

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.

December 2002

Time for Winter Fun - we hope

A lot of us *THINK SNOW* this time of year. One of our die hard members has already been skiing four times, and she and others report sufficient snow at Lolo Pass in contrast to the dry valley.

To get people in the mood we are reprinting, with permission, some of "Tony's Tips." Tony Neaves writes a regular column for that fun club to the south, the Bitterroot Cross Country Ski Club, and he has good advice for cross country skiers. We also have a great winter program at our monthly meeting on Wednesday, December

11th in the second floor meeting room of the Court House Annex on Pine Street. Meetings start at 7 PM and are free and open to the public.

Our speaker is Jeremy Lurgio, photographer for the *Ravalli Republic*. He has many slides and stories from his numerous ski trips. This time he is going to focus on back country skiing and telemarking in the Selway-Bitterroot area between Lolo Pass and Chief Joseph.

And in January we will have one of our most interesting programs. Wayne Fairchild of Lewis and Clark Trail Adventures will talk on his explorations of the Lewis and Clark Trail, and the upcoming bicentennial celebration. Wayne spent a lot of time with the late Stephen Ambrose. This will be on Wednesday, January 8th at our usual time and place. Tell your friends about it!

TONY'S TIPS, by Tony Neaves

RESOURCES AND ENTERTAINMENT

Winter is coming, and we are all hoping it will happen soon, right? The only drawbacks this time of year are that we are getting chased indoors by earlier darkness and the evenings are a whole lot longer! Time for some indoor projects and entertainment. Now that computers have become more common in most households, it's quite entertaining to check out some of the information available to us in the nordic department. For local info, our club's website:

www.bitterrootxcski.net

is a great start and will get better as more folks take advantage of its potential. Next, the Missoula Nordic Ski Club site:

www.missoulanordic.org

which you will find has many pertinent links. Skiing info for the Bozeman and West Yellowstone region is at the following addresses:

www.bozemanxc.org,

www.rendezvouskitrails.com and

www.westyellowstonecrb.visitmt.com. To get more general info around the state, check out www.wintermt.com.

If you are looking for some very deep reading on everything from racing to equipment and more opinions than you thought possible about one subject, look up these sites: www.xcski.org, www.dreamofit.com, www.xcskiworld.com, www.fasterskier.com,

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TRIP REPORTS

November 3rd Family Trip to the Lochsa

Future Mountaineers Mike Burleson (age 10), Jordan Clock, (11), Mollie Newton (10), Gharrette Warner (7), and Hannah Warner (5) joined Cathy Burleson, Nan Barber, Steve Schombel, and Julie Warner on a visit trip of Idaho across Lolo Pass.

First they got to climb rocks and play on big logs and in warm water at Colgate Licks, a warm spring and wildlife area with an interpretive trail. Next we stopped at the Fish Hatchery by Powell Ranger Station. It was closed but the ice formed by cascades and in the Lochsa River caught their attention. Next we stopped at the DeVoto Cedar Grove and while some enjoyed the interpretive trail the kids headed straight for the river (here the Crooked Fork) for more throwing rocks on the ice. This was all topped off with a stop at Lolo Hot Springs for a soak. We think everyone had fun. - Julie Warner

November 17th Lolo Pass Ski and Cookout

The trip scheduled for Fred Burr was changed to Lolo Pass because of conditions. Julie Warner, Karen Aplan and I had a wonderful ski on a road off of Granite. The snow was deep and pure powder. Back at the rig in the parking lot we tailgated out of my rig. I had brought a huge pot of chile and we barbecued brauts, (well I did mine but Julie decided it would take to long to cook hers, so she had chile and hot chocolate) Karen and I had the small amount of peppermint schnapps I had brought in our chocolate. It was a good day, I only wish more people had of joined us.

I have skied the Granite area three times, North Dallas 40, Moose Ridge, a road near the parking lot and Pack Creek so far since the 1st of November. Every time the conditions were different, but totally skiable, with the exception of the Nov. 1st trip. Packer Meadow road is plowed because of log hauling. They were even hauling logs on Sunday the 17th. I don't know how much longer the hauling will be going on. Sunday the 24th Karen and I skied part of the Glade Creek trail on our way to North Dallas 40. The snow was wonderful powder and the day was clear blue sky and cool. - Lois Crepeau
trip reports continued p. 3

Tony's Tips *cont.*

www.nordicequipment.com, www.alpinasports.com and lastly www.ernordic.com. For an in depth view of precise ski tuning, go to www.ultratune.net where you will find the brain of Nat Brown. He is regarded by most people in the industry as one of the best ski tuners in the nation! He has put out a very good book on ski care and tuning.

If you are looking at new gear this year, here are most of the companies' sites: www.madshus.com, www.rosignol.com, www.fischerskis.com, www.atomicsnow.com, and www.salomon.com. You could also do a search for these companies to get info on back-country gear: Voile equipment, Black Diamond equipment, Scarpa boots, Crispi boots, Life Link equipment, etc. etc!

A topic to look into and that will make your head spin is WAX! Every company believes that they make the slickest stuff and if you are not on their wax, you won't slide at all! Here are a few of the wax sites we know about: www.swixsport.com, www.tokous.com, www.jenex.com, and www.holmenkol.com. If I remember right, the swix site has a place where you can enter temperature and humidity, and it will spit out the correct wax to use for those conditions!

If you can absorb even one tenth of the information from this list, you will be able to hold your own in even the most intense techno-babble conversation! Have fun, and think snow!

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Our thank you this month goes to Todd Franks, who suggested that we put our mission statement from our bylaws in our masthead, and in all our letters. Helpful suggestions like this are always appreciated. So, unless some of you really miss the box which says "Climbing, hiking, . . .", the mission statement will remain.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND LIABILITY WAVIER

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 _____

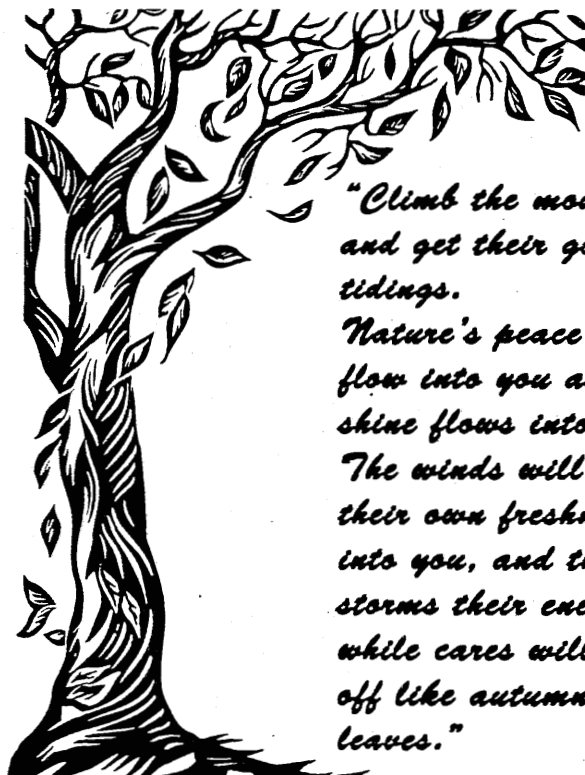
I, (print name) _____ hereby state that I wish to participate in courses and/or activities offered by The Rocky Mountaineers, a non-profit organization. I recognize any outdoors activity may involve certain dangers, including but not limited to the hazards of traveling in mountainous terrain, accidents 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).

TRIP REPORTS cont.

November 24th Alberton Gorge

Four of us drove down to Rivulet on this cold and icy day to explore the lower part of the Alberton Gorge. As the leader suspected, this part of the gorge is not suitable for walking along the river. We did find one place to drop down to the bank, but there were large cliffs downstream. We climbed back up and spent most of the rest of the day hiking near the road and railroad and looking down into the gorge. Not only that, we weren't certain if the land was public or private. There were some very pretty views near Tarkio, and some big new houses across the river. It looks like it is no longer possible to ski, drive or hike along the abandoned railroad grade due to development. How fortunate that the gorge itself has been protected. People will be able to float and land on the banks into the future. We ended the day with a short stop at the triple bridges, since two of the party had never seen this area. Participants were: Fred Schwanemann, Ron Pierson, Julie Warner and Steve Schombel.



*"Climb the mountains
and get their good
tidings.
Nature's peace will
flow into you as sun-
shine flows into trees.
The winds will blow
their own freshness
into you, and the
storms their energy,
while cares will drop
off like autumn
leaves."*

John Muir

UPCOMING TRIPS

December 7th

Cedar Peak at 5872' and @ five miles up a switchbacking trail from the West Fork Fish Creek road. If it's dry we can do a long loop through Chilcote Pass and down Straight Creek, but bring snowshoes. If the road is snowed in we can try to snowshoe to a lookout site near lower Fish Creek. Call Kirk Arnold at 327-0077 for information.

December 15th

Cross Country ski at Lolo Pass. Julie Warner is more than willing to give beginners some basic instructions, or to show intermediates some lesser known trails in this popular winter sports area. We can hope for a decent base. Call Julie at 543-6508 for information.

December 28th

Snowshoe trip at Lolo Pass. We will follow the designated route to the top of Packer Ridge. From there I would like to 'shoe' farther southwest instead of dropping right back down to the warming hut. It is a long ridge and there are many places to descend to the Pack Creek Road or Hwy 12. Participants will determine the distance. Call Steve Schombel at 721-4686 for information.

January 5th

Pack Creek point to point ski. Here is another very nice ski trip you can do while shuttling two vehicles. It is almost all downhill on a gentle road grade for eight miles from Lolo Pass to the Brushy Fork parking lot in Idaho. As always, snow and weather conditions will determine the difficulty of this trip. Call Fred Schwanemann at 542-7372 for the time and place to meet.

Christmas Wish Trips

In the past couple of issues we have had open weekends with no one volunteering to lead trips. This is very understandable during the holidays, when most people want to spend some time with friends and family. However, our Christmas wish would be that in the future more of our members will be willing to participate in club activities. Remember, we are trying to be a friendly club with more general outdoor activities, instead of focusing on the most difficult trips. So share your favorite places with us.



Rocky Mountaineers
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