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FOOTHILLS NEWS

monthly e-news for Mountaineers

Hello Foothills Mountaineers!

I hope everyone had a happy holiday season and is ready for a new year full of outdoor adventures! The Foothills Branch has plenty of exciting activities and courses planned to help you start the new decade, including a brand-new Climbing Committee. Check out all the Foothills [activities](#) and start planning your winter now!

For those of you who prefer to stay warm inside, the Foothills Branch is once again sponsoring the [Backcountry Film Festival!](#) This exciting annual film fest is sure to get your stoke high and have you itching to get outside. There is something for everyone this year, with films on backcountry sustainability, splitboarding, skiing, climbing, rafting, landscape art, and even mushing. With ten films to enjoy, you can look forward to an evening of excitement and adventure. We will host screenings in Bellevue on Jan 16 and in Seattle Jan 21. Tickets are \$11-\$14. Both showings will include complimentary beverages and a free raffle ticket!



Backcountry Skiing

[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.



Photo by @valhawks

Cimbing

The Foothills Branch Council is excited to announce the formation of the Foothills Climbing Committee in November 2019! The immediate goals of the new committee are to support climbers living and working east of Lake Washington and to plan for a Basic Alpine Climbing course in Spring of 2021. We are in the process of voting on a committee charter and the Basic Alpine Course structure. Anyone interested in helping or learning more can contact [Peter](#)

Tran or attend the next committee meeting, held 6:30-9pm on Jan 22 at [Rogue Brewery](#) in Issaquah.



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.

Those interested in helping with the course or leading backpacking trips are invited to the [Backpacking Building Blocks Volunteer and Leader Orientation](#) session on Jan 16, or may contact the Hiking-Backpacking Committee chair at cascadehiker@earthlink.net.

Conditioning for Hiking and Backpacking Level I | Mar 11, Mar 23, Apr 9

This hands-on indoor workshop led by personal trainer Sheri Goodwin will help you develop a personal conditioning program, with exercises and steps designed to help beginners build strength and get in shape for hiking and backpacking! Our workshop will be held [Mar 11](#), [Mar 23](#) and [Apr 9](#) – registration opens on Jan 15.

[Conditioning for Hiking and Backpacking Level II](#) | April 16-May 6

The goal of this multi-week series is to help participants gain mobility, stability, strength, and the endurance needed to hike and backpack with ease while preventing injuries. The course includes indoor instruction on hiking-specific exercises and development of a personal training plan, followed by outdoor training sessions in local parks where you'll practice the exercises and do hill-interval training on trails. Participants must complete an indoor session in mid-April plus two outdoor sessions in April and/or May to graduate. Registration opens on January 15.



Navigation

[Wilderness Navigation Course](#) | Begins Jan 20

Online sessions start on January 20 with workshops in late February and Field Trips in March. This year we are significantly enhancing our field trip to better prepare students for the rigorous off-trail navigation needs of scrambling, climbing, and backcountry skiing. As a student, the new Foothills Wilderness Navigation course will teach you how to use time proven map, compass and altimeter as well as current GPS technology. As an instructor (or assistant instructor), you'll be able to refresh, upgrade, and solidify your navigational knowledge and skills while experiencing the satisfaction of teaching.

[Winter Navigation Seminar](#) | February 18

This seminar focuses on how to travel as safely and efficiently as possible in potential avalanche terrain while maintaining position and terrain awareness as you travel in areas where no trail is visible, and visibility may be hampered.

If you're interested in navigation, either as a student, an instructor or part of our course development team, please feel free to reach out to Navigation Committee co-chair [Alan Davey](#).



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

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

[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.

[Adventure Writing Workshop](#) | Feb 10

Everyone can be a travel writer, but not everyone knows it. With a little practice, your snapshots, postcards, tweets, and scribbled notes can be crafted into a unique story — and in this one-of-a-kind workshop, you'll learn the secrets that travel writers swear by to turn those creative sparks into narrative arcs.

[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.



Volunteers Opportunities and Thanks

Thank you to all those volunteers who help make our branch the inviting and exciting place that it is! This month we celebrate Foothills volunteer [John Gilbert](#), a 29-year member of the Mountaineers who has been leading scrambling, hiking, snowshoeing, Nordic skiing, and navigation activities for over 15 years!

Volunteers with Leadership Experience Needed

We're looking for one or two people to help our Foothills branch and committees recruit and develop future candidates for key leadership roles. The time demand will not be great (perhaps 3-4 phone meetings over the spring and summer and a modest amount of 'homework' in between) and the work could have a big impact on our future success! If you have experience in non-profit or for-profit leadership, recruiting and/or development and might have an interest in helping with this, we would love to hear from you! Contact branch chair [Cheryl Talbert](#) for more information.

Hiking and Backpacking Volunteers Needed

The Foothills Hiking and Backpacking Committee is working on supporting existing programs and offering new opportunities for beginner hikers and families. Though our new offerings aren't listed yet, we need volunteers eager and interested to help us create and deliver these programs! Contact Hiking-Backpacking Chair Cheryl Talbert at cascadehiker@earthlink.net to find out more

- **Under Development! Beginning Hiking Series:** Focused on providing a welcoming, supportive community, helpful training, and an array of beginner hikes to help people of all backgrounds and fitness levels build their capability and confidence to safely enjoy hiking in our lovely PNW backcountry, starting from where they are.
- **Under Development! Hiking with Families:** We want to help parents feel confident getting their kids out on trails in a way that is safe and fun for all and builds a strong foundation for a life outdoors! We hope to start with a seminar for parents and build up to a series of local hikes tailored for kids of different ages.
- **Backpacking with Kids:** We are looking for volunteers who love exploring the outdoors with kids! Through a helpful lecture to get parents prepared, and then a ‘practice’ car camp and several fun kid-tailored overnights, this course helps families build the skills, confidence, and shared enjoyment needed to make a life of backpacking together! This program is going into its fourth year and needs your help with program design and delivery in spring and summer of 2020.

Volunteer as a Snowshoe Leader

Are you an experienced snowshoer, scrambler, or climber interested in leading snowshoe trips for the Foothills branch? If so, please reach out to our Snowshoe Committee at foothills.snowshoe@gmail.com 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.

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www.mountaineers.org

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