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VOCene # 23: Tuesday, December 9th, 2014

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1. Submit Your Trip Report to the Annual VOC Journal!

Calling all adventurers - from first-time to old-time VOCers:

Have you been on a memorable or epic trip lately? We want to publish your TRIP REPORT in our annual journal! Simply submit the report to vocjournal@gmail.com.

Pictures can be submitted in JPEG format (resolution should be at least 300 dpi). Be sure to include a caption for each photo and who took it.

Don't hesitate - submit your report today!

Sincerely,

Your Friendly VOC Journal Editor

2. Recent Trip Reports

Team Bad Idea Soak in Style

14 nautical miles up Pitt Lake, and 21 kilometers up the Pitt River FSR, in the midst of the Great Woods, deep in a narrow canyon, on the very bank of the mythical Pitt River, lies a hot pool of paradise. It is called the Pitt River Hot Springs. Piotr had successfully made it to the Pitt River Hot Springs once before, through a long and arduous self-propelled (and somewhat sado-masochistic) process of bikes, canoes and kayaks. He had promised himself that the next time he went, it would be by the easiest way possible. Thus was set the premise of this trip...

Brew Hut debacle lives up to its name

The day started bright and early, with my pack readied the night before and my lovingly prepared sandwiches, avy gear, and flask of rum ready by the door. This being my first VOC trip other than Longhike (which according to reputable sources ~~doesn't~~ count), I felt the pressure to not contribute to any faff. The notion of

an incident-free getaway was quickly dispelled by the time I reached Sam's house exactly on time, only to receive a panicked call from fellow driver and faffer extraordinaire Erin, who informed me that she had lost the keys to her Thule somewhere in the ill-remembered haze of the previous twelve hours. And so it was. Rides were shuffled, logistics sorted, and finally I felt the hit of my longed-after double double as we pulled into Squamish...

3. Upcoming Trips

THIS WEEK

Evening course: Decision making in the mountains 📅 Tuesday, December 9th
Bruce Kay (CAA Affiliate Member with extensive experience in the Avalanche forecasting/control/planning industry, as well as Guiding and Mountain Safety) is offering a course on decision making in the mountains. Bruce offers the course commercially with the Canada West Mountain School as an 8 hour course: <http://themountainschool.com/info/decision-making.html> Since Bruce wants to further test the course and gauge interest, we'll get a 4 hour course on UBC campus for free! The maximum group size is 20 and spots will go to those who sign up as committed first. The committed sign-up opens on Thursday, November 6th, 1pm. Only VOC members can participate. The event will be on Tuesday, December 9th from 6-10 PM in Henry Angus 435. Registration is currently quite full: contact organizer (Steph Grothe) for details if she has not contacted you already and you are already on the list.

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THIS WEEKEND

Avalanche Skills Training Block B (AST-1) 📅 Sat. Dec. 13th - Sun. Dec. 14th
Every year the VOC works with Canada West Mountain School in order to provide its members with discounted rates on avalanche safety courses, with the intent to help students mitigate the risks of backcountry skiing. The courses available to VOC members run from November thru February and in total include four sessions of Avalanche Skills Training I (AST I), and one session of AST II. This trip requires sign up in advance in the clubroom, along with payment. Cost is \$230 (course and avy kit) + \$110 (Whistler Pass). There will be an in-class session on the evening of Tuesday, December 9th. Note: registration for this session is closed, but you can register for future sessions!

Screw Exams, Let's Go Skiing! (Beginner Friendly) 📅 Sat. Dec. 13th - Sun. Dec. 14th

Most people are done with exams and some are past caring about them. Let's celebrate by skiing! Right now I've scheduled an overnight, but this can be a daytrip if that's what people want. I'm researching the exact location because this early in the season, some places are borderline. I was thinking either Manning Park (if there's enough snow), or else somewhere on the Sea to Sky if there's not. If avalanche conditions are high in the couple days before I'll cancel the trip or else move it somewhere very safe like Red Heather. This will be a beginner friendly trip in the sense there will be easy terrain available and you won't need to have skiing experience, but you'll need suffering tolerance. Also, you MUST have an avalanche beacon, shovel, and probe! The club rents these out, and you're not coming on the trip without them! Pre-trip meeting will be Wednesday, December 10th at 7 PM in the clubroom.

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UPCOMING TRIPS (INCLUDING NEW YEAR CELEBRATION OPTIONS!)

Joshua Tree Christmas Rock! 📅 Wed. Dec. 17th - Sun. Jan. 4th

Don't know how to lead ice? Screaming barfies sound unpleasant? How about camping at -30C or insane amounts of morning faff? Come to the mecca of winter trad climbing instead and enjoy belaying in the warm desert sun with climbing literally within your campsite. Depending on drivers and available free time, people can come and go as they please. No pre-trip meeting. Organizing rides and partners should be done here or by email.

Beginner Friendly Backcountry Skiing 📅 Wednesday, December 17th

Are you finished exams and want to try backcountry skiing? We will go for the day up to Red Heather in Garibaldi Park or maybe Mount Seymour (depending on how many cars are available). If people are keen, some people could make this an overnight trip. This will be an entirely beginner friendly trip so you do not need to have any experience outdoors or with skis (except for a desire to learn). This is a tentative trip because there has to be enough snow for us to ski. Pre-trip meeting will be Monday, December 15th at 6:00 PM in the clubroom.

Nephew of Icicles 📅 Fri. Dec. 26th - Sun. Jan. 4th

Last year's peculiar winter triggered a severe outbreak of icestokinitis, the mad iceman disease, during which hordes of vocers wandered off to the wilderness to frantically swing sharp metal bits into seemingly frozen parts of their environment (including but not limited to, refrigerators). This trip is not instructional and depending on where we go, people should be comfortable camping for several days in the backcountry in fairly cold conditions (think -20 degrees). People should also know how to put on a harness and belay. However, it is not a problem if you have never ice-climbed before since ice climbing for beginners only involves top-roping. This trip will likely be going to the Rockies and therefore requires cars suitable for that journey (snow tires are mandatory unless you have a dying wish). Depending on how many people sign-up, I may organize a pre-trip later on. Space is very limited by the number of car spots.

New Years Powder Slaying at Waddington Hut 📅 Fri. Dec. 26th - Sun. Jan. 4th

Continuing the tradition of past years, a VOC group will be heading to Brian Waddington Hut over New Years. The days are short and cold, but the skiing is excellent and the hut is warm and friendly (note: warm if you have lots of your friends with you)! This trip is a loosely organized, with small groups do their own objectives for the day and choosing the length of their stay. Each group needs to be self-sufficient (both while at the hut and getting to the hut) and comfortable making their own decisions. AST-1 or equivalent is highly recommended. The terrain at the hut and this trip itself isn't beginner friendly, although beginners are welcome if they make arrangements to have someone help lead them. No pre-trip meeting is scheduled, please sign up on the Wiki here.

4. Message Board Highlights

I. Additional Trips and Suggestions?

a. Looking to go skiing Dec 25-28? Check out one possibility here!

b. Do you have remote traverses or multi-day trips nearby suggestions? Or

perhaps other suggestions for outdoor activities in Canada/North America?

c. Want to start planning your awesome January weekend trips? Check out details for the following and sign up early: Winter Longhike 2015: January 10th-11th 2015, TeleSchool @ Mt. Seymour, Jan 17th, Intro To Back-Country Skiing (Jan 24-25th 2015)

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II. Accommodation?

a. Room available March-July 2015? Someone is seeking accommodation!

b. Looking for a place in January 2015 for yourself or maybe a friend? There is an opening at this lovely house!

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III. Accident Reports and Discussion

a. Do you have advice on accident/ Sport insurance currently available in Canada? Please follow this discussion here!

b. Check out the new Accident Reports Discussion Thread to stay up to date on recent incidents in the area and to be aware of things to look out for!

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IV. Looking for Fun Activities or Gear?

a. You can still get your Climbing Stoke going despite the rains! Alternatively, you can also start getting stoked about skiing or stoked about ice climbing! Or, get your Mountain Bike Stoke on year-round. Check out these threads for awesome videos, photos and more!

b. Want to be a Quartermaster Helper and learn how to fix gear? Check out how to be here!

c. Remember that you can find gear being sold by other members on the message board!

5. Ms. Manners

Do you have a question for Ms. Manners? If so, email it to to your friendly neighbourhood VOCene Editor and it'll get forwarded Ms. Manners for review. Remember, there's no such thing as a stupid question, so ask away.

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Dear Ms. Manners,

I thought you said that some snow had arrived. What happened??

Sincerely,
Angry Skier

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Dear Angry Skier,

It is true that rumours of snow had arisen and that snow did exist on some peaks (and still does, but not on the North Shore)! Unfortunately, the weather warmed up a bit and we had minimal precipitation during the recent cold spell. Further, a series of storms is coming towards Vancouver, which has prompted an Extreme Rainfall Warning! They suggest that the freezing level will rise to 2500 meters over a large portion of SW BC, and therefore any peak below this level within the affected region will likely be covered in rain (and lots of it!) instead of snow. You may be able to escape this, however, if you head far enough North or East! Start looking for locations outside of the immediate vicinity, and you may succeed. I hear that Whistler may still have snow! Good luck and I hope that happier ski times are coming in future weeks!

Sincerely,
Ms. Manners

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CONTRIBUTIONS to the VOCene are welcome. Please send all inquires or additions to the VOCene Editor.

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(This is no joke, no wimpy confirmation screens will appear, so don't mess around)

Varsity Outdoor Club