



# Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

JUNE  
MAY, 1994  
MEETING

Summer meeting schedule: During the summer the Club does not hold formal meetings. However, we may schedule potluck dinners in a park on the second Wednesday of July or August.

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## TRIP CALENDAR

Thursday evenings and Saturdays, Rock Climbing. The rock climbing group will meet on most Thursday evenings and Saturdays. This group usually climbs a wide variety of technical climbs; some easy, some hard, most top-roped, some multi-pitched. Beginners are encouraged to come and gain some experience on the rocks. Rock climbing experience may be a prerequisite for some of the Club's trips this summer. See last month's trip report below. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for details.

Beginning and Intermediate Kayaking. Cheryl Beyer is interested in organizing one or more kayaking outings at the beginning or intermediate level. The specific rivers to float are still to be decided. Call Cheryl at 251-2344 for more information and to arrange a date and place.

June 11, Saturday, Mountain Bike Ride. Circuit trip starting in Missoula and heading up the Blackfoot to the Gold Creek/Twin Creek Roads (gated), over the top to Shoofly Meadows, and out the East fork of the Rattlesnake. Depending on energy levels, we could also ride to the Mineral Peak lookout. An option, if participants prefer, is to drive cars to the Twin Creek Road. Call Ed Monnig at 721-2707 for information.

June 19, Sunday, Gray Wolf Peak. Climb Gray Wolf Peak, which is the impressive massive peak at the south end of the Missions. Unlike most Mission climbs, the approach to Gray Wolf follows a trail most of the way. Upper Riddle Lake, at the base of Gray Wolf, is a scenic place to spend the afternoon for those wishing to come for the hike but not the climb. The climb begins at the south couloir and an ice ax is recommended. Fourth class climbing with some exposure is required to reach the summit. This is a moderately strenuous trip. Reservation permit required for hiking. Call Ralph Flockerzi at 549-7150 for details.

June 26, Sunday, Bass Creek Craggs. Climb the Bass Creek Craggs, which are in the Bitterroots south of Florence and easily seen from the highway. The route follows a trail for a short distance, and then bushwhacking is necessary to reach the crags. Fourth class climbing with some exposure is required to reach the top. Some rock is loose and we'll bring a rope as a backup. Several routes are possible. This is a moderately strenuous trip. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for information.

July 10, Sunday, Eagle Pass Hike. This will be a 15-20 mile loop hiking trip in the scenic Mission Mountains. The hike begins at McDonald Lake and follows a creek, past a raging waterfall and several lakes to Eagle Pass and then down Eagle Pass valley to a different trailhead. Sites along the route, which is entirely on a trail, include: a cedar forest, a large waterfall, lakes, Eagle Pass pinnacle, colorful wildflowers, and Mount Harding. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for details.

July 17, Sunday, Heavenly Twins. Climb the Heavenly Twins, which are in the Bitterroots south of Florence and behind St. Mary's Peak. The route will begin on a trail, then take off cross country through some beautiful majestic high alpine country with white rocks and sparse vegetation (no bushwhacking). A small amount of fourth class climbing with exposure is required to reach the summit. This will be a long and strenuous trip. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for information.

July 23, Saturday, South Mission Mountains. An outdoor group from Yakima, Washington, asked Peter Dayton if they could join the Club for a representative high quality hike in the Missoula area. Peter proposes to take them on a hike and scramble in the south end of the Mission Mountains, such as Grey Wolf Peak, West St. Mary, or something else not too killer. Call Peter at 728-8101 for details.

Summer mountaineering. Plans are being made to climb a few regional mountains this summer, such as the Grand Teton, Granite Peak, Mount Rainier, and the Canadian Rockies. These will be moderately difficult technical climbs. We will probably climb most of them in July and August. The exact date will not be published in the newsletter due to tight scheduling. Make early arrangements with Gerald Olbu at 549-4769.

Wanna lead a trip? If you are interested in leading a trip, help is only a telephone call away; Gerald (549-4769) will be delighted to sign you up.

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## TRIP REPORTS

Rock Climbing, May. The rock climbing group has been meeting on most Thursdays and Saturdays. Climbers this month include: Dave Bixby, Tim Green, Chris Krumm, Ivan Marin, Gerald Olbu, Tim Page, Jim Plummer, Dave Siemens, and Paul Wilson. We climbed again some of our favorite climbs from last year. A few new people have joined the group and we've introduced them to safe climbing. Our main goal is to prepare for the several mountaineering trips this summer. --Gerald Olbu.

West Como Peak, May 8. A group of nine climbers set out to climb West Como Peak. Members of the group include: Cheryl Beyer, Todd Devenish, Jeff Holiday, Gerald Olbu, Todd Schuman, Dave Siemens, Jim Ulrich, Mike Wilson, and Paul Wilson. The route to the peak took us over some varied and interesting terrain: trail, bushwhacking, boulder hopping, snowshoe walking, and snow slopes steep enough to require an ice ax. The view from the top was great. El Capitan, a nearby large peak, looked quite impressive. The weather was very cooperative with a beautiful blue sky. We were relieved that we didn't have any problems with avalanches like we did on a couple of previous trips. This was a long trip and by the time we reached the trailhead, everyone agreed they had a good workout. --Gerald Olbu.

Middle Fork of the Flathead, May 20-22. The Middle Fork of the Flathead River flows north from the Bob Marshall and Great Bear Wilderness Areas, and reaches the south end of Glacier Park near Essex. From there it flows along the south boundary of the Park towards West Glacier. This is a really high quality wilderness river, with great scenery and interesting Class III-IV whitewater, all available without a permit. On Friday afternoon, May 20, Peter Dayton, Art Gidel, John O'Bannon, and Mike Worrall drove to Kalispell, where we encountered the major challenge of the trip, which was packing me, Art, and our two kayaks into a Cessna 206, no doubt violating various FAA regulations in the process. The cloud cover was low, so we had to fly up the Middle Fork to the Schaeffer Meadows grass airstrip, at the edge of the Bob Marshall, rather than cutting across the Swan Range and Hungry Horse Reservoir. While the airplane went back for John and Mike, Art and I hung out at the Schaeffer Meadows ranger station and chewed the fat with the trail crew foreman, a tough-looking gal with fifteen years as a USFS seasonal employee under her belt. She said she had never encountered a grizzly bear in the woods in all of that time. When John and Mike arrived we carried our kayaks about three-eighths of a mile to the river. From this launch site we floated 37 miles out to Glacier Park, and then continued about five miles along US 2 to Essex. The river was at an enjoyable moderate level. On Friday evening we only floated about a mile before setting up camp, as it was getting dark. The first excitement the next day came in a rapid just above the big ledge in the Three Forks Section, when we discovered several big logs jammed across the river. The logs were not visible until we were part of the way down the rapid, which created some consternation until we approached closer and discovered that we could float around the end of the logs. This increased our willingness to scout rapids which had horizon lines or blind corners. That evening we camped at Granite Creek. While loafing around after dinner we spotted a bear a few hundred yards away on the other side of the creek. Most of the guys were convinced that it was a grizzly bear, but I thought it looked like a black bear. We watched it for about half an hour as it wandered around the hillside, doing what bears do. This sighting focused our attention on our camping arrangements; after the bear slouched off, we moved our tents a couple hundred yards further away from where we had been cooking. The bear did not return for a closer look at us that night, as far as we know. The next day we had a fun float through the Spruce Park Gorge, which has the biggest rapids on the river. A number of large avalanche chutes drop right into the river, and we found large snowbanks on both sides of the river at the bottom of some of these chutes. It appears that avalanches from these chutes must regularly dam the river. - Peter Dayton

Gray Wolf Peak, May 22. A group of six hikers and climbers embarked on a trip to Gray Wolf. Members of the group included: Andy Collins, Bill Gaeuman, Dave Gaeuman, Lisa McKenzie, Gerald Olbu, and Tim Page. The trail was a little wet, but mostly just a lot of work. Once we reached the Riddell Lake area, we were greeted with some scenic country still covered with snow. The climb up the snow couloir was fun and a good experience for all the climbers. As we began traversing along the back of the mountain, we found beautiful mixed snow and rock conditions. The white snow and black rock was very photogenic. Unfortunately, the snow made the rocks slippery and some members of the group felt uncomfortable with 500 feet of exposure below us. We decided to turn around and head back. It began raining quite heavily. At the lake we found Lisa quite comfortable in a shelter she had made out of her poncho. The trip back was short and pleasant. --Gerald Olbu.

Holloway Lake, June 5. For an easy hike, Linda Bailey and Gerald Olbu hiked up Sweeney Creek to Holloway Lake. It was a very pleasant hike since didn't have any firm destination or goal. We hiked up the trail and explored around whenever we found anything interesting. There was some snow at Holloway Lake. The weather teased us all day, alternating between a cloudy sky and a clear blue sky. The temperature was perfect for hiking. The trip was very relaxed and enjoyable. --Gerald Olbu.

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**OFFICERS**

Gerald Olbu, President - 549-4769  
Dave Pengelly, Secretary-Treasurer - 728-6512

Peter Dayton, Newsletter Editor 728-8101  
Rick Murney, Vice President - 543-7586

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**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Check one: Individual (\$6.00/year) \_\_\_\_\_ Family (\$8.00/year) \_\_\_\_\_ (9398)

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"Rocky Mountaineers" to  
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