



# Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

SEPTEMBER, 1994

## MEETING

**Time and place.** Meetings are held 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. This month's meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 14.

**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.** After taking a couple months off, the rock climbing group will resume meeting on most Thursday evenings and Saturdays. The group usually climbs a wide variety of technical climbs - some easy, some hard, most top-roped, some multi-pitch. This is especially good experience for beginners. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for details.

**September 18. Sunday. Turquoise Peak.** Climb Turquoise Peak, which is located in the Mission Mountains near St. Ignatius. The route will follow a trail part of the way, then will go cross country with some moderate bushwhacking. Finally, the climb of the peak will involve some fourth-class climbing on slabby-type rock with some exposure. The views from the top are spectacular. The Garden Wall, Lake of the Clouds, Iceflow Lake, Cliff Lake, McDonald Peak are some of the sights one can see from the top. This will be a long and strenuous trip. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for more information.

**September 25. Sunday. Blackman Lookout.** Hike to Blackman Lookout in Glacier National Park, weather permitting. The route follows a trail; however, there is a river crossing which must be negotiated. Expect a water level of about two feet with a slow current. This is a 5-mile (one way) moderate-level hike through some beautiful Glacier Park country. Call Cheryl Beyer at 251-2344 for more information.

**October 1. Saturday. Cabin Work Party.** Come and visit the Club's luxurious cabin in the Bitterroots. We need to cut some firewood for the winter. Does anyone have a chainsaw? Only minimal work should be required because the cabin wasn't used much last winter due to the early road closure. This will be a great opportunity to learn where the cabin is and contribute to its maintenance. It's only about a two mile hike to the cabin and should be an enjoyable short day. Call Art Gidel at 543-6352 for more information.

**October 8. Saturday. Blodget Canyon.** Hike up Blodget Canyon which is located in the Bitterroot Mountains near Hamilton and is known for its impressive 1000-foot vertical buttresses on the north side of the canyon. The trail is well maintained and fairly gentle. The group will hike at a moderate pace. There is no firm destination, but the group probably won't go past the wilderness boundary which is seven miles from the trail head. This will be an easy to moderate hike suitable for people of varied ability levels. Call Dick White at 251-6430 for more information.

**October 8-10. Sat-Mon. Warren Peak.** Climb Warren Peak which is located in the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness. A short hike on a trail will lead to Carpp Lake where we will camp. The climb of the peak the next day will involve some-off trail travel (minimal bushwhacking) and some fourth-class climbing with some exposure. From the top one should have some impressive views of the rugged continental divide as it cuts through the Pintlers. Overall, the trip shouldn't be too strenuous since it's spread over 3 days. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for details.

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

## TRIP REPORTS

**Crow Creek Area, Mission Mountains, August 13.** The announcement for this trip promised an exploratory hike in the Missions during which the participants would "confront alders, bugs, disorientation, raw fear, and our personal shortcomings." The trip leader began confronting his personal shortcomings the night before the trip, when a neighbor rang his doorbell with a message from Colleen Hunter, who was on a two-week bicycle trip in Canada. The message was "hang up your telephone, you dimwit; it's been off the hook for the last couple of days." Yowee! That explained why I hadn't been receiving any calls! I called for a pizza Wednesday night, and failed to set the handpiece properly back in the receiver.

Fortunately, Greg Zlock had called before this blunder, so I didn't have to venture into the unknown alone. After discussing some options, we decided to check out the area to the south of North Crow Creek Canyon. I had looked into this area from the north on an earlier climb of Goat Peak, and thought that it looked interesting. We drove to the trailhead for the Crow-Piper Pass Trail, which is northeast of Ronan, crossed the creek, and started bushwacking southeasterly up the ridge. After climbing about 3,600 feet we reached a 7,293 foot peak and checked out the scenery while eating lunch. This area looks sort of boring from the valley because most of the peaks are hidden by the forested shoulder of the ridge. However, there is a lot of interesting little pothole lakes, rocky ridges and basins, and attractive scenery tucked away up there. We headed further east, crossed a saddle, swung north and dropped down to North Crow Creek, crossed the creek, and found the Piper-Crow Trail just before it starts switchbacking up to the pass. From there it was an easy couple of miles back to the car. This is a neat little corner of the Mission Mountains, which probably doesn't get much traffic because it doesn't have any trails or major peaks. And the bushwacking isn't too bad for the Missions. - Peter Dayton

Mount Owen, August 16-19. Jeff Holiday, Justin Ivory, Steve Longo, Eric Moles and Gerald Olbu set out to climb Mount Owen which is situated between the Grand Teton and Teewinot Mountain and overlooks Teton Glacier. After a day of hiking, we camped on the moraine near Teton Glacier. The next day we traversed the glacier and began climbing up the Lower Kovan Couloir. We got our first taste of the muck in the couloir, which was filled with loose rock, sand, gravel, water, and some snow. We were constantly vigilant for rock fall, and we got hit a couple of times. As we reached the bench between the upper and lower couloirs, we noticed that the helicopter which was flying around the Grand Teton all morning was now carrying a rescue litter. We found out later that a woman fell 60 feet during a rapel and broke her leg and a few other bones. This was a good place for a break because there was another group ahead of us still in the couloir and we didn't want to eat the rocks they were knocking loose. We continued and climbed the Upper Kovan Couloir, which was just as mucky as the lower. We were quite happy when we surmounted the couloirs and reached the ridge crest. The next obstacle was a 120-foot rock band. There were two possibilities: either climb the chimney or the face. After some discussion, we decided to rope up and climb the face. Soon, we caught up with the other group who were preparing to retreat. We continued and crossed both upper snowfields, which were steep and icy in places. At this point we were on the west ridge right below the summit. In another 1-2 hours we could be on the summit, but we looked at the time and decided we should be safe and head back. We took in the views. We were face to face with the north face of the Grand Teton and it was very grand. We could look straight down 1000 feet to the Teton Glacier. The trip down involved several rapels. There was a little bit of excitement when on the first rapel, the rope got stuck. We climbed back up and got it. All total, we did seven double-rope rapels. We did the last two rapels after dark with our head lamps. The rest of the trip was routine and uneventful. Even though Mount Owen is not as popular as the Grand Teton, it is a much finer alpine climb and very exhilarating.--Gerald Olbu.

Sweeney Peak, August 21. Eight individuals (Cheryl Beyer, Elizabeth Morgan, Marian McKenna, Barbara \_\_\_\_, Wendy Phillips, Bret Doucette, Beverly Chin, and Art Gidel) car-pooled to the Peterson Lakes trailhead on Sweeney Ridge, which is located east of Florence in the Bitterroot Mountains. The drive to the trailhead now takes less time due to recent road improvements. The trailhead area also has a larger parking area. Four of us left the trail at a spring (about 2 miles from the trailhead) to hike the ridge towards Sweeney Peak. The remainder of the group stayed on the trail and returned to the vehicles in the early afternoon. The views from the summit were reasonably clear, in spite of considerable smoke from forest fires. The summit party returned to the trailhead in mid-afternoon. -Art Gidel.

Nyack/Coal Creek Wilderness, September 3-4. Abandoning the original trip plans because of closure of the North Fork due to fires, a crew of four mountaineers (Cheryl Beyer, Dan Chisholm, Steve Schombel and Julie Warner) shifted gears and instead forded the raging waters of the Middle Fork of the Flathead and entered the rainy and remote Nyack Wilderness of Glacier National Park. A good time was had by some. --Cheryl Beyer

#### OFFICERS

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#### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

Mail a check payable to  
"Rocky Mountaineers" to

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

Dave Pengelly  
P.O. Box 4262

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

Missoula, Montana 59806

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