

Mountaineer

EXPLORE • LEARN • CONSERVE



in this issue:
How to Hot Wax Nordic Skis
Winter Trail Running
The Mountaineers Advocacy Agenda

Winter 2025 | Volume 119 | Number 1

The Mountaineers enriches the community by helping people explore, conserve, learn about, and enjoy the lands and waters of the Pacific Northwest and beyond.



On the cover: Friends enjoying powder at Mt. Bachelor, Oregon. Photo by Tatiana Van Campenhout.

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Photo courtesy of Manisha Powar.

Looking back on my 15 years as a member and volunteer with The Mountaineers, I can't help but think about the fulfillment I've gained from being part of this amazing community. From leading trips and courses to serving as an activity leader and Board member, the journey has been incredibly rewarding. As a volunteer leader, I've enjoyed researching routes and trip reports, doing the planning, and then getting out with old and new friends. Yet, with the growing popularity of outdoor recreation,

we're also facing new challenges, particularly when it comes to navigating the complicated permitting process required to access many of our cherished public lands.

Permitting is necessary to protect the lands where we recreate, but the process can be tedious and inconsistent across different agencies. Applying for permits is a part of leadership that isn't as exciting as the adventure itself, but it's crucial. That's why I'm thrilled to see the strides we're making to support our volunteers by streamlining these systems.

This progress didn't happen overnight - it's the result of persistent effort, collaboration, and advocacy at both the state and federal levels. As president of the Board, I've witnessed firsthand the hard work being done behind the scenes by our staff and volunteers. In our most recent Board meeting, Mountaineers staff shared the progress they've made in simplifying the permitting process for our volunteers. Thanks to their partnerships with land management agencies, we've secured important permits - like an eight-year guiding permit in the Cowlitz Valley Ranger District - and we're continuing to push for more.

I couldn't be prouder of what we've accomplished. And our work isn't done. We're prioritizing expanding existing permits and applying for new ones, deepening our partnerships with our land managers, and mobilizing our community to advocate for federal legislation to streamline the permitting system.

Being a Mountaineer isn't just about getting out into nature - it's about ensuring future generations can enjoy these spaces just as we do. Volunteering with The Mountaineers has opened my eyes to the importance of outdoor conservation beyond recreation. Leadership, engagement, and advocacy are essential to preserving the natural places we love. Along the way, I've built lasting friendships and made lifelong friends. Working with a community bound by a shared passion for the outdoors is a privilege, and I can't wait to see the impact we will collectively drive over the coming years.

Manisha P.

Manisha Powar
Board President



The Mountaineers is a nonprofit organization, founded in 1906 and dedicated to the responsible enjoyment and protection of natural areas.

EDITOR

Skye Michel

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Bayley Stejer

PROOF READERS

Evy Dudey
Kate Regan

DESIGNER

Sarah Kulfan, Beans n' Rice

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Tom Vogl

EXECUTIVE PUBLISHER

Tom Helleberg

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Bri Vanderlinden

PUBLICIST

Kate Jay

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Photo by Zach Goldberg.



Skye Michel
skyem@mountaineers.org
Photo by Karen Grubb.

I am not a runner. In fact, I've been known to show up to runs with roller skates instead of shoes (and even still can't keep up with my running counterparts). But when I moved across the street from Green Lake and its popular running trail in 2021, I bought my first pair of running shoes. With this purchase (and the associated "buyers' guilt"), I finally committed to giving running a try.

Eager to start my journey with a sense of accomplishment, I pushed myself to complete

the lake's three-mile loop on my first run. After finishing, I nearly threw up and spent the following two weeks recovering from arch pain that ran up my inner shin. I didn't touch my running shoes again for another year.

The next time I ran, I did the same three miles and spent the following days nursing knee pain. This pattern of running-then-nursing repeated itself until a friend and running enthusiast offered some enlightening advice: Start slow. And when you think you're running slow enough, run slower.

In retrospect, the advice may seem obvious - no one wakes up a seven-minute/mile pace athlete - but these words were a welcomed reminder of how setting a sustainable pace allows our bodies to properly adapt. While not always easy, setting pace enables us to continue our pursuits with energy and enthusiasm.

The stories in this edition touch on the various ways we can set pace this season. Setting pace is essential to endurance, but it doesn't always have to require slowing down. Sometimes setting pace involves speeding up, as Becca Polglase offers in "How to Hot Wax Nordic Skis," so that we can enjoy whizzing through winter's snowy slopes. Sometimes setting pace involves speaking up, as our Advocacy Agenda illustrates, so that we can preserve and protect the natural places we love for generations to come. And sometimes setting pace involves resting up, as Leif Whittaker shares in Peak Performance, so that our training and recovery plans generate healthy physical progress. Setting pace can also involve applying mountaineering skills to enhance running endeavors, as Priya Sinha discovers in "Mountaineering to Run," taking the time to craft with your little one, as Leslie Gobel offers in Youth Outside, or appreciating history as you stroll through Washington's urban areas, as Vienna Christensen shares in Outside Insights.

Slowing down, speaking up, scaling back, moving forward... how we set pace is what allows us to sustain what we love. I set a slower pace to enjoy running and it's paid off - I'm almost in need of new shoes. This winter, I hope you find ways to enjoy what the season offers. Whether it's learning a new skill, taking on a new project, or discovering your voice, find a pace that instills an enduring commitment to what you love.



In the summer 2024 magazine, our **Outside Insights** column highlighted the GoHike course, a program led by dedicated volunteers that introduces new hikers to the joys of hiking within a supportive community. One reader reaffirmed that our volunteer leaders are indeed invaluable.

"Grand experiences led by a highly talented and hard working leadership team who find and nurture wonderful instructors."

- Peter Hendrickson, 19-year member



"Charlie has been my climbing mentor and adventure buddy for over two decades. His common sense approach to enjoying the wilderness resonates strongly with me. Great article on how to play it safe during fire season. Thanks, Charlie."

-Josephine Johnson, 8-year member

In **From Peaks to Peace**, Courtenay Schurman wrote about the benefits of incorporating a beginner's mindset into your outdoor pursuits, whether starting from scratch or a setback. Readers appreciated the refreshing perspective.

"I appreciate this article. The hard and fast mentality isn't always the best, and the balance in her personal experience keeps a mindfulness approach while recreating outdoors. Thank you for sharing this!"

-Christina Buckman, 12-year member

"Beautifully said."

-Harrison Stroud, *Mountaineer* reader



In our fall 2024 edition, we published an article on open water swimming. The author would like to notify readers that Vaseline and petroleum jelly harms neoprene. When wearing a wetsuit, it is recommended that you use a non-greasy product such as Body Glide to prevent chafing.

In **When Smoke Gets in Your Eyes**, Charles Bookman reflected on an unpleasantly smokey multi-day backpacking trip, and offered advice on how to incorporate fire safety and preparedness into your recreation plans. One reader expressed thanks for the wise words.



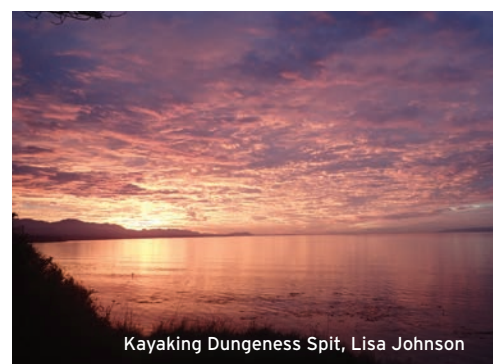
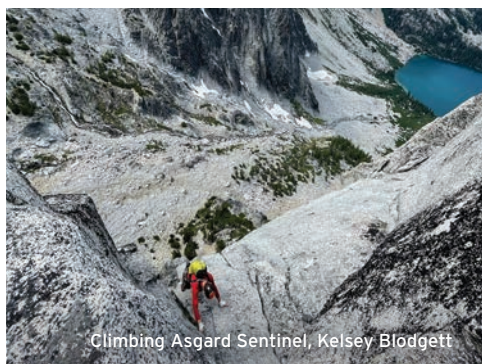
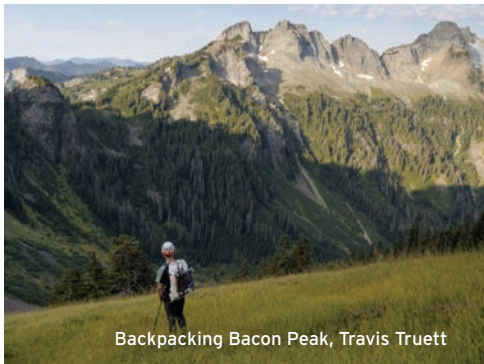
Mountaineer magazine spreads joy by inspiring a sense of community and connection among recreationists and the natural world. One reader felt particularly happy reading our last edition, and we hope you did, too.

"This is such a special magazine. It's community! It's outdoors! It's talking about emotions and other sweet things! It makes me happy."

- Sam Good, *Mountaineer* reader

In our last edition, Director of Community Engagement Bri Vanderlinden wrote about five ways that members can give back to The Mountaineers community, and one of those ways was sharing your testimony. We want to hear from you! If you have a story to tell, we're here to listen. Email magazine@mountaineers.org - we're all ears.

LAST SEASON'S TOP TRIP REPORT PHOTOS



Submitting trip reports is a simple, yet impactful way to give back to The Mountaineers community. We're excited to introduce our new Trip Reporter badge, celebrating community members who share their outdoor experiences by submitting three or more Mountaineers trip reports per fiscal year.





Name Krithika Sankaranarayanan, she/her

Hometown Kovilpatti, South India

Member Since October 2023

Occupation I own my small business: Kritikal Adventures LLC, building a community of hike-minded people who meet every weekend and get some Vitamin-L (Laughter).

Favorite Activities Of course hiking. I also like camping near rivers, reading books in the middle of wilderness while immersed in beautiful scenery, making goofy poses with my hiking people, and identifying PNW wildflowers and tree varieties.

What first brought you to The Mountaineers?

I wanted to be part of an outdoor community. My main objective as a hike leader is to make hiking a fun and social activity, similar to hanging out in a restaurant or bar. My style of hiking is social - we talk a lot! Talking is also my way of measuring cardio to set pace for the group. (You can walk as long as you are able to talk.)

I love the camaraderie formed when people bring their genuine selves to the outdoors where there is no judgment. When there are smiles, the miles are more easily done.

Why do you like getting outside with us?

Because of the community. Every individual I meet is unique, and they bring a whole new perspective during a conversation. Hiking gives me the opportunity and time to learn and share things with other Mountaineers. Plus, I get to meet some cool people whose experiences humble me and inspire me to explore more.

What's your favorite Mountaineers memory?

I went on a hike in February 2024 to Tiger Mountain 1, 2, and 3. It was cold and windy at the top, and rainy as well (of course). Had I hiked by myself, I wouldn't have enjoyed it. Having company to share the miserable moments with transformed that experience into something more memorable. Company is always good in the outdoors - physically and mentally. That experience also made me fall in love with hiking in the PNW rain.

Who/What inspires you?

Every time I am outside stretching my limits, I discover a new self. Summiting mountains or accomplishing insurmountable outdoor feats brings an immense amount of joy and pride that redefines my beliefs and values. It is the mountain that teaches me to take one step at a time, and that learning stays with me long after I leave the mountain.

What does adventure mean to you?

Stepping out of my comfort zone and being open to a new experience, regardless of whether it is joyous or miserable. In the worst case, there is an engaging story to share. The adventure is what shapes everyone into who they are. ▲▲

Lightning round

Sunset or sunrise? Sunset

Smile or game face? Smile

What's your 11th Essential? Book/Kindle

What's your happy place? My car's driver seat

Post-adventure meal of choice? Dosa and sambar

If you could be a rockstar at any outdoor activity overnight, what would it be? Swimming. I swim one to two times a week



A group photo at 14 Camp of all the people of color on the mountain during the 2013 season, including the Expedition Denali team. (From left to right, back row) Adina Scott, Ryan Hudson, Rosemary Saal, Billy Long, Stephen Shobe, Ryan Mitchell, Tyrhee Moore, Erica Wynn, James “KG” Kagambi. (Front row) Robby ReChord, Scott Briscoe, Madhu Chikkaraju, Stephen DeBerry, Philip Henderson. All photos courtesy of Hudson Henry.

The Adventure Gap

Changing the Face of the Outdoors, 10th Anniversary Edition

By James Mills, Mountaineers Books Author

Below is an excerpt from the 10th Anniversary Edition of The Adventure Gap by James Mills published by Mountaineers Books (reprinted with permission). This excerpt comes from the afterword – a reflection on the decade following the first all-Black summit attempt on Denali, North America’s highest mountain.

After our wonderful adventure in Alaska, I can look back over the past decade with pride and awe at how much has been accomplished. By the summer of 2014, one year after the expedition, the team members were invited to various events across the country, appearing in front of thousands of people. They shared slideshows at speaking engagements with audiences ranging in size from twenty to four hundred. Billy Long was featured on the cover of *Sierra Magazine* and in the

NOLS alumni publication, *The Leader*. Media organizations—from *NBC Nightly News* to the *Huffington Post* to *Backpacker Magazine*—covered stories on the expedition. The response from audiences and readers was overwhelmingly positive. Despite the unfortunate pushback we received from folks who believed the expedition was unnecessary or overrated, people in communities across the country were excited to hear our compelling story.

Later that same year, the team won the prestigious Outdoor Inspiration Award from the Outdoor Industry Association, and we produced a documentary called *An American Ascent* with





Above: Tyrhee Moore. Right: Stephen Shobe at Windy Corner.



Wild Vision Films. In 2015, Expedition Denali team members Billy Long, Rosemary Saal, and Tyrhee Moore journeyed to Washington, DC, along with me and the film's co-producer and writer Andy Adkins. In a private screening for almost two hundred high school students and representatives from several youth-focused nonprofit organizations, we presented our story at the White House.

Although I never admitted it out loud, I secretly hoped that our mountaineering adventure would pique the interest of President Barack Obama. Unfortunately, heartbreaking headlines throughout that week made a personal visit with the commander-in-chief impossible. On June 17, 2015, nine parishioners at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, were shot and killed by a racially motivated terrorist during a bible study. Among those slain was Reverend Clementa Pinckney, the pastor of the church and a former South Carolina state senator. The murders drew the nation's attention to more important matters. On the day of our film screening, President Obama was scheduled to give the eulogy at the funeral of Reverend Pinckney. The sad irony of these circumstances clearly illustrates why expressions of Black representation like Expedition Denali are still so profoundly necessary in twenty-first-century America.



Rosemary Saal, Erica Wynn, and Adina Scott at 14 Camp.

In the state where the first shots of the Civil War were fired at Fort Sumter, the Confederate battle flag still flew over its capitol. As Reverend Pinckney's funeral procession rolled slowly past South Carolina's state capitol building where he once served, both the flags of the United States and the State of South Carolina were lowered to half-mast in his honor. But by state law, the flag of the Confederacy could not be taken down for any reason, including the death of one of the community's most prominent Black dignitaries. We had hoped to celebrate Expedition Denali with President Obama. Instead, while we screened our film, he sang "Amazing Grace" in front of a grieving crowd and a troubled nation.

Our team gathered at the Eisenhower Executive Office

Building that adjoins the White House. As the events in the film unfolded, the young people in the audience, mostly people of color, sat watching, their attention riveted. We proudly shared our story on stage to an auditorium of wide-eyed future explorers. Afterward, we fielded several questions about the expedition and the prospects of getting more people of color into the outdoors. But the query of one young man in particular made the entire project—everything we had done over the previous four and half years—completely worthwhile:

"Do you think I can do something like that one day?" ▲▲

The Adventure Gap is available for purchase at our Seattle Program Center Bookstore, online at mountaineersbooks.org, and everywhere books are sold.

Exploring Winter With Your Mini Mountaineer

By Leslie Gobel, Overnight Camps Program Coordinator



Mini Mountaineers exploring the Salish Sea. All photos courtesy of Mountaineers staff.

Getting youth outside changes with the season, and winter is no exception. Our Mini Mountaineers program helps little kids and their families enjoy and learn about nature during even the rainiest months by facilitating nature-based activities and hikes. The program - offered by our Seattle and Tacoma Branches - is designed for youth ages two through five and fosters a love for the outdoors in the next generation. Now in its sixth year, Mini Mountaineers is a wonderful way for young children and their adults to experience new adventures, build meaningful relationships, and create impactful memories. Monthly outings, organized by staff and led by staff or volunteers, include interactive outdoor activities, climbing evenings, and a variety of hikes for little legs.

The impact of Mini Mountaineers is palpable. From its origins, the program was intended to build community. Now, that community has blossomed into an inspiring group of stewards, advocates, and skilled recreationists. "The best part about Mini Mountaineers has been the friendships that have formed," shared RyAnn Peverley, Tacoma Youth Programs Coordinator. "I along with my son have met some of our best friends, and the community I was looking for takes place not only in the woods but at home. Those first Mini's that helped build the program are all now Pathfinders (our adventure program for youth ages six to nine), and they are continuing to learn, explore, and enjoy this beautiful place we call home."

Below are some of the crafts and activities our Mini's will be participating in this season. These activities encourage inspiration for children seeking natural connections or adults looking to re-engage their inner child. Take a peek and try one of these projects for yourself at home!

Natural ornaments

As the weather chills and we spend more time inside, why not decorate our homes with the outdoors? Natural ornaments provide a great opportunity to venture outside with your little one to collect materials for ornamenting your windowsill, indoor plants, or mantle. When collecting



A decorated pine cone as a colorful natural ornament.

materials from the outdoors, remind your kids to minimize their impact on our environment by only collecting things that are dead, down, and dry. We always want to avoid disturbing plants that are still alive.

Materials

- Sticks, leaves, and pinecones
- String or embroidery floss
- Decorations: paint, pom poms, glitter... your choice!
- Glue

Steps

1. Head outside to collect materials as the base for your ornament.
2. Tie or glue your string to the top of the ornament for hanging.
3. Decorate your ornament with any materials you like. Depending on your materials, you can paint sticks different colors, add pom poms to pinecones, cover leaves in glitter... the list goes on!
4. Allow your ornament to fully dry. Once dry, hang your ornaments throughout your home to liven up the space during the gray winter months.



A crafty hibernation den.



A model fire.

Hibernation dens

Humans aren't the only animals that find shelter from the cold. Many animals like bears, marmots, and chipmunks hibernate during the winter to stay warm, give birth, and keep their bodies healthy. Explore the elements of a good hibernation den by building one to protect your favorite animals from the cold. This activity can be done with just craft materials, or natural materials as well.

Materials

- Popsicle sticks
- Scissors
- Construction paper
- Colored pencils or pens
- Cotton balls
- Optional: leaves and sticks

Steps

1. Draw or cut out your hibernating animal, such as a bear or chipmunk.
2. Place your animal on its bed, which can either be construction paper or sticks and leaves that you collect from outside.
3. Build your animal's den using popsicle sticks or construction paper. What shape do you think will work best to protect your animal from the cold? How big should your animal's den be?
4. Finally, decorate your completed den with cotton balls to represent the winter snow. Make sure your animal is fully protected from the cold!
5. As a bonus activity, build your own hibernation den at home using pillows and blankets. Make sure your den is fully covered except for an opening to exit at the end of the long winter months.

Building a fire

One of the ways we can keep warm while winter camping is by making a fire. Though useful and fun, building campfires can be a tricky task. Teach your kids the building blocks of campfires using a pretend fire or a real one. Before the activity, make sure to communicate the importance of fire safety, including staying a safe distance from the flames and making sure the fire is completely out before leaving it for the night.

Materials

- Sticks
- Small materials for kindling
- Rocks
- Red, orange, and yellow felt or scraps of paper

Steps

1. Send your little one outside to collect dead, down, and dry materials for their fire, such as sticks for the fire, rocks for the fire ring, and smaller materials for kindling.
2. Build your fire together. What shape or configuration do you think would work best? Hint: Try the log cabin, teepee, or star structures.
3. Add a ring around the fire with rocks, indicating a "safety circle" to stay outside of that keeps you away from the flame. Have a conversation about why it's important to stay a safe distance from your campfire.
4. Add kindling to the center of the fire structure.
5. For pretend fires, have kids cut felt or colored paper to represent flames. Add the flames to the fire.
6. For real fires, light your kindling and watch your fire grow! For added fun, roast marshmallows over the flames for a winter treat. ▲▲

When you're done crafting, cozy up with a book or game. For inspiration, check out these Mountaineers Books publications. Find them at mountaineersbooks.org, our Seattle Program Center Bookstore, and anywhere books are sold.



An Urban Take on an Outdoor Classic

Urban Walks at The Mountaineers

By Vienna Christensen, Manager of Volunteer Development



Urban walkers at Section 10 of the Seattle Olmsted 70. Photo by Yoko Sato.

In the winter of 1907, forty-eight charter members of various genders and ages walked through what is now Seattle's Discovery Park to the West Point lighthouse on Elliot Bay. Ninety-one years later, author Jim Kjeldsen would reference this outing in *The Mountaineers: A History*, writing "The Mountaineers' legacy of outdoor adventures began with a local walk."

Since our founding in 1906, Mountaineers have explored near and far places, understanding that great adventure still exists close to home. Today, this legacy continues through Urban Walk, a program that joins members in community to enjoy the benefits of frontcountry recreation.

Reviving a Mountaineers tradition

While steeped in tradition, formal urban walks are fairly new offerings at The Mountaineers. The formalization of the Urban Walk Committee began amid the global upheaval of 2020 when the Foothills Branch asked Mountaineers leaders Liz McNett Crowl and Peter Hendrickson to launch a committee around this popular activity. Over the next two years, Liz, Peter, and other leaders designed a new iteration of a longstanding Mountaineers tradition, building out structure and guidance for Mountaineers to take urban walking to new heights.

To formalize urban walks as a Mountaineers activity, the committee developed activity standards for leading safe walks in urban and suburban environments. Prior to the committee's founding, Mountaineers would simply lead "hikes" in urban areas. But frontcountry terrain brings its own set of challenges and risks that need to be planned for and mitigated, such as how to manage pedestrian safety, crowded streets, increased

contact with dogs, and a multitude of shared trail users (like cyclists, strollers, skaters, groups, and wheelchairs). The committee also had to define terms, set leadership standards, develop training requirements, and create badges.

Through the intentionality and dedication of Peter, Liz, and the rest of the committee leaders, Urban Walk now has organization-wide standards (adopted in January 2023) that solidify its offerings as distinct Mountaineers activities. Liz currently serves as the Foothills Urban Walk Committee Chair and Peter as the Seattle Urban Walk Committee Chair.

What is urban walking?

The Mountaineers defines urban walks as "outings two miles or longer that take place on city or suburban streets, parks, or greenbelts, where there is consistent cell phone service and nearby emergency response access and egress points." While urban walks are different from hikes, they share a similar goal: to provide members an opportunity to engage in physical activity outdoors with a like-minded community.

Some differences between urban walks and hikes may be obvious, such as traveling on sidewalks, incorporating cultural or urban venues and activities, and an altered Ten Essentials. Traditional hikes tend to explore areas beyond city limits, but urban walks embrace the city and celebrate spaces where the built and natural world intersect and interact. Because of this, urban walks are often more accessible.

For instance, some urban walks take advantage of mass transit or don't require driving at all. Access to water stations, restroom facilities, and emergency care makes outdoor adventuring more feasible for people who can't risk being



Early Mountaineers on the first local walk to the West Point Lighthouse at Seattle's Fort Lawton. Photo from the 1907 Mountaineer Annual.

in the backcountry for hours on end. In addition, the regular walking opportunities offered by the Urban Walk Committee help reduce risk factors for chronic disease, especially when done with community.

New urban setting, same spirit of exploration

Urban walks are a low-barrier opportunity for families and individuals of all ages and abilities to enjoy the healing effects of movement outdoors in a supportive environment. Some folks participate in urban walks to stay connected to The Mountaineers after a long legacy of climbing, scrambling, and backpacking; some join to see our waters, hills, and mountains in a new light; and some, as Peter described, come for the “tug of finding or nourishing new social connections. There’s a lot of time to chat.”

In the few years since its inception, Urban Walk has thrived at The Mountaineers. Volunteer leaders embody the spirit of adventure in the city’s bustling and dynamic terrain, often centering walks around historical and memorable elements such as historical districts, seasonal attractions, art installations, and gardens. Urban Walk activities have also incorporated city night walks, geocaching, yoga, and even pit stops at street markets and pumpkin patches. “I love exploring the metropolitan area to see how more than three million folks live, work, and play together,” shared Peter Hendrickson. For him, these activities are an opportunity to appreciate the ebb and flow of different cultures within a landscape, as well as contemplate the dynamic landforms and glacial history that lie beneath our cities.

Urban Walk is for everyone

When asked who would most enjoy urban walks, Liz’s immediate response was, “who wouldn’t?” Urban Walk caters to everyone and anyone who wants to join. Currently, only the Foothills and Seattle Branches offer Urban Walk trips, but members and guests from any branch are welcome to participate. During Seattle’s darker months, the Seattle Branch also offers the GoWalk! course, providing monthly urban walk outings and seminars to improve skills and make new friends.

Whether you’re a seasoned outdoor professional or just dipping your toes into outdoor recreation, Urban Walk invites you to continue elevating this Mountaineers legacy within an ever-growing community of fellow explorers. ▲▲



Urban walkers smiling beside the Brunn Idun Troll at Section 8 of the Seattle Olmsted 70. Photo by Peter Hendrickson.

PRO TIPS

Sign up for Urban Walk notifications

If you are interested in participating in Urban Walk activities, adjust your Alerts & Notifications preferences in your online profile to include Urban Walk activity announcements. This feature notifies you when an urban walk is posted, so you can sign up immediately.

Become a leader

If you are an aspiring Urban Walk Leader, the path ahead is easy, especially if you are already a Hike Leader or have taken leader courses. Learn the steps to becoming an Urban Walk Leader by visiting mountaineers.org/urban-walk-leader.

WALKING THROUGH HISTORY

Olmsted 50k and 70k

One of the crowning achievements of the Urban Walk program is the Seattle Olmsted 50k and 70k routes, created by Peter Hendrickson in partnership with Friends of Seattle Olmsted Parks. The Seattle Olmsted Circuit, which spans a total of 75 miles divided into 12 six-mile sections, beautifully links together both green and urban spaces as you walk through forests, ravines, hidden parks, shorelines, clothing-optional beaches, greenbelts, and parks, as well as the Woodland Park Zoo, marine and aeronautical industrial areas, the University of Washington campus, and spaces abounding in art installations and murals. Visit our website to find urban walks covering sections of the Olmsted 50k and 70k: mountaineers.org/Seattle-Olmsted-Circuit.



How Scholarships Support Adventure and Belonging

By Jackson Gutierrez, Development Officer

Photo by McKenzie Campbell Davies.

The Mountaineers is a vibrant community, encompassing everyone from skilled alpinists summiting the world's highest peaks to adults learning new skills to youth discovering the natural world's wonders for the very first time. This vibrancy is made possible through our commitment to fostering a culture of equity and belonging, which drives us to reduce barriers and create welcoming spaces for all regardless of age, background, ability, or interest. We envision a future where every individual who wants to find inspiration, community, and a sense of belonging in the outdoors can have that opportunity at The Mountaineers.

"I have always felt welcome and included. Everyone should have access to the outdoors. It's so important for fitness, socialization, and mental health."

- Elsie Hazlet, 2024 scholarship recipient

Supporting equity and improving access to the outdoors

Economic barriers can often hinder an individual or family's ability to experience the natural world. The costs associated with outdoor activities, such as equipment, travel, and course fees, can be prohibitive due to a variety of circumstances, and this economic strain may prevent people from joining outdoor groups, attending educational courses, or participating in community events that foster a sense of belonging and shared purpose. Without access to impactful outdoor opportunities, individuals might miss out on the physical, mental, and social

benefits that come from engaging in nature and being part of a supportive community.

One way we improve access is through our Mountaineers Access Program which provides scholarships to help cover the cost of courses, programs, and memberships. Members like you donate to create a pool of resources available as scholarships so that others can learn about, enjoy, and find belonging in the natural world. By lowering financial barriers, we help ensure that more people have the chance to discover and connect with the natural world and embark on adventures with purpose.

Thanks to investments from our Mountaineers community, we've awarded over \$100,000 in scholarship funds in the 2024 fiscal year. These scholarships enabled adults and youth to participate in life-changing outdoor recreation activities, lodge stays, courses, clinics, and camps. If you supported Mountaineer scholarships this past year or in previous years, thank you. Your investments have had a significant impact on our community.

"Thank you for making people's outdoor dreams a reality and for allowing others to experience that the outdoors are for everyone. Being outside is life-saving. Coming from a poverty background, going outdoors felt like a rich-person activity and also unattainable. Scholarships enable individuals to explore new opportunities, develop outdoor skills, and share their knowledge to enhance the abilities of others."

- Derek, 2024 scholarship recipient*



Donor-funded scholarships help foster a culture of equity and belonging at The Mountaineers. Photo courtesy of Scott Kinney, scholarship recipient.

Reflecting on your role in a culture of belonging

Inspiration and belonging outdoors can be experienced in myriad ways, such as bearing witness to a majestic landscape, a powerful current, or an expansive night sky. Learning new skills expands our sense of self, whether self-arresting on a snow slope or identifying the moss in an ancient forest. Experiencing joy, achievement, peace, wonder, and even discomfort with others strengthens our community both on and off the trail.

This season of giving is the perfect time to reflect on your journey with The Mountaineers. Perhaps your reflections involve friendships formed on mountain trails, skills learned under open skies, or personal growth sparked by shared adventures. Regardless of outdoor setting, we hope that in your reflections you find that The Mountaineers has helped you access programs, discover more about yourself, and find a sense of belonging.

When reflecting on their time at The Mountaineers, many members look for ways to give back so that others can have similarly profound experiences. Help our community experience the same sense of belonging and support that Elsie, Derek, Matty, Sarah, and countless others describe by contributing to a vision where everyone has the opportunity to explore, learn, and grow.

“Being a part of The Mountaineers and getting the incredible opportunity to participate in its programs has hugely impacted my life. As a kid from Texas, I did not know it was even possible to do some of the things I've been able to do since joining this group. I've pushed myself physically and mentally and proven to myself what I'm capable of through these trips. My worldview has expanded and my confidence in myself has grown vastly.”

- Sarah, 2024 scholarship recipient*

How you can help

The Mountaineers flourishes when we welcome more people into our community of adventurers. Investing in scholarships enables individuals to adventure with purpose, enriching their lives and fostering a sense of unity that strengthens our collective bond. Make a difference today by donating to support Mountaineers scholarships and helping to create an inclusive community where everyone can experience the wonders of the natural world. ▲▲

“Scholarships allow people who otherwise could not afford training to learn the skills that keep them safe in the outdoors. Some of these recipients become volunteers for The Mountaineers, who teach these skills to the next crop of eager students.”

- Matty, 2024 scholarship recipient*

*Some names have been changed to honor their wishes to remain anonymous.

SCHOLARSHIP FAQ

Who can apply for a scholarship? Anyone - members and non-members - may apply for a scholarship. Adults must apply for scholarships on behalf of minors or dependents.

When can I apply for a scholarship? Be sure to apply at least two weeks before you wish to register for your course or activate your membership.

How can I support scholarships? You can directly support scholarships with a tax-deductible donation at mountaineers.org/scholarshipfund. Members like you are also leveraging tax-smart ways to give through donor advised funds, appreciated stock, IRA contributions, and more.

For more information about scholarships, contact Member Services at 206-521-6001 or info@mountaineers.org. Together, we're building a stronger, more connected community.

SCHOLARSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS

Fiscal Year 2024 (Oct 1, 2023 - Sep 30, 2024)

\$106,719 scholarships redeemed

165 adults

65 youth and families

30-100% of course costs covered

64 recipients paid it forward by volunteering with The Mountaineers

Ensuring a Sustainable Future for Northwest Forests

Shaping Climate-Smart Improvements to the Northwest Forest Plan

By Betsy Robblee, Conservation & Advocacy Director

Photo by Nate Derrick.

Growing up backpacking with my family in the Cascades and Olympics, I was introduced to our magnificent Northwest forests at a young age. Those summer trips where I collected pinecones and roasted s'mores over the campfire fostered my love for recreating in these iconic landscapes. These days, trail running and backcountry skiing through the same forests remind me why I was called to conservation work and the role the recreation community can play in protecting our lands and waters through outdoor advocacy.

The forests that first connected me to nature are changing due to the climate crisis. Decreased snowpack, drought, and increasingly intense wildfires are drastically affecting our forests and the outdoor opportunities they provide. Melting glaciers and smoky summers aren't just headlines, they're on-the-ground consequences that underscore the critical need to adapt current land management practices to the realities of climate change.

The Forest Service is taking important steps to manage forests in a way that responds to and mitigates the impacts of a changing climate. To that end, the Northwest Forest Plan - which has guided management across seventeen national forests in Washington, Oregon, and Northern California for the last 30 years - is getting a much needed and overdue update. This process intends to help ensure a more sustainable future for these forests and the biodiversity, communities, and recreation experiences they support.



South fork Skokomish River Trail in the Olympic National Forest. Photo by U.S. Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Region.

Bringing the recreation voice to northwest forest planning

That carefree kid hiking through towering trees would have never guessed she'd have the opportunity to advise the Forest Service on the future of climate-smart management of Northwest forests we all love. In June of 2023, I was appointed to serve on a new Forest Service Federal Advisory Committee (FAC) for sustainable, climate-adapted, wildfire-resilient landscapes in Pacific Northwest national forests.

The Federal Advisory Committee is made up of a diverse group of tribal leaders, local community members, environmental groups, industry leaders, and scientists responsible for advising the Forest Service on how to amend the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan to address modern challenges like fire resilience and climate adaptation. I was motivated to serve on this committee because it is essential that the recreation community's values and perspectives are represented during the plan update.

Outdoor recreation is the primary way that people experience our national forests. The Northwest Forest Plan area includes over 10,000 miles of trails, more than 500 climbing sites, and almost 900 river access sites, including many critical areas for Mountaineers courses and programs. While preparing to join the Committee, I spent a lot of time thinking about the interests of The Mountaineers, the recreation community, and ideas that I could bring to the table that could make outdoor recreation more fire- and climate-resilient.

Digging into the Northwest Forest Plan update

The 1994 Northwest Forest Plan contained historic protections for old growth forests, wildlife, and water quality. Although many elements of the original Northwest Forest Plan have withstood the test of time, our forests face new challenges that require management changes. The FAC focused on several key topics: fire resistance and resilience, climate change, mature and old growth forest ecosystems, tribal inclusion, and rural communities. After nearly a year of collaborative work, the Committee made nearly two hundred consensus recommendations to the Forest Service.

We recommended that the Forest Service:

- Prioritize protection of older forests and trees across the landscape, including conserving the remaining unprotected old growth forests.
- Accelerate restoration of dry, fire-prone forests on the east side of the Cascades to increase resiliency to high-intensity wildfire.
- Increase the capacity of ecosystems to adapt to climate change through new climate resilience strategies and adaptive management.
- Vastly improve meaningful consultation and engagement with Tribes and Indigenous communities, including expanded co-stewardship of federal lands and incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge into planning.
- Support economic opportunities for rural communities in the Northwest, including sustainable timber harvesting and outdoor recreation.

While many of these recommendations may not directly address outdoor recreation, the Committee's recommendations seek to improve the sustainability and conservation of our forests, so we can continue to enjoy high-quality recreation opportunities. I contributed several recommendations to better integrate recreation into forest health projects and restore recreation infrastructure, like trails after climate-related events such as wildfires or severe storms. There may be future opportunities to make our recreation experiences more resilient to a changing climate through the Federal Advisory Committee process and the proposed amendment.

After receiving the Committee's consensus recommendations and input from the public and Tribes, the Forest Service created a draft amendment and environmental analysis. Now the public - including The Mountaineers community - has an opportunity to provide feedback on the draft.

An evening of northwest forest advocacy

To celebrate The Mountaineers deep investment in forest



The An Evening of Advocacy speaker panel. Photo by Matt Hagen.

planning advocacy, inform our community on the Federal Advisory Committee process, and prepare to take action on the draft amendment, we highlighted this work as part of this year's An Evening of Advocacy event in October. An Evening of Advocacy is The Mountaineers annual fundraiser directly supporting our conservation and advocacy work and impact. I brought two of my fellow FAC Committee Members - Dr. James Johnston from the University of Oregon and Ann House with the Snoqualmie Tribe - as well as our key conservation partner, Megan Birzell from The Wilderness Society, to discuss current challenges and opportunities presented by the Northwest Forest Plan update and to share their passion for our forests.

Event attendees asked thoughtful questions of the panel, highlighting the deep connection our members, supporters, and partners have to our region's forests. Our community's engagement in the discussion demonstrated how we're well-positioned to help ensure that the recreation community's values and perspectives are included in the Northwest Forest Plan amendment and the future management of our forests.

Speak up for our forests

The next opportunity for our Mountaineers community to help shape a sustainable future for Northwest forests through a climate-smart amendment to the Northwest Forest Plan is here. A public comment period on the Forest Service's proposed action and draft environmental impact statement is now open. This is a rare opportunity to help make our forests more sustainable, and the recreation community has an important role to play. The Mountaineers will be commenting along with our partners at Outdoor Alliance on behalf of our community, and we encourage our members to share their comments directly with the Forest Service.

"The key to making your voice heard during the comment period is personalization," shared Megan at An Evening of Advocacy. "Where you can shine is by putting your heart into your letter and sharing your connection to these forests and the things you want to see in the plan."

Thanks in advance for adventuring with purpose with us by speaking up about the forests we love - from the Olympics to the Deschutes and beyond. Find more information on how to comment by visiting our blog and reading our Conservation Currents newsletter. You can also visit the Forest Service's planning page: bit.ly/NorthwestForestPlanAmendment. ▲▲



HOW TO HOT WAX NORDIC SKIS

By Becca Polglase, ski enthusiast and Director of Programs and Operations

Photo by Skye Stoury.

I never waxed my first pair of skis. I didn't know any better. Twenty years later, they are still viable skis. But most avid skiers do wax their skis (and for good reason). With the right wax, your glide improves and the ski base is protected, allowing them to perform better, longer. There's a saying: "Take care of your gear and it will take care of you." But how? For me, waxing skis was intimidating. With seemingly endless options and advice, learning the process felt overwhelming as a beginner. My hope is to demystify the world of hot waxing so you can confidently prepare your skis for winter adventures.

What you'll need

A place to lay your skis upside down, with tips and tails supported, and bindings hanging freely. My friend uses two Adirondack chairs. Many people have mounted ski clamps on their garage work benches. Apartment-dwellers might cough up \$150 for a foldable waxing table, but the most portable option (and my personal favorite) is the Happy Norwegian Mr. Grippy. With a pair of these, you can wax your skis just about anywhere. If you aren't ready to take the plunge, many ski areas have waxing rooms or huts.

A way to clean the fine wax dust you'll leave behind. A tarp will do, or a shop vacuum. You must clean after every waxing session or you'll quickly create an irreversibly waxy floor, which becomes dangerously slippery, very flammable, and, well... gross.

An iron. Old consignment irons work fine, but cheap ski waxing irons are even better (best bang for the buck I think). Don't use your clothes iron unless you want oily clothes. Fancy waxing irons do the best job at fine-tuning the temperature for your wax. If you're an average skier like me, don't worry about fancy. You don't ski well enough to notice the difference.

A plastic scraper. Scrapers come in multiple thicknesses. I like having a 3mm and a 4mm. The 3mm flexes just enough to get the inconsistent spots, and the 4mm provides extra sturdiness when scraping.

A plastic groove scraper. These tools, shaped like a pen, are designed to remove wax from the groove of your ski base.

A soft wire brush and a nylon brush (they also make combo brushes). Wire brushes are the only metal you should

use on Nordic skis. All other tools should be plastic.

Note: There are many types of wax (like kick wax, liquid waxes, and gel waxes) as well as different types of skis. This article is specifically about hot waxing your Nordic skis using solid glide wax.

Advice on seeking advice

Ski waxing brings out the nerd in everyone. You will get endless opinions about all aspects of waxing, from the coarseness of the brush to the number of times you brush the ski to the temperature the wax should cool to before scraping. Generally, no advice is wrong, and over time you'll develop your signature wax routine. Don't let the details discourage you. For now, you're waxing your skis! Which is better than not waxing your skis.

How long does hot wax last?

In my experience, wax lasts 10-15 kilometers on cold, dry snow. When you finish skiing, you'll notice your bases look dry in some areas. That's a sign to wax before your next outing, even if conditions are similar. On wet snow, wax can last 30-50 kilometers.



Left: Applying wax via the drip method. Middle: Groove-scraping and ironing. Right: Scraping the ski, tip to tail. All photos by Becca Polglase.

Hot waxing your skis

Choosing

Swix and Toko are the most commonly used brands of ski wax, but there are others like Fastwax and New Moon, and surely others I've not heard of. Most wax reports provide both Swix and Toko recommendations. I recommend buying three small (40g) squares of wax to start - one each of red, violet, and blue in Swix, or red, yellow, and blue in Toko. Each wax has snow temperature ranges as well as iron temperature recommendations. Don't worry if you can't regulate your iron temperature - your iron just needs to get hot enough to melt the wax.

Snow temperature also varies. The night before your outing, check the forecast. If there's a wax report, follow those recommendations. Otherwise, consider the time of day you're skiing and choose the wax based on temperature. If you're unsure, err toward colder (harder) wax.

Applying

Note: wax application, scraping, and brushing are identical in both skate and classic skis. The only difference is that in classic skis, you need to avoid the "kick zone" (aka the mohair skin or the fish scale pattern).

There are two common ways to apply wax to skis. The wax-conserving but challenging method is to draw it on, also known as the "crayon" method. Rub the brick of wax on the iron, then quickly transfer the melty surface to the ski. Do this repeatedly until the ski is covered with wax (or just enough so that when you go over the wax with an

iron, it will disperse to cover the whole ski).

The easier method is to drip the wax on. Hold one corner of the iron above the ski at an angle, press the brick of wax on the iron, and let the wax drip onto the ski. Experienced waxers can drop a melted sine wave down the ski in about five seconds. As a beginner, you will take longer and drip too much wax. That's okay - you'll improve with practice.

Once your ski is covered with wax (whether "crayoned" or dripped), move your iron up and down the ski until the wax melts evenly. Treat the ski like your clothes and keep the iron moving so as not to burn the ski.

Cooling

Let your skis completely cool before scraping.

Note: The colder and harder the wax, the more difficult it is to work with. If I'm using super cold wax, I prefer to do an initial scrape while the skis are warm. (But I'm sure plenty of people would disagree.)

Scraping

First, use the groove scraper to remove wax from the groove(s) of your ski, scraping tip to tail. I prefer to do this first so if I slip out of the groove, I don't mess up the ski after I scrape it. Then, using your plastic scraper, scrape from tip to tail. Continue scraping until no more wax will scrape off. Scrape the edges too.

Brushing

Using your brush, press down firmly on your ski, brushing tip to tail about 10-15 times. Like sanding, brushing creates fine

dust and makes your skis smooth and shiny. If you have a metal brush and a nylon brush, do this twice - first with the metal, then with the nylon. When you're done brushing, don't forget to clean, otherwise the fine wax dust will embed into your floor forever and you'll quickly have a slippery ice rink.

Skiing

Congrats! Your skis are waxed and you can enjoy the fruits of your labor. Some days your skis will be fast, other days you'll wonder if you made the wrong wax choice. The truth is, some days the snow is slow, some days you are slow, and some days the wax, the snow, and your body align for speed and grace on the trails. Variability is all part of the fun. ▲▲



Photo by Skye Stoury.

TOP 10 MOUNTAINEERS OF INSTAGRAM

If taking a photo makes a memory last longer, then memorializing a photo in print would effectively make a memory last forever.

We launched our Instagram (@mountaineersorg) over a decade ago. Since then, hundreds of Mountaineers and members of the outdoor community have shared their outdoor pursuits with us. From stewarding beloved forests to embracing grand adventures, photos go a long way in encouraging each other to appreciate, protect, and respect the lands and waters we love.

Each winter, we showcase a few of our favorite Mountaineers Instagrammers and the compelling memories they've shared with our community. Until coffee stains and dog ear folds distort these pages, we hope you enjoy these visual memories and the lifetime of purposeful adventure they inspire.



Tatiana Van Campenhout, @zatiana

When I moved to Seattle in 2019, the view of Mt. Rainier sparked curiosity about what it would take to climb it. In 2020, I joined a guided climb of Rainier, and although we didn't summit due to bad weather, that experience ignited my passion for mountaineering. My love for photography grew alongside my mountaineering. Coming from Belgium, I wanted to share the stunning landscapes of the Pacific Northwest with my friends and family back home. Photography became my way of connecting with family and bringing the beauty of these places to those who may never experience them. Through my photos, I aim to capture the joy and serenity I find in nature and share it with others.



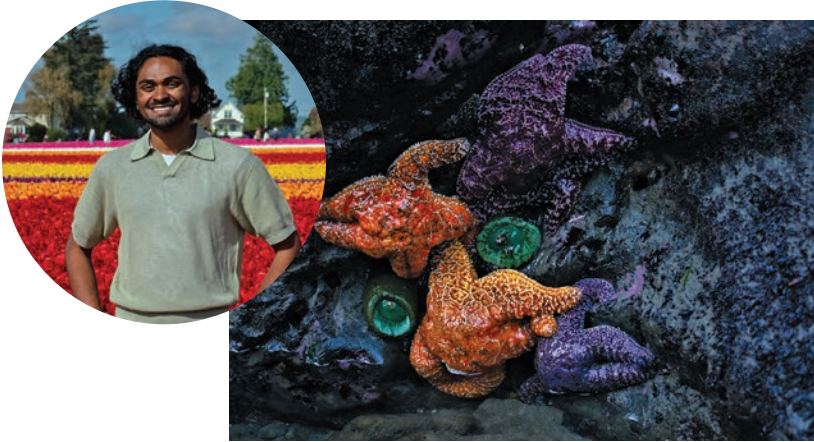
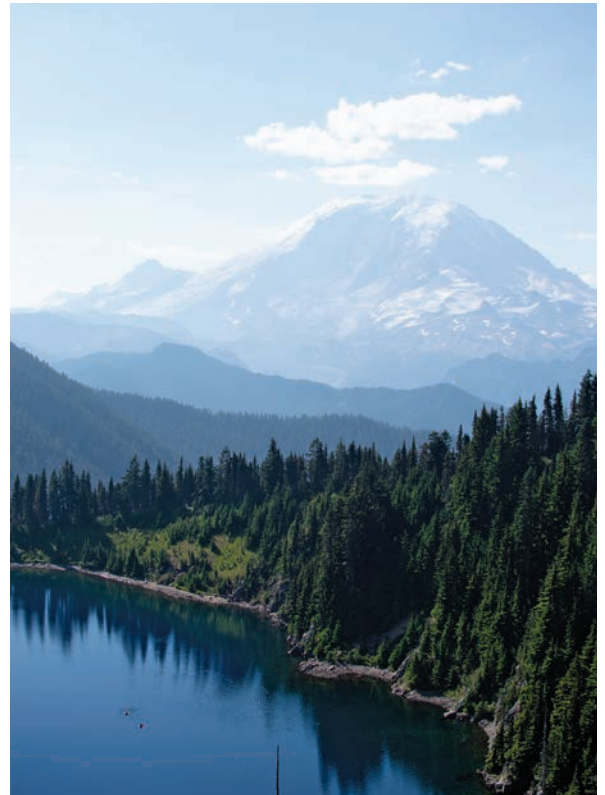
Elanie Igama, @ms_elanie

I discovered my love for hiking a few years after visiting an alpine lake I had seen online. After that trip, I knew I wanted to hike again. Here I am, a few years later. I backpack all summer and hike all year. Sunsets, wildflowers, fresh breeze, alpine lakes, mountains, beaches... you name it, I love it! I am not a professional photographer, but I love capturing my adventures and telling my story with people through my photos. We live in a beautiful state, and there is much to see. I feel grateful to be able to do this, and I hope that by sharing photos and stories, I encourage and inspire others to go outside and see the beauty that is all around us.



Abhay Cashikar, @abhaycashikar

I've been exposed to the outdoors since I was a kid, but I don't think I truly appreciated being in nature until I moved to the PNW. Photography has helped me slow down on my escapades and pay more attention to the journey rather than just reaching my destination. I joined The Mountaineers with the goal of summiting Rainier, and recently completed the first step by taking the Alpine Scrambling course. Not only am I more confident, fit, and prepared to tackle Washington's unique summits, I've also stumbled upon a group of like-minded friends in my former classmates to go on trips with. A few of us summited Mt. Adams back in August, which was exhilarating from start to finish. I'm always looking forward to exposing strangers and friends to mountaineering so that they can experience this amazing environment we live in.



Wally Estenson, @wallyestenson

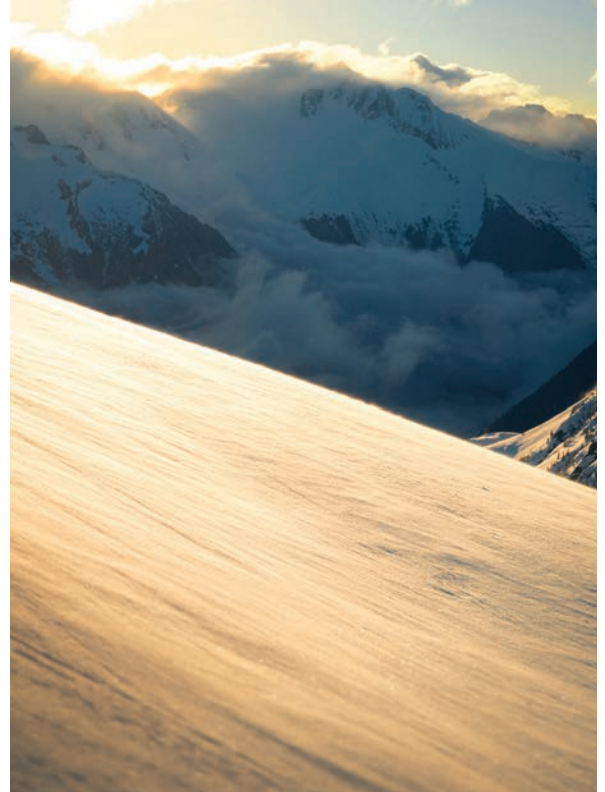
Growing up in Minnesota with parents who loved planning family adventures, I was fortunate to develop a love for nature early on in life. Since moving to Seattle last year, I've been continuously amazed by the beauty of the Pacific Northwest. Whether it's a walk on the beach or tackling a big mountaineering objective, nature offers me a space for peace and introspection, as well as one where I can challenge myself both physically and mentally. I enjoy photography as a way to relive past experiences, and by sharing these moments, I hope to inspire and motivate others to get outside and explore.





Forrest Golic, @forrestgolic

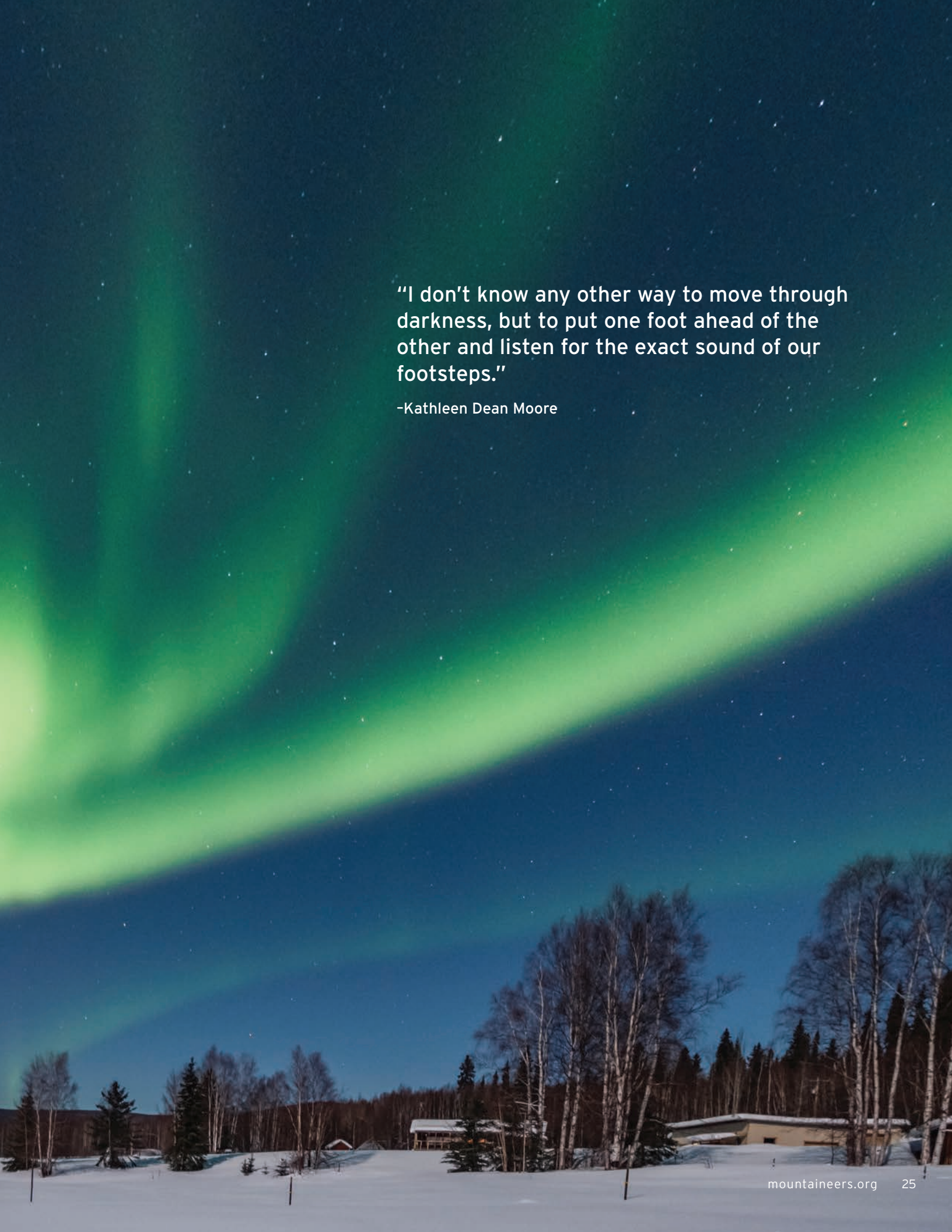
Growing up in North Bend, I loved spending time in the mountains, but during my freshman year of college, trips to the mountains became fewer and farther between. The only way I ameliorated the mountains' call was to look back at old photos. It was in my dorm room that I realized the power of photography. To me, photography is an escape from the 40-hour work week. It has amplified my love of being outside, seeing new places, visiting old favorites, pushing myself to new heights, waking up early, and challenging myself. I try to share more than just the beautiful moments, but also the experiences of hiking on tired legs, running out of electrolytes, being cold, powder skiing, not powder skiing, hoping for a good sunrise but not getting one, and, of course, the taste of cold beer after a day in the mountains.



Danielle Graham, @graham_danielle

A lot has changed since I first learned how to use photo apps and macro lenses to “see” the natural world, though I still love to capture the small moments, like drops of water on mosses from winter wandering on Tiger Mountain or the appearance of bog gentian which marks the start of fall in the alpine. As a member of the Grasstops Collective at Outdoor Alliance, sharing photos and stories on Instagram allows me to amplify folks who are advocating for inclusion in outdoor recreation and conservation on public lands. I’ve also started dipping my toes into reels, which have been fun to explore during packrafting and aquatic canyoning trips with The Mountaineers.





"I don't know any other way to move through darkness, but to put one foot ahead of the other and listen for the exact sound of our footsteps."

-Kathleen Dean Moore



Kristy Nguyen, @kristy_thi_nguyen

I'm notorious for avoiding the camera and not taking photos. I want to experience what's being offered to its fullest: what I'm seeing, smelling, feeling. These experiences are impossible to capture because they are more than just the one shot. It's not just the breathtaking views I'll remember; it's the blisters and bruises that I take as souvenirs. It's not just physical fitness and mental fortitude that got me through the miles; it's the Nerds gummy clusters fueling each step. It's not just discipline and determination that got me through the last switchbacks; it's the wishful conversation of our future diner feast. It's the boring behind-the-scenes, the mundane minutiae, the silly shenanigans. And so, I'm grateful for those who adventure alongside me and capture these beautiful moments to be appreciated, shared, and remembered.



Josh Hall, @_josh_hall__

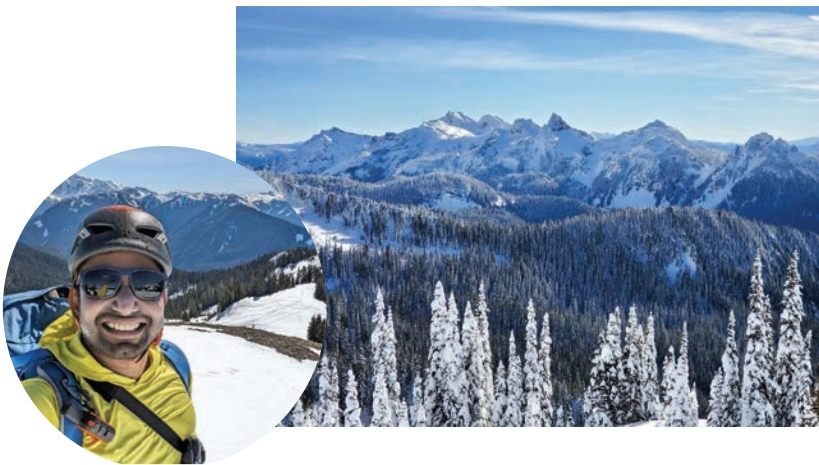
It wasn't until my dad took me up Mt. Adams at the age of 12 that I had my first "real" mountain experience. From that moment, I was hooked, constantly seeking my next adventure. I soon took on backcountry skiing and climbing and began taking photos to capture the memories and places I was exploring. The Mountaineers has provided me with the skills to safely and responsibly navigate these areas. Whether I am on a big trip in the alpine, a fun day in the backcountry, or just cragging with friends, I'm passionate about preserving these memories through photography as they give me something to look back on and cherish. I hope to inspire others to seek adventure and experience the natural areas around us.





Will Hill, @dubuyhill

I am anything but a photographer, don't think I've ever owned a camera, but I do enjoy sharing phone-shots of beautiful moments in wild places. I think it's because I've been so inspired by pictures of surreal landscapes. Seeing craggy skylines with fire-lit hues ignites late-night trip planning to places I otherwise wouldn't have visited. Climbing mountains has mostly been a vehicle to visit these exciting-looking places, an excuse to be on top of some large vista as dawn or sunset paints a dreamlike landscape. I suppose sharing those moments is my way of contributing to the greater pool of stoke for what nature offers if we choose to adventure.



Ananth Maniam, @ananth_maniam

I grew up in the tropics of Tamil Nadu, India. Hiking and climbing were not part of my life until later in adulthood, but I eventually found my heart in the mountains. With the infamous "Seattle freeze" as a looming threat, I thought The Mountaineers would become home, and it definitely has over the last eight years. I grew up with the lessons to "always give what you have to others who don't have" and "always show things which others can't afford to see." These words inspire me to give back, so I became a hike and scramble leader in 2018 and have led over 200 trips and participated in 300 or more. The people, the bushwhacks, the alpine sunrises, and the carpools keep it going for me.



THE MOUNTAINEERS ADVOCACY AGENDA

Advocating to protect public lands and the outdoor experience





Mountaineers have always been fierce advocates for the natural world. Early Mountaineers advocated to protect lands and waters of the Pacific Northwest, including Olympic National Park, North Cascades National Park, and the Alpine Lakes Wilderness.

Today, our donor-funded conservation work empowers our staff and more than 16,000 members to speak up on behalf of the natural landscapes that make our adventures possible.



Why Advocacy

Without conserved lands and waters, climate-resilient landscapes, and sustainable access to these places, our organization and the opportunities we provide would cease to exist.

What We Advocate For

We advocate for conservation and recreation policies that protect public lands and responsible recreation access. The Mountaineers advocacy agenda prioritizes four key issue areas: landscape conservation, climate action, public lands funding, and sustainable and equitable outdoor access.

What We Prioritize

We protect the landscapes and ecosystems where we recreate and the outdoor experiences these places provide.

- The majority of our focus is on national public lands including National Forests and Parks, as nearly two-thirds of Mountaineers outdoor activities take place on federal lands.
- We engage strategically on issues affecting Washington state-managed lands and waters.
- We occasionally engage in county and local issues where multiple Mountaineers programs and priorities intersect.

How We Advocate

From Washington State to Washington D.C., we educate, organize, and lobby to influence public policy and land management by:

- Shaping solutions-oriented legislation that protects public lands and the outdoor experience.
- Investing in relationships with legislators, land managers, and Tribes.
- Engaging in land planning processes and comment opportunities.
- Leading and participating in partnerships and coalitions to amplify our impact.
- Empowering outdoor enthusiasts to take action on current issues.

Top: Dungeness River Valley, Olympic National Forest. Photo by U.S. Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region. **Bottom:** Mountaineers staff and partners lobbying in Washington, D.C. Photo courtesy of Mountaineers staff.

ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

	WHY	HOW	WHAT
Landscape Conservation	Mountaineers rely on conserved public lands and waters for our outdoor adventures and the many other benefits they provide	Advocate for administrative and legislative protections for public lands and waters while maintaining and improving sustainable recreation access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wild Olympics Wilderness and Wild & Scenic Rivers Act • Durable protections for roadless areas in the North Cascades • Northwest National Forest planning
Climate Action	The climate crisis is an existential threat to the future of our organization and the planet	Advocate for state and federal climate policy that makes public lands and waters part of climate solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inflation Reduction Act and Climate Commitment Act implementation • Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful initiative
Public Lands Funding	In the face of intensifying climate change impacts and increasing recreational use, public land managers need robust funding to protect our natural spaces	Advocate for robust state and federal funding to support operations, deferred maintenance, recreation planning, and capital projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State and federal land management agency appropriations • Land & Water Conservation Fund and Washington Wildlife & Recreation Program funding • Great American Outdoors Act implementation and reauthorization
Sustainable & Equitable Outdoor Access	When we connect people to place, we build advocates for public lands and the outdoor experience	Advocate for sustainable and equitable outdoor recreation access to public lands and waters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplifying Outdoor Access to Recreation Act • State and federal sustainable recreation policy • No Child Left Inside funding • Federal and state land planning processes





Mountaineers enjoying a sunny paddle in the Salish Sea. Photo by Cathie Frizalone.

Why We're Effective

The Mountaineers is uniquely positioned to have an outsized advocacy impact. What sets us apart from similar organizations?

Authenticity: We speak with an authentic voice. Our community of outdoor enthusiasts have a personal connection to place that makes them powerful advocates for conservation.

Nonpartisan: We have a reputation for being moderate, pragmatic, and for working across party lines, increasing our ability to get things done.

High Engagement: When we ask our community to speak up, they take action in high numbers, making policymakers take notice.

Amplified Impact: Our authentic engagement is backed up with strong partnerships and deep policy expertise. We team up with like-minded organizations to achieve wins we couldn't on our own.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Your voice is powerful!

Sign up for Conservation Currents. We share current advocacy issues and action alerts in our monthly newsletter.

Take action. Our action alerts make it easy for you to personalize and send a message to your representatives.

Learn more. Learn more about conservation and advocacy through our conservation eLearning courses and our Conservation 101 series blog posts.

"The Mountaineers is a preeminent outdoor recreation and education organization in the Pacific Northwest, and is well respected throughout the region for its mission to help people explore and protect the outdoors. As one of the only recreation organizations in Washington State who actively engages in federal public land management issues, The Mountaineers is a unifying force for the larger outdoor recreation community."

- Taldi Harrison, Director of Community and Government Affairs, REI Co-op



Climbing trip to Frenchman Coulee, Columbia Basin Wildlife Area, Vantage, WA. Photo by Steve McClure.

"Climate change is increasingly threatening the places that host our outdoor adventures, and land managers continue to be underfunded. We need more Mountaineers to advocate to protect our public lands and waters, the climate, and the outdoor experience. The power of your personal connection to the outdoors can help provide a more sustainable future for new generations of outdoor enthusiasts."

- Roger Mellem, Chair, Mountaineers Conservation and Advocacy Committee

MOUNTAINEERING TO RUN

How The Mountaineers Prepared Me for My First Ultramarathon

By Priya Sinha, 2-year member and ultra runner



Priya running on the mesa in Page, AZ, just above Lake Powell behind the Glen Canyon Dam. All photos by Barney Kinzer.

When I joined The Mountaineers, I wanted to become a better alpine climber. I didn't realize it at the time, but learning how to climb has made me a better runner.

Earlier this year, I completed my first 55K ultramarathon. I was able to navigate the race with confidence thanks to the skills and techniques I had acquired through The Mountaineers. While each facet of mountaineering may seem distinct, techniques like compass reading, navigating rock, and traversing technical terrain have applications beyond climbing: they improve my running, enabling me to not just endure but thrive in the rugged and often unpredictable wilderness. Throughout the 55K, my mountaineering techniques proved invaluable in enhancing my running experiences, allowing me to focus on the journey instead of simply surviving the miles.

Starting strong: Snow techniques to handle sand

My 55K began with a taxing challenge: 20 kilometers of running on sand. Running on sand is difficult because the sand absorbs energy from each stride, making every step a struggle.

But thankfully, The Mountaineers had prepared me to handle similar challenges in snow.

When moving through snow, we're taught to lift our feet higher than usual and distribute our weight evenly over our feet to maintain speed and momentum and avoid sinking too deeply with each step. Instead of wasting unnecessary energy by forcing myself forward in the loose sand, I utilized the "penguin foot" strategy, a wide-stance gait used to avoid post-holing in snow. By slightly widening my foot placement, I could spread my weight over the ground's surface and reduce the energy drain from sinking into the sand. Mirroring snow travel techniques, I kept my cadence high, my steps short, and was able to conserve energy for the miles ahead.

To the amusement of my fellow racers, I also followed in their footsteps. Some of them noticed, and we agreed to break sand for each other.

Learning to rest (step) while running

Runners often lose energy trying to power uphill too quickly. When I first started training for my trail run, the rest step never came to mind. However, after powering my way up enough hills during training, I finally realized the potential of the rest step

to improve my running endurance.

Traditionally used in mountaineering to conserve energy during long and steep ascents, the rest step allows you to lock your back leg momentarily to give your muscles a break. Most runners (myself included) strike on their forefoot to maximize speed and efficiency. However, on prolonged climbs, this technique can be exhausting. To conserve energy, I adjusted my stride, planting my foot fully on the ground and allowing my back leg to take advantage of the brief relief. By incorporating the rest step, I maintained momentum without draining energy.

The rest step felt slow at first, almost counterintuitive in a race. But the payoff came later when my legs weren't as fatigued as they would have been had I tried to power through every climb. My Mountaineers training taught me the value of efficiency over brute force, and that lesson carried me through the most challenging parts of the race.

Staying stable with trekking poles

Many trail runners hesitate to use poles thinking they'll affect speed or get in the way, but poles actually provide stability which propels you forward. In technical terrain, running becomes less about speed and more about efficiency, making poles a crucial element to trail running strategy.

On steep climbs, poles distribute the workload between the legs and upper body, allowing the arms to assume some of the strain. On descents, poles provide balance and prevent runners from falling forward as gravity tries to speed them up. Like mountaineering, trail running routes host various types of terrain, including loose scree, solid bedrock, and wet, slippery surfaces. In the ultramarathon, my trekking poles helped me stay balanced and avoid injury while negotiating technical terrain. Poles also helped me maintain an upright posture, essential for breathing and overall endurance. The poles became an extension of my body and provided stability when the trail became tricky, giving me the confidence to tackle terrain that would have otherwise forced me to significantly slow down.

Maintaining mental toughness

In both mountaineering and ultra running, the sheer length of time spent on the trail can be overwhelming, making mental resilience equally important as physical resilience. The key to enduring is to divide the journey into manageable pieces and focus on the present moment. Whether summiting a peak or making it through a difficult race section, The Mountaineers taught me to focus on the next step, the next breath, and the next mile.

Eventually along the race, fatigue crept in and the 55K felt endless. During these difficult moments, I stayed present and focused on small, immediate goals like reaching the next aid station, maintaining my breathing, or navigating the next piece of technical trail. The ability to remain grounded in the moment kept me from becoming overwhelmed by the enormity of the task ahead and helped me push through inevitable low points.

After a lengthy last few kilometers, I crossed the finish line with tired feet and a happy heart. Through numb legs, I



Priya at the finish line of the 55K, just before walking another kilometer to celebrate her 56th birthday.

continued walking another kilometer until I reached 56K. Fifty-six kilometers to celebrate my fifty-sixth birthday. That's another thing The Mountaineers taught me... Each step and each day is a gift worth celebrating.

The Mountaineers legacy on my running journey

As I write this, I'm in Utah, adjusting to elevation for an upcoming three-day, three-stage, 40-mile trail run. Preparing for my next challenge, I am reminded daily of how much The Mountaineers has shaped my running journey. From the technical skills of navigating rocky terrain and mastering efficient climbing techniques to the mental fortitude required to endure long days in the wilderness, the lessons I've learned are invaluable.

The efficiency, patience, and presence required of mountaineering are now woven into my trail running approach. As I lace up my shoes for this next adventure, I do so with the confidence that I carry the wisdom of The Mountaineers with me, every step of the way. ▲▲

HOW TO UPCYCLE YOUR WINTER GEAR

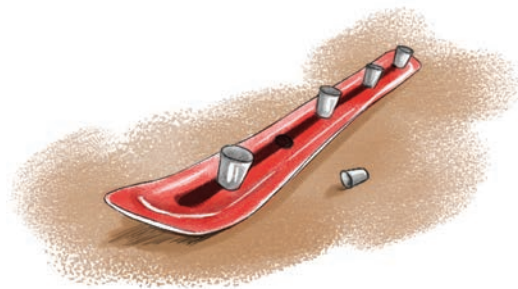
By Kristina Ciari, 11-year member and winter enthusiast
Illustrations by Shelby Olson, artist and Member Services Associate

I like to joke that I was born with skis on my feet. The product of two skiers raising a child in Montana, I've always loved winter (the colder the better). And, as someone who grew up watching Captain Planet and was raised on the idea of reduce > reuse > recycle, I enjoy finding multiple uses for my treasured outdoor gear. In the spirit of reuse, I'm delighted to offer a list of ideas to help you upcycle your old winter equipment.



Make a ski/board bench

No doubt you've seen one of these cool cats outside a ski or snowboard shop. Maybe you've even lounged on its semi-comfortable haunches. What it lacks in softness, the ski/board bench more than makes up for in style and durability - not to mention waterproofness. And, lucky for you, simple-to-follow building plans are easy to come by with a quick internet search.



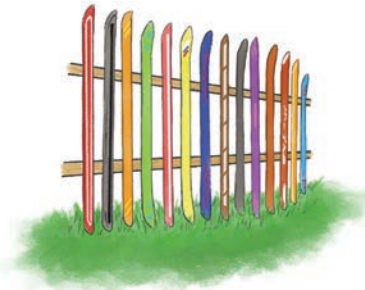
Drill a shotski

If you've been to an après ski event, a shotski was presumably one of the main attractions. Take an old ski and drill four to five holes large enough to hold your favorite shot glasses. Bring your shotski to your next party with a bottle of choice. Don't drink? No problem. Half the fun is finding the most disparately-sized humans and watching as they try to keep from spilling while drinking.



Dine anywhere on a charcutaski (or charcutaboard)

You've heard of a charcuterie board... A charcutaski or charcutaboard is that plus altitude. Next time you head to the hills, pack sliced meat, cheese, and other accoutrements as desired to set up a memorable meal slopeside. Bonus points for posting pics to make even the most famous Instagram Influencer jealous.



Build a ski fence

Travelers who have driven Highway 2 know the famous ski fence near Gold Bar. While not the most practical building material, skis can keep out critters (and humans) with their sharp edges, pointy tips, and durable design. Plus, old skis are relatively easy to come by, depending on how badly you want to make this fence happen. A ski fence is either completely stunning or totally hideous. Build one to find out which side of that fence you fall into.



Decorate your walls

Browsing Airbnb, it seems like some people buy log cabins just to hang old skis, poles, and snowshoes on the wall. I'm happy to report that you need not live in a log cabin to decorate with winter equipment. Right now, as I write this, my shotski hangs on the wall behind me. Life is too short... Hang your gear on the wall. ▲▲

The Perfect Detour

A Global Adventure in the Bernese Alps

By Colin Chapman, Global Adventures Leader



The start of the detour. Photo by Colin Chapman.

Perched atop Sefinenfurgge - the second highest pass on Switzerland's Via Alpina - we soaked in our last views of the Eiger and Mönch (two of the Bernese Alps' most famous peaks). We were eager to see the Blümlisalp massif ahead, but weren't exactly excited about our next task: descending 3,700 feet over 3.6 miles into a valley and then immediately ascending another mile and 1,200 feet. Excited or not, that's what it was going to take to reach our next hut, Berghaus Bundalp. Before we started downhill, a quick headcount revealed we were missing a participant.

"Come up here!" we heard from a small shelf above. The voice belonged to our missing hiker. We assumed the shelf was simply a photo spot with a different perspective of the valley below. But we were in for a big surprise... From the shelf, our curious hiker had spotted a high route etched into the rocky slopes below Bütlasse mountain. We pulled out our map and were astonished to realize this high route snaked past five peaks and four glaciers, and through a UNESCO World Heritage Site on its way to Berghaus Bundalp. A quick team meeting rendered a unanimous verdict: skip the valley and take the detour along the high route.

Crossing scree fields, descending ladders, and bypassing hollowed-out snowfields, the group remained patient as I constantly checked in to make sure everyone was comfortable with the terrain.

Rounding a shoulder and turning southeast, we were greeted by a massive cirque situated beneath the towering Gspaltenhorn and Kamel mountains, with the Gamchigletscher glacier dumping a raging torrent of silty water into the Gamchibach river below. The solitude was striking. After a week of sharing trails, trains,



A lively team meeting at Sefinenfurgge. Photo courtesy of Colin Chapman.

and huts with trekkers from all over the world, we felt like we had an entire cirque to ourselves.

But we weren't alone. In the distance, beyond a broad scree field and below the summit of Gspaltenhorn, was a tiny building. We assumed it was a primitive, single-room hut similar to the Schmadrihütte we'd visited two days earlier. But like a mirage turning into an actual oasis, as we progressed across acres of scree, the tiny building morphed into a beautiful, modern alpine hut: Gspaltenhornhütte.

With beer and sparkling water pouring from its bar taps, four varieties of homemade fruit tarts alleviating our hunger, and a deck with sweeping views of the surrounding peaks, glaciers, and rivers, we agreed that Gspaltenhornhütte was the perfect stop on the perfect detour to Berghaus Bundalp. ▲▲



WINTER TRAIL RUNNING

By Alex Bendig, Jennifer Bell, and Nataliya Semez, Trail Running Leaders

Tiger 1 from West Tiger 2 after some snow in December 2023. All photos courtesy of Jennifer Bell.

Crisp air circulates through your lungs. You exhale and a misty cloud hangs in the cold winter air. High in the mountains, trails turn to mud and ice as snow falls, then freezes. The sun hides behind a thick layer of dark clouds. At lower elevation, mossy soil and gentle rain offer a refreshing environment in the forest canopy. You lace up your shoes and put on your vest. It's the perfect day for a trail run.

Why winter trail running

Trail running takes you outside, away from busy streets to the trails. Forested or mountainous, well-maintained or overgrown, nicely graveled or covered with rocks and roots... there are thousands of runnable trails in Washington state. While similar to hiking, trail running allows you to move faster, explore further, and stay active all year long.

The best thing about trail running is you can do it whenever you want, not just as weather permits. During the winter, the trails are fairly empty as many recreationists pause their activities to avoid the mud and rain. But the folks who do brave less-than-ideal conditions often come back with better memories, stronger friendships, and funnier stories. Plus, tromping through the mud is undeniably fun.

The Winter Trail Running Conditioning course

When you join the trail running community at The Mountaineers, you'll see The Mountaineers culture and values at play. Our friendly, open, and welcoming community is reflected in our courses as well as the trips we organize, which provide safe spaces for all abilities, paces, and experiences. A shared sentiment among Mountaineers trail running leaders is that if we wanted to run fast, we'd run alone. We trail run

with The Mountaineers because we want to be in community, enjoying each other's company at a comfortable pace for the whole group.

Our Winter Trail Running Conditioning course began in 2023. The course focuses on conditioning, whether that be maintaining fitness built in the summer or getting in shape to start the new year strong. The course also tests your commitment to starting a new journey, all while adventuring in beautiful outdoor spaces in any weather with fun, supportive people.

"The three most challenging things about trail running are being alone, running in the dark, and being cold or wet," shared one trail running leader. "Try to eliminate one of those, and you will have a lot more fun." Our Winter Trail Running Conditioning course eliminates the challenge of being alone, which makes running in the cold, wet darkness a more enjoyable experience.

Throughout the course, we cover foundational materials on how to trail run safely in winter conditions and organize numerous trips to practice. To graduate students must attend the initial lecture and successfully participate in two runs per month in December, January, and February. While necessary for graduation, we see these trips as more than requirements: they are opportunities to create adventure, community, and lasting memories during a season that can be challenging for many. "I don't feel obligated to complete these activities - I feel grateful," shared Trail Running Leader Alex Bendig. "It's not that I *have* to do these things. I *get* to. I *get* to meet new people who are passionate about the outdoors. I *get* to explore cool trails from a new perspective. And I *get* to find other people who are willing to run when it's cold, dark, and wet outside."



A winter conditioning night run at Cougar Mountain in December 2023.



A winter conditioning run on Christmas Eve 2023 at Little Si.

More than just a workout

Our trail running community strives to be a welcoming space for all Mountaineers. "I'm not sure if this is a testament to [the] leadership style or something woven into the fabric of The Mountaineers... but I was overjoyed at the diversity of our running group," shared one Mountaineer after a trail running event at Tiger Mountain. "It's so inspiring to be in such a diverse group with such similar interests."

In addition to Winter Trail Running Conditioning, we offer a variety of trail running courses throughout the year, such as Introduction to Trail Running: Frontcountry, a perfect way to meet others who are new to the sport, Introduction to Trail Running: Backcountry, which teaches participants how to trail run safely in remote wilderness settings, and Introduction to Trail Running: Fastpacking, which combines trail running with ultralight backpacking, enabling you to go lighter, travel farther, and stay out overnight safely. We also offer Introduction to Trail Racing: 25K that's designed to help participants prepare for a 25K trail race, as well as a Trail Running Weekend at Baker Lodge where new and old friends can enjoy great food and a few miles together on some of the most scenic trails through the Mount Baker Wilderness.

Whether you're a new or experienced runner, we have plenty of offerings to get you outside and running safely. This year's Winter Trail Running Conditioning course is already underway, but there are plenty of other opportunities to get on the trails with fellow Mountaineers. We regularly offer trail running trips that are open to members and guests. Get outside with us this winter by checking out trail running activities on The Mountaineers website. We look forward to meeting you out on the trails soon! ▲▲

TIPS FOR WINTER TRAIL RUNNING

Know yourself. Consider your comfort zone in cold, dark, rainy, or snowy conditions. Developing your trail running skills will take time. Remember that experiencing joy, struggle, and routine helps you improve.

Jump in all the puddles. You're going to get wet, so let your inner child out and jump in as many puddles as possible instead of avoiding them.

Embrace the mud. It's inevitable that you will get muddy... everywhere. Bring a change of clothes and something to cover your car seat.

Adjust pacing. When it's dark and wet, slow your pace to reduce the likelihood of tripping or falling.

Layer up. Appropriate technical layers are a must. Always carry gloves, a hat, a rain jacket, and an extra layer, even if you don't easily get cold. You never know when you'll need to slow down or stop, which can put you at risk of hypothermia if you don't layer up quickly.

Stay hydrated and fueled. Carry hydration and snacks when you plan to run longer than 60 minutes. Aim to consume 300 calories per hour. Always carry enough calories to ensure you have energy for an extra hour.

Share your plans. Even frontcountry runs in the winter can be unpredictable. Make sure someone knows your location and intended route, and always have an emergency plan.

Keep your headlamp charged. Daylight is fleeting during winter, so always carry a charged headlamp. When you return home, put your headlamp immediately on the charger so it's always ready for a run.

Stay optimistic. Remember, the weather always looks worse from inside!

Learning How to Train Just Hard Enough

By Leif Whittaker, Mountaineers Books Author and Evoke Endurance founding member



Leif gliding through 16 inches of fresh powder during a ski trip to Hokkaido, Japan. Photo by Freya Fenwood.

Finding the correct balance between training and recovery is one of my main objectives as a coach. Famed running coach Renato Canova once said that a proper training load is not the maximum amount of work an athlete can tolerate, but the least they need to improve performance. Since every person has a unique athletic history, genetic code, and physiological makeup, figuring out how to train just hard enough can be tricky.

Using data to inform training

Today, more assessment tools are at our disposal than ever before. Most smartwatches provide heart-rate-based metrics such as heart rate variability (HRV), resting heart rate, and other data that can illuminate your body's internal processes and clue you into your state of recovery and training readiness. Training apps such as Strava or TrainingPeaks can monitor your training history and formulate scores for fatigue, form, and overall fitness. And lab-based tests, like a metabolic efficiency test, can identify an athlete's energy production thresholds, allowing for scientific precision when regulating workout intensity.

While data has many uses - especially for a coach - the volume of information can distract from the underlying goal of training: to improve performance.

Using intuition to inform training

Your subjective fitness experience is equally important as the objective data. Your watch might tell you you're getting fitter, but that doesn't mean much unless you feel fitter. When it comes to adjusting intensity and gauging training readiness, old-school methods are very effective.

Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE) is a subjective measure of exercise intensity that employs a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being an easy activity and 10 requiring maximum effort. RPE can be used for both strength and cardiovascular workouts. Rating every workout in this manner and comparing how your ratings change over time helps you understand how your body reacts and adapts to different challenges.

Muscular soreness can indicate whether you are going too hard or too easy at the gym. Light or moderate soreness for one to three days after a workout is generally acceptable, but if soreness lasts any longer, you probably need to lighten your next workout, then build your strength from there.

Mental preparedness for training is another important weathervane. Ask yourself, are you feeling motivated to work out today? Or does hiking on a treadmill for an hour sound like torture? Not many people are intrinsically driven to train every day, but if training always sounds like a chore, you might need to reassess your training plan.

Using both

Rather than focusing only on advanced metrics or subjective measures, why not use both? Correlation or incongruity between the two is perhaps the most powerful indicator of training success.

The relationship between heart rate and RPE is a perfect example. A lower-than-expected heart rate during an aerobic workout could be a sign of either improved metabolic efficiency or muscular fatigue. If your lower heart rate coincides with a higher-than-expected RPE, you are likely fatigued. But if your lower heart rate stays in line with RPE and coincides with an improved pace, you can be reasonably certain that your training is paying off.

Ultimately, your metrics and perceived fitness should experience a unified and gradual rise. If you're training consistently without experiencing long term progress, consider adjusting training volume or intensity, allowing more time for recovery, or taking an extended break and returning at a lower training load. When you strike the right balance, your data and intuition will tell you. ▲▲

Leif Whittaker is a coach, author, public speaker, and founding member of Evoke Endurance. He specializes in training mountaineers of all levels and abilities. For more information about Leif and his coaching work, visit evokeendurance.com or contact him at leif@evokeendurance.com.

Did you know....

As a mission-driven nonprofit publisher, Mountaineers Books publishes books that reflect our shared values.

Your support will help us publish 38 new titles in the coming year, connecting hundreds of thousands of people to the natural world.

Donors who make a restricted gift of \$250 or more to Mountaineers Books will have the chance to get their name listed in one of our Fall 2025 titles.

Having a name listed in a Mountaineers Books title makes a thoughtful holiday gift, honoring a commitment to outdoor recreation, conservation, and supporting the largest independent publisher in the Pacific Northwest.

To make a contribution and back Mountaineers Books, visit mountaineers.org/supportbooks

Photo by Jackson Gutierrez.

SETTLE IN

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As a Mountaineers member you have access to:

Courses, clinics, & seminars to gain lifelong skills

Activities to get outside & find community

Lodge access at our Baker, Meany, & Stevens lodges

20% off Green Trails maps & Mountaineers Books

10-70% off gear & experiences from our partners

And more!

To learn more, visit
mountaineers.org/membership/benefits

membershipmatters

Photo by Skye Michel.

mountaineers.org

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Racers get underway in the 2023 mass start. Photo by Nigel Steere.

Touring Through History

The Mountaineers Patrol Race

By Pat Boyle and Tracy Fuentes, Patrol Race volunteers

Headlamps pierced the 4am darkness of a hopeful winter morning as Nigel Steere welcomed a jovial group of ski fanatics eager for a grueling day of touring. This wasn't just any backcountry tour. The eleven teams, strapped to their skis and braving the pre-dawn cold, were making history as the first Patrol Race contestants since the infamous event ended in 1941.

Despite a few hiccups - including a mechanically terminal snowmobile and a Sno-Cat nearly left permanently marooned during a rescue excursion - the race was a success and seven of the eleven teams crossed the finish line. Set in motion by a few fliers and word-of-mouth, a tradition that had rested undisturbed for 73 years in forests and valleys along the Cascade crest was finally rekindled.

The origins of the Patrol Race

Led entirely by Mountaineers volunteers, the Patrol Race is the longest continuing ski race in the Northwest. Traversing a punishing twenty miles, the course navigates challenging terrain, including forests, ravines, creeks, cirques, lakes, and seven passes. The route - much of which spans the Pacific Crest Trail - starts at the bottom of the Snoqualmie Pass Ski Area's Little Thunder Chair and ends at Meany Lodge. Teams consist of three racers, and participants must complete the race within one minute of each other. Skiers finish with buckling knees, screaming quads, and the sound of ringing cowbells as they ski down the rugged, steep, and infamous "Lane" to the finish line where they are greeted by smiling faces and beverages of their choosing.

The Patrol Race is modeled after European military ski races whereby groups of skiers would execute a task - like setting up a piece of military equipment - on skis. This style of race emulates the traditional use of skis, when the equipment was used for moving from one point to another rather than skinning for steep powder or aggressive terrain.



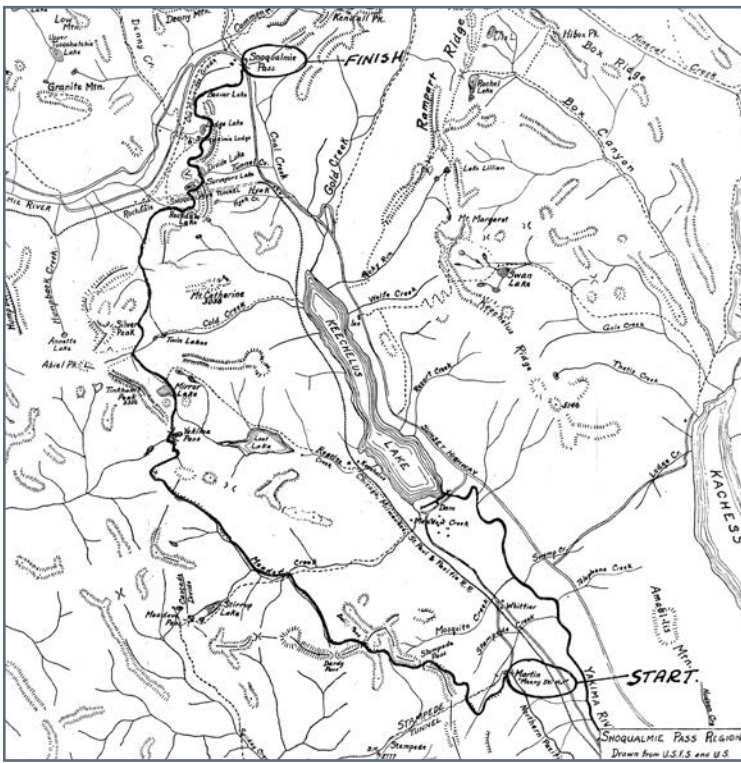
Racers sporting leis at the 2021 race. Photo by Rick Meade.

At the time of the race's origins, skiing was the new best thing to do in the mountains, and both Snoqualmie Lodge and the recently constructed Meany Ski Hut were popular destinations for Mountaineers members who were inspired by their European counterparts to explore what the snowy Cascades had to offer. As Mountaineers scouted new winter recreation routes, orange tin shingles were placed high on trees to demarcate paths, one of which included a route between the Snoqualmie Lodge and the Meany Ski Hut. This route was challenging enough that the original scouting party got temporarily lost and spent an unplanned night in the snow.

In 1930, six men and one woman were the first to continuously ski the full length of the trail. A few days later, the first official Patrol Race was held, and the winning team crossed the finish line in seven and a half hours.

Reviving history, breaking records

The rise of ski resorts and "easier" ways of skiing led to the end of the Patrol Race just before WWII; however, what was once the Patrol Race's downfall became its saving grace as budding Mountaineer backcountry enthusiasts of the modern era were allured by the opportunity to slog their way through



The original race route (ran in reverse some years) from the 1930s. Map courtesy of Nigel Steere.

the backcountry once again. Recognizing this growing enthusiasm for the older ways, Nigel Steere, with the help of Mountaineers friends and Meany Lodge volunteers, re-ignited the Patrol Race.

At the revival race in 2014, the winning team crossed the finish line in 7 hours and 9 minutes, over two and a half hours slower than the record set by 1936 winners Wolf Bauer, Paul Shorrock, and Hans-Otto Giese who used wooden skis and wax. Despite modern advancements in gear, the 1936 record held steadfast until 2017 when team "Wet and Scrappy," comprised of Lowell Skoog, Seth Davis, and Aaron Ostrovsky, skied across the finish line in 4 hours, 19 minutes, and 23 seconds. The current record, set on a slightly modified route (about two miles longer than the original), was made in 2019 by Allan Taylor, Ethan Linck, and Todd Kilcup ("Fastest Known Team"), who crossed in 4 hours, 35 minutes, and 46 seconds, despite losing a pole to a tree well midway.

A great effort has been made to follow the historical track, with a few exceptions only to avoid groomed roads that weren't there in the 1930s. At several points along the way, the watchful eye can still see rusted metal tags nailed high in the trees that once denoted the full length of the pilgrimage. Race rules are also largely unchanged, adhering to the original intent: all three team members must stay together for the entire course, with the modification that each member must carry standard avalanche-rescue equipment - a shovel, probe, and beacon. This new list forgoes historically required safety items like "three new candles."

Many hands make lively work

Legend has it that there were often more people organizing the race than skiing it. Sometimes this still feels true. The many volunteers who come every year are what make up the spirit and fabric of the Patrol Race.

Leading up to race day in early March, seasoned volunteers

scout the route status and conditions. Snowmobiles are repaired, radio equipment is updated, and volunteers are organized into teams: trail breakers and sweepers, starters, checkpoint 1 crew, checkpoint 2 crew, finish crew, and Meany Lodge food, transportation, and prep.

The day before the race, trail break crews set the track. (Legend also has it that Fred Beckey was on one of those teams because he was too young to officially compete). If it snows overnight, trail breakers return before dawn to reset the skin track. Pre-dawn, the start crew and racers gather at the starting line to set up. Volunteers answer course questions, take photos, and check in racers with team names like "Legs Miserables," "Are We There Yet?," and "Where's the Chairlift."

The different divisions set out between 6-8am, after completing safety checks and other pre-dawn rituals (like singing the national anthem) that motivate skiers to march through the woods for 5-10 hours. Sweep teams, mostly led by Cascade Backcountry Ski Patrollers, work tirelessly throughout the day to ensure that all teams are accounted for and, if needed, able to exit the course safely. Race checkpoints along the way provide race whimsy such as ax throwing or "ski archery" while teammates attend to blisters, rip skins, and repair gear with creative tools like duct tape.

At the finish line, volunteers wait for all teams to finish, ring cowbells for encouragement, take finish line photos, document finish times, and distribute beverages. Teams are then treated to hot soup by the fire pit, grilled cheese sandwiches, and an awards ceremony on the "snow-podium."

Racers can pre-book a stay at Meany Lodge, the oldest operating ski area in Washington, or finish the journey to their car at Crystal Springs Sno-Park. Either way, the return to reality involves another few miles on skis or a tow behind Meany's 60-year-old snowcat.



2024 Racers enjoying a brief pause mid-course near Yakama Pass. Photo by Rick Meade.

Participate in the 2025 Patrol Race

What began as a race involving 12 contestants now welcomes close to a hundred each year. The revival of the Patrol Race has made a tremendous tradition of old-school-style ski racing in the Northwest, with an enthusiastic group of teams and an even more enthusiastic group of volunteers spanning the entire route. The 2025 Patrol Race will take place on Saturday, March 15. For more information, visit: mountaineers.org/Mountaineers-Patrol-Race. ▲▲

The Mountaineers is a volunteer-led community built around sharing knowledge and skills to safely recreate outdoors. We offer courses, activities, and events every season, and members are encouraged to participate in programs offered by any branch.

How to Sign Up for Activities

Step 1

Visit our website
mountaineers.org

Click on the big green 'Find Activities' button, or hover over the 'Activities' tab and choose 'Find Activities.'

Step 2

Filter your search

Define your search using the filter options in the green column on the left. To view activities by location, choose 'Map' in the upper right.

Step 3

Register

Click on the activity of your interest to learn more. If you like what you see, select the orange 'Register' button. You'll be added to the trip roster and receive a confirmation email.

Note: Activities require registration unless otherwise noted. You will also need a current waiver on file with The Mountaineers to participate.

How to Sign Up for Events

Step 1

Visit our website
mountaineers.org

Click on the 'Upcoming Events' button on the left of the main page, or click 'More' and choose the 'Events' tab.

Step 2

Browse for local events

Scroll down to view our most popular events, or choose a branch or program center calendar for more events in your area. Browse through your options, and click on an event to learn more.

Step 3

Select an event & register

Many events are free but require you to RSVP via the orange RSVP button. Events that require tickets will have a link for online ticket purchases.

How to Sign Up for Courses & Clinics

Step 1

Visit our website
mountaineers.org

Click on the big green 'Find Courses' button, or hover over the 'Courses' tab and choose 'Find Courses.'

Step 2

Filter your course search

Define your search using the filter options. You can also search key words in the lefthand course search bar, or at the top of our webpage.

Step 3

Select a course & register

Read the course overview to learn more about course objectives and expectations. Once you register, you will receive a confirmation email.

Note: Most courses require that you register a few months before the course start date.

Virtual Education Center

Check out our Virtual Education Center and Calendar, your home base for accessing all our virtual learning tools. Find online activities, events, and classes, and browse our educational resources for outdoor tips and skills. Visit mountaineers.org/courses/virtual-education-center to learn more.

Volunteer With Us

Interested in helping others find community and safely enjoy the natural world? There are many ways to get involved as a volunteer, such as instructing a course, hosting at one of our lodges, or helping at an event. Reach out to your branch chair to learn more about volunteering with The Mountaineers, or visit mountaineers.org/volunteerwithus.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if I'm not a member? Our courses and activities are open to the public. You simply need to sign up for a guest membership at mountaineers.org/join. Guests can participate in two activities for free before joining, and unlimited courses at a higher course cost.

What are some easy ways to get started? Sign up for an activity without prerequisites. These include day hikes, backpacking trips, stewardship activities, photography outings, and occasional sailing opportunities. Also, consider taking a basic or introductory course like Basic Snowshoeing, Introduction to Rock Climbing, or Navigation.

How are events and activities different? Activities are primarily day-long outings that require participants to use skills in an outdoor setting. Examples include hikes, naturalist walks, or snowshoeing. Events are primarily opportunities to see presentations and socialize. Examples include summer picnics, branch banquets, and speaker series like BeWild and the Adventure Speaker Series.

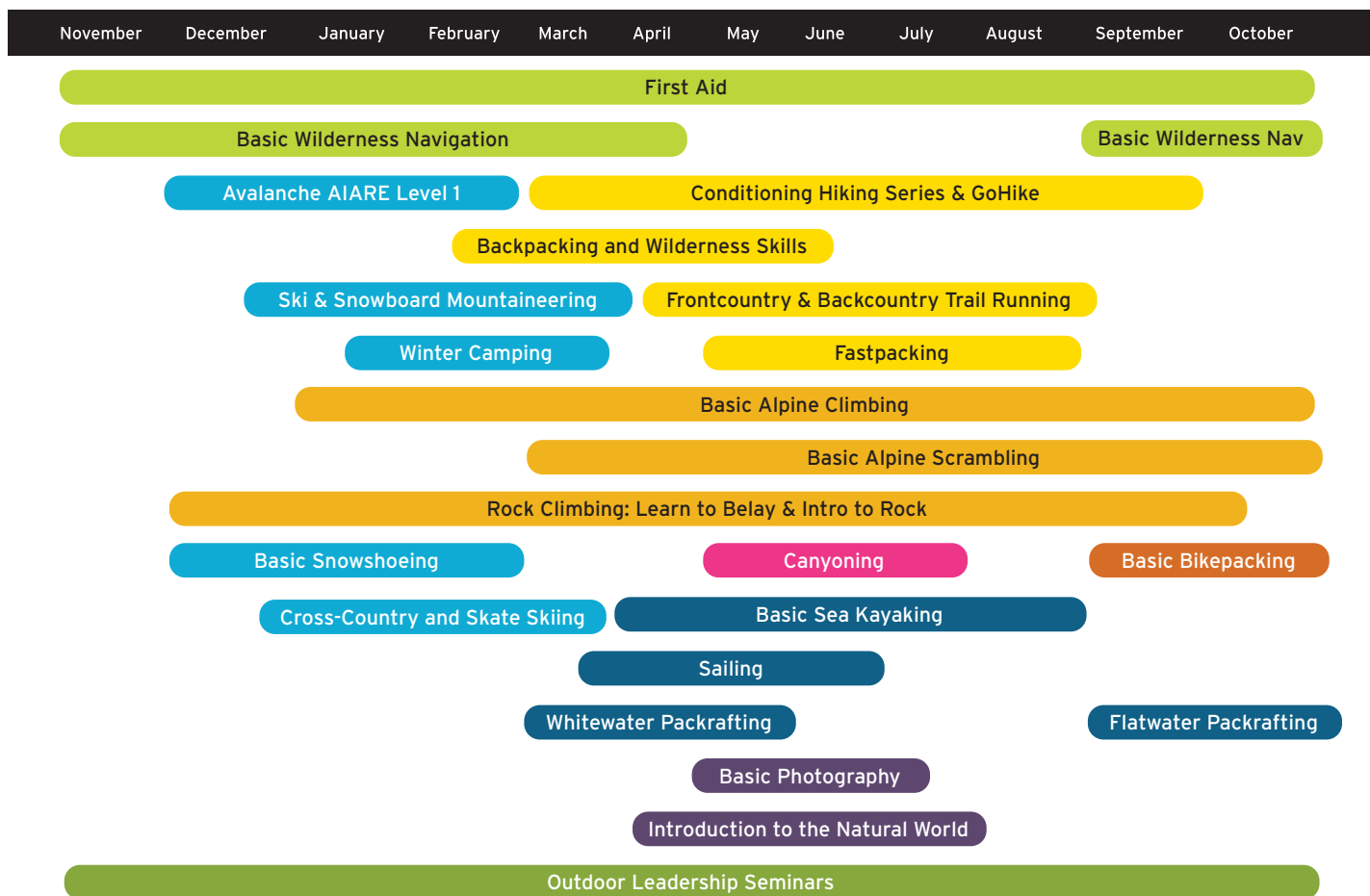
What if I don't meet the prerequisites for an activity? Some of our technical activities have prerequisite skill requirements. If you want to learn the prerequisite skills, we encourage you to take one of our courses. If you already have the prerequisite skills, you might qualify for equivalency. Email info@mountaineers.org and we will help you apply for equivalency so you can participate at the appropriate skill level.

Why do some activities say 'Leader Permission Required'? All our Mountaineers activities are led by volunteers. To ensure everyone on a trip has a set of specific skills, some volunteers require you to contact them in advance to participate. Before signing up for a trip that requires leader permission, please contact the leader. For any questions, email our Member Services team at info@mountaineers.org.

What if the course or activity is full? Sign up for the waitlist! Yes, it works. We have roughly a 10-20% drop-out rate in courses and activities, so spots often become available.

Course Calendar Overview Updated May 2024

Please visit mountaineers.org to see current course listings and to sign up.
 Course selection varies by branch. Registration usually opens 1-3 months prior to the start of the course.



The Mountaineers is home to seven branches, each offering a number of courses and seminars. Our branches also host a variety of events like picnics, film screenings, and guest speakers. Regardless of which branch you join, you can sign up for offerings with any branch. Learn more at mountaineers.org/locations-lodges.



BELLINGHAM

Chair: AJ Schuehle, ajschuehle@hotmail.com
Website: mountaineers.org/bellingham;
bellinghammountaineers.com

You'll find the Bellingham Branch tucked alongside the upper craggy expanse of the North Cascades. We enjoy easy access to the peaks that drain into the Nooksack and Skagit River basins. Our close-knit community offers climbing courses, hiking trips, and backcountry adventures in a diverse, inclusive, and supportive environment.

Branch Council Meetings are on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Visit our branch calendar for details.

EVERETT

Chair: Nick Mayo, nicholas.e.mayo@gmail.com
Website: mountaineers.org/everett

Founded in 1911, the Everett Branch offers several programs. As a smaller branch, we value companionship and are excited to meet new members at our in-person events including our Spring Happy Hour, Beer & Gear evening, Annual Awards Banquet, and more. Check our branch calendar for details. Our branch is also known for our unique Lookout and Trail Maintenance Committee,

which restored the Mt. Pilchuck Lookout and continues to maintain the historic Three Fingers Lookout.

Branch Council Meetings are held every other month to discuss new and ongoing initiatives and are open to all. We host a combination of hybrid and fully remote meetings depending on the month. As we ramp up our in-person events and programs, we are looking for talented and passionate volunteers to make an impact. Please reach out to Nick Mayo for details.

KITSAP

Chair: Melissa White, melissa.white@gmail.com
Website: mountaineers.org/kitsap

The Kitsap Branch draws members from throughout western Puget Sound, from Gig Harbor to the Olympic Peninsula, including Pierce, Kitsap, Jefferson, and Clallam counties. Join us at our program center, conveniently located in Bremerton.

Branch Council Meetings are held in January, April, July, and October. Our annual branch celebration is in December, please join us!

SEATTLE

Chair: Craig Kartes, c.kartes@outlook.com
Website: mountaineers.org/seattle

The Seattle Branch began as the sole club location in 1906 when The Mountaineers was founded. Our Meet The Mountaineers open houses are held about once a month and are a great way for new and prospective members to learn about our many offerings. Our branch is also home to the Seattle Program Center, which features a bookstore, indoor and outdoor climbing walls, friction slabs, event spaces, and more.

Branch Council Meetings are held every other month to discuss new and ongoing initiatives. We're growing rapidly and actively seeking people to support our community. Visit our branch calendar for details and reach out to the branch chair if you are interested in volunteering.

FOOTHILLS (I-90/I-405 CORRIDORS)

Chair: Travis Vermeer, travisvermeer@gmail.com
Website: mountaineers.org/foothills

The Foothills Branch is the club's newest branch, founded in 2004 and encompassing the eastside communities along the I-90 and I-405 corridors. In addition to our educational and activity programs, we host film screenings, guest speakers, and stewardship events with the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, Shadow Lake Nature Preserve, WTA, and other conservation-minded partners.

Our branch is growing rapidly, and we are actively seeking people to support our community - no prior experience required. We invite you to get involved in branch leadership and committees to get our communities outside. Contact the branch chair if you might be interested.

Branch Council Meetings are held every other month (except summer) to discuss new and ongoing initiatives. All branch members are welcome! Visit our branch calendar for details.

TACOMA

Chair: Natalia Martinez-Paz, nataliamp@gmail.com
Website: mountaineers.org/tacoma

The second largest of all seven branches, the Tacoma branch maintains its own program center in the Old Town neighborhood of Tacoma, as well as the Irish Cabin property located near Mt. Rainier. A great way get involved is our Meet the Mountaineers event, consisting of a meet-and-greet and a 90-minute interactive presentation giving you opportunities to learn about our history, our website, and how you can get involved.

Branch Council Meetings are held every six weeks to discuss new and ongoing initiatives and general branch business. Visit our branch calendar for details.

OLYMPIA

Chair: Bob Keranen, bobkeranen@gmail.com
Website: mountaineers.org/Olympia

The Adventure Speaker Series returns on November 5 and continues on the first Wednesday of the month through March.

Branch Council Meetings are held at 6:00 PM on the second Wednesday of the month, alternating in-person and Zoom, though Zoom is always available. Members are encouraged to attend. Contact Bob Keranen for details.

Get Involved With Your Branch

Visit Your Branch Page

Go to mountaineers.org and click on 'More' in the top menu; then click 'Locations & Lodges' and select your branch from the dropdown options. On your branch home page, you'll find branch news, upcoming events, contact info, and more.

Sign up for Branch News

Branch eNewsletters are a great way to stay up to date. To opt in to these emails, update your Notification Preferences in your online profile.

Open to Mountaineers members and the general public, our lodges provide visitors with unparalleled access to skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, and more. The Mountaineers is also home to the Kitsap Forest Theater, a historic outdoor theater showcasing two musical productions a year which are open to the public and a family favorite.

LODGE WEBPAGES Information about schedules, availability, meals, group rentals, and special events can all be found on the lodge webpages. You can also book your stay online. To access our lodge webpages, visit the direct links listed below or go to mountaineers.org, click on 'More' in the top menu, and then click on 'Locations & Lodges' in the dropdown menu.

VOLUNTEER Our lodges and the Kitsap Forest Theater are run by dedicated volunteers, and they can use your help! Visit their webpages to learn how you can contribute to the teams that keep our outdoor centers running.



Baker Lodge

mountaineers.org/bakerlodge

Mt. Baker Lodge, above Picture Lake and near Artist's Point in the North Cascades, is a gorgeous place for a get-away. The lodge is located within walking distance of the Mt. Baker ski area as well as numerous hiking trails.



Stevens Lodge

mountaineers.org/stevenslodge

Nestled near the Stevens Pass ski area, this rustic ski-in/ski-out lodge is open Wednesday to Sunday for skiers and winter recreationists beginning late December when the ski area is operating. Tired of the hustle and bustle of the big city? Come for a quiet respite to a cabin in the woods, with bunks for the whole family. The lodge is open Wednesday to Sunday during the winter when the ski area is open.



Meany Lodge

mountaineers.org/meanylodge

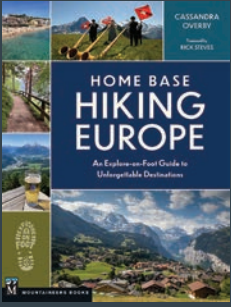
Meany Lodge is The Mountaineers oldest winter sports resort, located approximately 60 miles east from Seattle off I-90 near Stampede Pass and surrounded by the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest. Meany Lodge provides a warm family environment for all - perfect for winter and summer adventures alike. During the ski season, the lodge operates a rope-tow on our ski hill for ski lessons, cross-country skiing, and snowshoe excursions. Join us in March for our annual Patrol Race.



Kitsap Forest Theater

foresttheater.com

We're thrilled to announce our enchanting 2025 season with three shows! Be swept away by the boundless imagination and storytelling of two lively and funny musicals: *Annie* and *Big Fish*, plus Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. These mesmerizing, family-friendly shows promise to light up hearts of all ages, and what better way to experience them than at the Kitsap Forest Theater. More information, including tickets and audition dates, can be found on our website. Tickets make great gifts - consider buying season tickets! We also have volunteer opportunities and offer summer camps for kids.



Home Base Hiking Europe

By Cassandra Overby

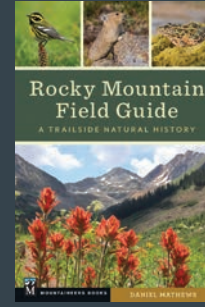
Live your travel dreams with a “home-base” European adventure, staying in place long enough for a deep and authentic experience, enjoying day trips on the region’s trails and other local activities. Author of the critically acclaimed guidebook *Explore Europe on Foot*, Cassandra Overby shares her hand-picked destinations and itineraries in ten unique destinations within Austria, Croatia, France, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, Spain, and Switzerland. Each itinerary is tailored to the region’s scenic locales, comfortable lodgings, lively restaurants, interesting cultural and historic sights, and access to fabulous day hiking.



Sticks, Stones & Pinecones

By Jen Ball

Portable, fun, and perfect for the holiday season, *Sticks, Stones & Pinecones* is a collection of 37 games that use rocks, sticks, leaves, twigs, and other nature supplies that you can forage for wherever you are. Brought to life by author and professor of Environmental Studies Jen Ball, these games are accessible to players of all ages, bringing friends and family together for sustainable outdoor fun at a campground, on the trail, or even in your own backyard.



Rocky Mountain Field Guide

By Daniel Mathews

This essential guide to the Rocky Mountains is perfect for hikers, campers, naturalists, students, teachers, tourists, and anyone interested in this stunning and expansive mountain range spanning Colorado, Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, New Mexico, and Utah. In this comprehensive guide, naturalist and writer Daniel Mathews delivers immersive natural history with humor, passion, and verbal elegance, detailing the region’s trees and shrubs, flowering plants and ferns, fungi and lichens, insects and fish, amphibians and reptiles, birds and mammals, rocks, and even the changing mountain climates and ecological effects of forest fires.

WINTER BOOK SALE

Light up your reading list at The Mountaineers Winter Book Sale!

25% Off Books & Maps
25% Off Logo Merchandise
35% Off Book Bundles

In-store only at 7700 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle
Monday - Friday 9am-5pm through December 2024

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Dates

Tacoma: Dec 4 & 5, 2024

Seattle: Jan 15 & 16, 2025

Olympia: Feb 28 - Mar 2, 2025



French Alps, photo by Jordan Manoukian

