

LETTER PERFECT Graphics

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2673 Willamette, Next to the Black Forest Tavern 484-0996

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Monroe white-water raftsman tells tales of Yangtze expedition



Courtesy Photo

Expeditionist John Mattson kayaking at the source of the Yangtze, a glacier at the foot of Mount Geladantong.

By B.J. Thomsen
Of the Emerald

In 1978 Ron Mattson jumped at the chance to be part of an expedition that intended to raft the length of the unconquered Yangtze River in China.

Mattson is an experienced oarsman and white-water rafter from Monroe describes himself as a "frustrated Lewis and

Clark." He will give a slide presentation and talk on the trip tonight at 7:30 in the EMU Ballroom.

The Yangtze expedition was led by Ken Warren, a Portland resident. Consisting of between 14 and 18 Americans including a film crew, the group made their first attempt in 1983 and spent six weeks in China, but never got to the river because of financial complications, Mattson said.

Getting the money together for the trip, which cost more than \$1 million, was the biggest problem, he said.

Mutual of Omaha Insurance Co., in exchange for rights to film the trip, footed most of the

bill for the expedition, Mattson said. The company was looking for just such adventures to document in a new television series, "Spirit of Adventure," to replace the famous "Wild Kingdom" series at the time.

The documentary will air April 26 and May 3 on ABC.

National Geographic Magazine also had planned to do a piece on the trip, but when expedition member Dave Shippe, a photographer working for the magazine, died of pneumonia complicated by altitude sickness, the magazine decided against it.

John Wilcox, who produced the "American Sportsman" television program, was responsible for getting Mutual of Omaha together with the Warren expedition, Mattson said.

The expedition returned to China in the spring of 1986. The group left Tuotuoheyan, China, for the headwaters of the Yangtze located in the Tangalula Mountains at the base of 22,722-foot Mount Geladantong on July 1. It headed down the river about two weeks after that and eventually traversed 1,200 miles of the 3,964-mile river.

The river's source, discovered by the Chinese in 1976 at a 17,000-foot elevation, begins at the foot of a glacier on Mount Geladantong.

When the Chinese learned

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Thursday, March 5, 1987
7:30 p.m.
129 School of Law
University of Oregon
-FREE-

PANELISTS

Doug Bates, Managing Editor; The Register-Guard
Rebecca Force, News Director; KEZI-TV
Lauren Kessler, Professor; School of Journalism, UO
Bruce Smith, Attorney; Cass, Scott, Woods & Smith Attorneys

MODERATOR: Duncan McDonald, Ph.D., Professor; School of Journalism, UO

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