



Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

AUGUST, 1994

MEETING

Summer meeting schedule. During the summer the Club does not hold formal meetings.

Fall meeting schedule. Beginning in September, the Club will hold meetings on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 in the County Commissioner's meeting room on the second floor of the Annex (new portion) of the Missoula County Courthouse. Enter the building through the north door.

September program. The program for the September meeting is the traditional potluck showing of slides taken by Club members on outdoor trips during the last year. Dig out your favorite slides from the last year and bring them in. This slide show is a great way for new members to find out what kinds of outdoor activities various club members pursue.

TRIP CALENDAR

Thursday evenings and Saturdays. Rock Climbing. The rock climbing group usually meets on Thursday evenings and Saturdays. However, due to several multi-day trips (Granite, Rainier, Canada, and Grand Teton), the group hasn't met in July, and probably won't meet much in August. We will resume in September. 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.

August 14-21 (tentative). Canadian Rockies Climbing Trip. A trip is being planned to climb several peaks in the Canadian Rockies. Most or all of the routes will be over snow and ice, requiring ice climbing ability as well as technical rock climbing ability. Some of the climbs will be day trips from a campground or climbers hut. Other climbs require 3-4 days. We will try to make a base camp and then climb several peaks from that camp. It will be a potpourri of peak bagging. We may even have time for a pizza break. So far, 4-6 people are scheduled to go on this trip. There is still room for a couple more people. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for more information.

August 21. Sunday. Sweeney Peak. Hike to the top of Sweeney Peak (9161 feet), which is in the Bitterroot Mountains near Florence. This is a moderate hike which follows a trail part of the way. The rest of the route is an off-trail hike (no climbing, not even a scramble) to the top of Sweeney Peak. This trip is suitable for many ability levels since it is only about 6 miles and 3100 feet in elevation gain to the summit. From the top of the peak one has great views of the Bitterroot Valley. Call Art Gidel at 543-6352 for more information.

September 3-5. Saturday-Monday. Glacier National Park. Three-day backpack trip over the Labor Day weekend in scenic Glacier National Park. The route will begin at Kintla Lake, and continue over Boulder Pass and Brown Pass to Bowman Lake. There will be side trip possibilities. This will be a moderately strenuous trip, with about 12 miles per day. We'll need to shuttle cars. Call Cheryl Beyer at 251-2344 for details.

Early September (Labor Day?). Grand Teton. Plans are being made to climb the Grand Teton via the Upper Exum route, and also probably the snow couloir on the north face of the Middle Teton. We may also consider other mountains in the Tetons, such as Mount Moran, Teewinot, or Owen. Experience with technical rock climbing and an ice axe is required. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for more information.

Wanna lead a trip? If you are interested in leading a trip, contact Gerald Olbu at 549-4769.

TRIP REPORTS

Eagle Pass Hike. July 10. A group of six hikers (Dan Chisholm, Matt Grandy, Brian Mariano, Jody Miller, Gerald Olbu, and Lissa Sisson) set out early in the morning to enjoy some fine scenery in the Mission Mountains. We began at McDonald Lake and hiked up the trail through a cedar forest. We crossed the creek below a spectacular waterfall, which made for good photos, and ate our first lunch. The hike along the lakes was easy and the mosquitoes didn't bother you too much if you didn't stop. The hike up to the pass was a lot of fun, very scenic and a long grunt. We ate our second lunch on top of Eagle Pass. The hike down was fairly quick. - Gerald Olbu

Granite Peak Attempt, July 16-19. There are several approaches to Granite Peak. After much consideration, Jody Miller, Eric Moles, Gerald Olbu and Tim Page chose the Huckleberry Creek approach for its scenic qualities. We camped at Princess Lake where we met Matt and Scott, two Missoula natives who just successfully climbed Granite Peak after being rained out the day before. They were celebrating their victory and were in good spirits. We asked them about the route and Matt replied "Just follow them rock piles." They were funny. The next morning we proceeded to "follow them rock piles." We hiked past Snowball Lakes, which was the most scenic portion of the trip. As we reached the col below the peak, the weather looked threatening. We ate lunch and in a short while it began raining with a little lightening. The trip back was very slow; it was difficult to travel over wet boulders. However, the boulders did provide some interesting shelter from the rain, almost like a cave. We saw several goats on the trip. During both nights at Princess Lake, goats visited our camp. In the morning, there was goat hair all over the place. The only other notable wildlife we saw were huge spiders that made their webs between the boulders. They provided extra incentive to not fall in between the boulders. -Gerald Olbu.

Grey Wolf Peak, July 23. Art Gidel, Peter Dayton, Dick White, and Brett Doucett met three women from Yakima, Washington, for a day of hiking in the south Mission Mountains. After considering the out-of-towner's inclinations and the available options we headed for Grey Wolf Peak. The women and Dick visited the Scenic Lake drainage and hung out at the Riddell Lakes while Art, Brett and Peter climbed Grey Wolf by the south couloir. A good time was had by all. - Peter Dayton.

East St. Mary's Peak, July 31. Art Gidel, Peter Dayton, Brett Doucett, and four other persons whose names were not available at press time climbed East St. Mary's Peak in the south Mission Mountains. From the dam at St. Mary's Reservoir, two ridges lead towards the peak, and meet part of the way there. We ascended the ridge to the east, which involves some steep and trail-free bushwacking, but provides great views of the west side of Grey Wolf Peak, the No Fish Basin, and the cascade below the basin. After hanging out on top of the peak for a while we returned to the point where the two ridges meet and descended by the west ridge. Although the scenery is less impressive than the east ridge, there is a steep but well-beaten-out usage trail running down the west ridge. I don't remember this usage trail as being so distinct the last time I climbed East St. Mary's; possibly the mobs of people climbing to the site of the airplane crash a few years ago upgraded this trail. I enjoyed the scenery on the east ridge very much, but those who are not fans of bushwacking will probably prefer to take the west ridge route. - Peter Dayton.

Mount Cowan, July 30-31. Rick and Jenny Murney, Bill Burnett, Steve Niday, and Dave Pengelly climbed Mt. Cowan (11,200 feet) in the Absorokees during the last weekend in July. After sweltering in the heat in Missoula, we looked for a reasonable climb at elevation, and Mt. Cowan fit the bill. We drove to the trailhead on the East Fork of Mill Creek on Saturday morning. The trailhead is at about 5600 feet. The trail to Elbow Lake on the south side of the peak is about 8 miles, with a net elevation gain of 3,000 feet. We met several groups with horses along the trail, but none of them were camped at the lake. The trail is pretty beat up in places due to the horses, and the horseflies were a bother. The campsites at the lake are heavily used, but the view is great and we had the place to ourselves. After Jenny made sure that we were well fed, we crashed early so that Steve and Rick would be able to get up fairly early for the climb the next day. We didn't get out of camp until 7:15 and made the summit in three hours. The climbing is relatively straightforward (4th class) if one adheres to the route description in Pat Caffrey's guidebook. We had great summit views. It took about two hours to return to camp and about 2.5 hours out to the car. This is a nice alternative to some of the local climbs if one is looking for something different. - Dave Pengelly.

Mount Rainier, August 1-5. A group of six climbers (Steve Longo, Eric Moles, Gerald Olbu, Tim Page, and Jim and Janet Surrena) set out to climb Mount Rainier. We were going to do the Kautz Glacier route via a loop, but due to conditions, we chose the Camp Muir/Disappointment Cleaver route instead which entailed less commitment. The hike to Camp Muir was a long grunt up a snowfield. On the second day we decided to go out on the glacier and play in a crevasse, which was a lot of fun for everyone. On the third day, just like the previous, the Rainier Mountaineering Inc. guides got their mob up at 1:00 a.m. They made a lot of belligerent noise and woke everybody up. We did our best to go back to sleep. At 4:00 MST, in a howling wind, we got up and headed out at 6:00 with headlamps, crampons, ice axes, and rope. We were immediately greeted with the thrill of jumping a two-foot wide, 100-foot deep crevasse on the Ingraham Glacier. As we began climbing Disappointment Cleaver, we were glad there was no one directly above us kicking rocks down on us. On the Emmons Glacier, we saw the most beautiful crevasses; they were large, had interesting shapes and sometimes a bluish color. As we proceeded, we saw that soon we would be in the lenticular cloud, which is the resident cloud which usually surrounds the summit. Other climbers began coming down and reported lots of wind and complete whiteout. "We couldn't see anything" they exclaimed. We continued on. At about 13,000 feet we stopped to put on more clothing. The wind was about 50 miles per hour. It was so strong that when we took our packs off, we had to anchor them with our ice axes. We had to anchor everything lest it blow away. Wisps of clouds would blow by us as fast as if we were standing on a highway and watching a car rush by. As we continued, we noticed the cloud was thinning. It made a beautiful rainbow halo around the sun. We reached the summit crater at 3:00 and the summit at 3:45 under a clear blue sky. We were the last group of climbers to summit that day and we lucked out. We had the entire summit all to ourselves and we were some of the few climbers who had any visibility on the summit. We could clearly see Mt Adams, Hood, and St Helens. Mt Baker was hidden in the forest fire haze. It was a beautiful day on the summit. The trip down was fairly quick and quite enjoyable. On the fourth day, we hiked down from Camp Muir, had a delicious pizza and drove home. -Gerald Olbu.

Great Burn, August 6. New club members Kim Phillips and Dick White joined Dave Pengelly to escape the heat and forest fire smoke in the Great Burn. We drove to the divide on the Cedar Creek road out of Superior. The road crosses the divide about 9 miles north of Hoodoo Pass. We hiked south for 4.5 miles to Illinois Peak, where we ignored the standard operating rules of the club and actually hung out for 1.5 hours to eat lunch and

enjoy the scenery. We then continued south on the divide trail and climbed Graves Peak before turning around and heading back to the car. The hike is quite mellow, with little elevation gain and good views most of the way. Despite the drought, there was still a good display of wild flowers. Most of the fires were to the east and southwest, so the haze wasn't too bad and the temperature was quite moderate. - Dave Pengelly.

More of the same old kayaking.. Alberton Gorge. At this time of year, the water in the Alberton Gorge on the Clark Fork River probably smells worse than the water in most rivers in Rwanda. I don't know if the source of the smell is dead fish, rotting algae, the Frenchtown Mill, the Missoula Sewage Treatment Plant, or all of them, but the odor is pretty putrid. You feel like you should seal your lips with duct tape before venturing out on the water. But we gotta do it; no other river in the region has such good whitewater at this time of the year. We regularly see kayakers and rafters from places such as Spokane, the Tri Cities, Cour D'Alene, Great Falls, and Butte. I floated the gorge 14 times since the beginning of July, and expect that Art Gidel has been there even more. We spend hours thrashing around in play spots such as Split Rock, Cliffside II, Triple Bridges, Icebox Hole, Geek's Hole, and Fang. After a while, you kind of forget about the smell. - Peter Dayton.

OFFICERS

Gerald Olbu, President - 549-4769

Dave Pengelly, Secretary-Treasurer - 728-6512

Peter Dayton, Newsletter Editor 728-8101

Rick Murney, Vice President - 543-7586

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

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

Mail a check payable to
"Rocky Mountaineers" to
Dave Pengelly
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Missoula, Montana 59806

THE MOUNTAIN EAR
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(STAMP)

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