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FOOTHILLS NEWS

monthly e-news for Mountaineers

Hello Foothills Mountaineers!

Winter is almost with us again and snow is expected soon in the Cascades. As a result, this month brings plenty of courses and activities from our Backcountry Skiing, Nordic Skiing, and Snowshoeing Committees, as well as a new Winter Camping Class and a preview of our Backpacking Course offerings!

Check out all the Foothills [activity listings](#) and start planning your winter activities!



Backcountry Skiing

The Foothills Backcountry Skiing Committee has been busy planning some exciting courses for Winter 2020:

[Introduction to Backcountry Uphill Travel at Meany Lodge](#) | Starts January 4

Are you relatively new to backcountry skiing? Here is the perfect introduction for your skiing dreams. This one-day clinic, with 6 students or less, runs every Saturday starting January 4.

The clinic includes skills for efficiently skinning-up and removing the skins, skinning up the hill, including track angle, route selection, turning, efficient transition and gear issues, such as types of skins, ski width and use of ski crampons. Students should have Alpine (AT) gear and be at least strong intermediate skiers with some experience in broken or new snow. The course price includes the all-day class, hot lunch, and the book [*Backcountry Skiing: Skills for Ski touring and Ski Mountaineering*](#).

[**AIARE Level 1 Avalanche Safety Course**](#) | **Begins Jan 7**

This course introduces students to avalanche phenomena, the types and characteristics of avalanches, and helps them identify and plan safe routes and travel in avalanche terrain. We will focus on developing strong group communication skills and help students learn how to recognize and mitigate the group dynamics that can lead to increased risk taking. We will also learn how to react in an avalanche, use an avy beacon, use rescue tools, and employ rescue techniques.

[**Wednesday Night Ski Lessons**](#) | **Jan 8-Feb 12**

Enjoy a mid-week break and develop your skills so you can have more fun skiing the backcountry! The Backcountry Skiing Committee has partnered with The Summit at Snoqualmie Snow Sports School for special group pricing on six weeks of telemark and randonne ski lessons at a Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA)-certified ski school in Snoqualmie West. There are separate groups and levels for A/T and for telemark. All levels are welcome and the registration deadline is December 15.

[**Backcountry Touring Course**](#) | **Jan 28-Mar 8**

This course teaches the skills and knowledge necessary to become a competent participant on day tours in the backcountry. This course welcomes both skiers and splitboarders who can ski or ride downhill at an advanced/intermediate level or better at a lift-served resort. Participants must be able to make turns downhill safely and confidently in ungroomed variable snow conditions and slope angles.

Hiking and Backpacking

[**Backpacking Building Blocks**](#) | **Registration Opens Jan 15**

Backpacking season is right around the corner, and it's time to think about gaining the core skills, learning about the right gear, and finding compatible trail companions - with the help of a group of experienced teachers and mentors in The Mountaineers! Backpacking Building Blocks (B3) is the most comprehensive backpacking course the Mountaineers offers, aimed at providing new and returning backpackers with the latest knowledge, gear info, practical experience, compatible trail companions, and experienced helpful mentors to help you become capable and confident on overnight or longer trips with the club or on your own.



Snowshoeing

[Intermediate Snowshoeing](#) | Jan 15-Apr 30

The Intermediate Snowshoeing course is designed for adventurers who want to gain the skills and experience to handle more challenging snowshoe routes and terrain. Whether it's a winter backcountry vista, frozen alpine lake, or a climb to the summit of a mountain, this course will take snowshoeing to the next level. Learn the skills necessary to travel more ambitious snowshoe routes that may go through avalanche terrain and/or require the use of an ice axe.

[Winter Camping](#) | Feb 25-Apr 5

This winter camping course will focus on the practical aspects of safe tent camping. Learn how to make a comfortable overnight camp in the snow and how to make emergency snow shelters in about an hour.

See our events section below for more exciting snowshoe opportunities!



Meany Lodge - New Courses Available

[Meany Lodge](#) offers an outstanding range of activities and courses during winter, including downhill skiing, Nordic skiing, and skate skiing for all ages and abilities. These classes are taught by certified Mountaineers instructors in a nationally recognized PSIA school and include a unique one-day Nordic skiing class and a one-date skate skiing camp on 13 miles of groomed trail.

Beginning in January 2020, Meany Lodge will add snowboarding to the busy schedule of weekend classes. Also new in 2020 is a Backcountry Uphill Travel Course every Saturday in January and February. This course is limited to only 6 attendees, so each participant can receive individual attention.

Drop-in classes are offered every weekend. Stay up-to-date on the exciting activities and courses at Meany Lodge on our [activities page](#) or reach out to us [via email](#).

Events

[Snowshoeing for Beginners Seminar](#) | Dec 18

Curious about snowshoeing but not sure it's right for you? Come learn the basics in this free seminar!

[Celebrate the New Year at Meany Lodge](#) | Dec 31-Jan 1

The Meany Lodge New Year's Eve Party features a prime rib dinner, fireworks, and a great time. This event is always a sell-out, so be sure to register early.

[Methow Valley Winter Trails Weekend](#) | Jan 3-6

Mountaineers cross-country ski and snowshoe leaders will be offering a series of trips over a long

weekend in the Methow Valley. There will also be quite a few fun evening activities happening in the valley, including a Saturday night Meet and Greet for club members, family, and friends. In addition, we have compiled a list of non-skiing options, ranging from riding the luge at the Loop Loop ski area to wine tasting in Winthrop and winter sleigh rides at Sun Mountain Lodge.

[Walking the Wild](#) | Jan 14

Daniel Zilcsak is back for another Walking the Wild event, this time to present photos and tell stories from a backpacking trip in Oregon's Eagle Cap Wilderness, often called Oregon's Enchantments! Have a great story yourself? Learn how to [host your very own](#) Walking the Wild presentation.

[Avalanche Awareness Seminar](#) | Jan 15

Learn the basics of avalanche safety directly from the folks at the Northwest Avalanche Center (NWAC).

[Celebrate Winter at the Backcountry Film Festival!](#) | Jan 16, Jan 21

The Foothills Branch has been successfully sponsoring screenings of the Backcountry Film Festival for almost a decade now. This year's ten film shorts are some of the best ever. Produced each year as a celebratory, backcountry community event by the Winter Wildlands Alliance, the Backcountry Film Festival film line-up is full of snowy, cinematic adventure. You'll find it all in this award-winning film lineup. Join us for our [Jan 16 Bellevue screening](#) or our [Jan 21 Seattle screening](#).

[Introduction to Winter Trail Running Seminar](#) | Jan 16

Running in the winter poses challenges even for a seasoned trail runner. Join us and learn about all things related to winter trail running, including lighting, clothing, and gear choices. This is a hands-on learning experience so there will be a gear show and tell as well as Q&A. Feel free to bring your own gear as well as your questions! All are welcome to attend.

[Spokane Nordic Ski Weekend](#) | Jan 17-19

Join the Foothills Nordic Ski Committee for a winter weekend of cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in Mt. Spokane State Park! Enjoy this winter wonderland setting on a mountain with stupendous views of Idaho mountain ranges and the Canadian Rockies. These will be N3 and N4-level ski trips on mostly intermediate and advanced trails with approximately 1,500 feet accumulated elevation gain. Participants should have sufficient stamina and skills to go up and down advanced-level hills.

[Leavenworth Nordic Ski Tour](#) | Jan 29-31

Join the Foothills Nordic Ski Committee for a fun three days of cross-country skiing on groomed trails in the Leavenworth/Plain area.

[Winter Navigation Seminar](#) | Feb 18

Learn how to travel as safely and efficiently as possible in potential avalanche terrain. Discover how to maintain position and terrain awareness to travel as effectively as possible in areas where no trail is visible and where visibility may be hampered.

[Meany Lodge Patrol Race](#) | March 14

Ski over Stampede Pass to Meany Lodge, following the historical patrol course (about 22 miles). Plan ahead to build your three-person team and submit your entry to the lottery by **December 31** for a place in the race.



Volunteer Cheri Solien holding a ski waxing clinic

Volunteers Opportunities and Thanks

Thank You Cheri Solien

This month we'd like to give special recognition to Super Volunteer Cheri Solien. Cheri created the content for the first-ever ski waxing clinic offered by the Foothills Nordic Skiing Committee on November 17. The event was a huge success and had a great turnout. We can't wait to hold it again next fall.

Volunteer with the Backcountry Ski Committee

The Backcountry Skiing Committee is offering a course in February 2020 to help you get the training and skills you need to lead successful ski trips. This course includes a lecture and on-snow field trip, where you get to practice leadership skills. This is a great way to share your enthusiasm for snow sports. Visit the Foothills [website](#) and download the leader application for details.

If you would like to become a ski leader, or are currently on the leaders list but did not complete the training last year, please attend the leader training course, dates TBD based on student interest. Leader training and Level 1 Avalanche training will be free to any leader who commits to leading three trips this winter/spring. [Email us](#) your completed application or with any questions you may have.

Volunteer as a Snowshoe Leader

Are you an experienced snowshoer, scrambler, or climber and interested in leading snowshoe trips for the Foothills branch? If so, please reach out to our [Snowshoe Committee](#) to inquire about our leadership development initiatives for new and established leaders. We are actively recruiting for enthusiastic leaders eager to run trips at all levels.

Volunteer with our Backpacking Building Blocks (B3) Course

Are you a backpacker and think you might be interested in helping with the Backpacking Building Blocks course or leading backpacking trips? Contact our [Hiking-Backpacking Committee chair](#) or attend our [B3 volunteer orientation on January 16](#).

Volunteer with our Staying Found Navigation Course

Foothills [Staying Found On-Trail Navigation Course](#), designed for on-trail adventurers, is looking for volunteers to help with clinic administration and leading students on practice exercises and hikes. See the course listing for contact info to volunteer.

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