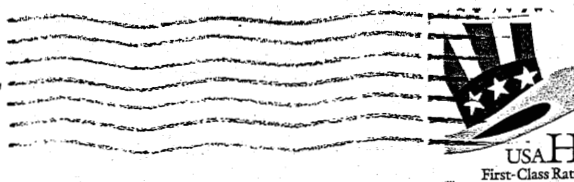
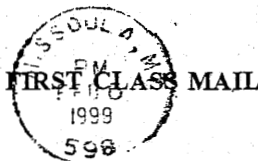
Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Check one: Individual (\$9.00/year) _____ Family (\$12.00/year) _____

Mail a check payable to
"Rocky Mountaineers" to
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