



Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

NOVEMBER, 1995
MEETING

Meetings: Club meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month in the Missoula County Commission's meeting room, which is located on the second floor of the annex (newer portion) of the Missoula County Courthouse. Please enter through the north door. This month's meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 8.

Program: Pat Caffrey will present a slideshow of his recent climbing trip to Mount Everest. Pat is living proof that somebody from Missoula County (Seeley Lake, actually) can make it to the big time in international high altitude climbing circles; he has climbed all of the "Seven Summits" except for Everest. He approached Everest from the Tibetan side rather than the more common Nepalese side. Even though he didn't reach the summit (only one of his group of 12 did), he has great slides of the entire route and summit. Pat met some interesting people, including the late Alison Hargreaves during her climb of Everest without bottled oxygen. Expect a lively talk; if they ever run out of trees in the Swan Valley, Pat could start a second career as a stand-up comic.

CALENDAR

Health warning: Early season skiing can be hazardous to the health of the bottoms of your skis. While the Rocky Mountaineers Outdoor Club has scheduled various trips which are billed as "ski trips" or "ice climbs," the Club does not represent or warrant that there will in fact be any snow or ice present at the time and place of the trip. So the motto of the month is "caveat viator" (let the wayfarer beware), and the word for the wise is "cavendum est a fragmentis" (look out for the rocks).

November 11, Saturday, north face of Trapper Peak. Climb a steep snow/ice couloir on the north face of Trapper Peak. A short hike on a trail will lead to the base of the headwall of Trapper Peak. An ice axe and crampons will be required to climb the couloir. This trip will be suitable for beginners wishing to gain experience climbing with an ice axe and crampons. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for more information.

November 24-26, Friday-Sunday, McDonald Peak. Three-day ski and climbing trip to McDonald Peak, which is the highest peak in the Missions. We will ski in from the Swan side and camp a Cliff Lake at the base of McDonald Peak. The climb of the peak is normally a scramble, but with snow it will be more difficult, and an ice axe will be required. This will be a challenging trip in extremely beautiful country. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for details.

November 25, Saturday, Lolo Pass. Intermediate ski tour on trails in the Lolo Pass area. Assuming there is any snow to be had, this trip would be a great way to kick off (no pun intended) your ski season. Call Steve Schombel at 721-4686 or Julie Warner at 543-6508 for details.

December 2, Saturday, Bass Creek Crag. Climb the Bass Creek Crag, which are the jagged spires south of Florence and easily visible from the highway. The route follows a trail for a short distance, then heads off cross country through brush, boulder fields, and snow to the base of the crags. It is a moderate fourth class climb in the summer, but with snow it will be challenging. This should be a great winter climbing trip. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for more information.

December 10, Sunday, local ski trip. Moderate-level backcountry ski trip to a local area such as Hoodoo Pass, St. Mary's Peak, or Sweeney Peak, depending on the snow conditions. Call Art Gidel at 543-6352 for more information.

December 17, Sunday, local ski trip. Same description as December 10. I'm not proud, I'll go wherever I can find some snow. Call Peter Dayton at 728-8101 for details.

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

TRIP REPORTS

Winter Camping, October 7-8. Intending to climb Warren Peak, Matt Grandy, Gerald Olbu and Judy Stack headed for the Pintlers. We hiked to

Maloney Basin (8100 feet), which is a large, scenic meadow at the base of Warren Peak. There was about six inches of fresh snow on the ground, but it was just below freezing so it was dry. This created a beautiful winter scene with a snow-dusted Warren Peak jutting right up from the meadow. There was more snow than we expected, and it made climbing the slab rock on the east face not advisable. Instead, we used this as an opportunity to test our winter camping skills. - Gerald Olbu.

Heavenly Twins, October 14. The Heavenly Twins are the majestic twin peaks west of St. Mary's Peak in the Bitterroot Mountains. Knowing it would be a long trip, Jim Day and Gerald Olbu headed out early in the morning. We got into snow below St. Mary's Peak. As we left the trail, we tried to stay on wind-swept ridges, but that was not always possible. It was fun walking down a 1000-foot slope with a foot of powder snow, but we knew we would hate it on the return trip. We continued up and down along the ridge top through some very beautiful alpine country. The snow was about two feet deep as we reached the base of the east Heavenly Twin. Normally we would scramble up the couloir, but we didn't want to do any more postholing in deep snow, so we opted instead to climb the face. The climb was challenging; there was some snow and ice in some of the chimneys, making it slippery as well as exposed. We reached the summit and congratulated each other as we took in some great views. We scrambled down the west side of the peak and began the long trip back. We reached the trailhead and completed a 14-hour trip. The best kind of trip is one that you just barely pull off. The endurance required and the climbing difficulty made this that kind of a trip. - Gerald Olbu.

Kakashe Mountain, October 29. Wanting to climb a scenic and challenging mountain, Jim Day, Jeff Holiday and Gerald Olbu set out for Kakashe Mountain, which is near St. Ignatius in the Missions. We began at Mission Reservoir and bushwacked and followed a trail up a ridge that led to Kakashe. The route was straight forward, but long with a foot of snow at the top. As we neared Kakashe, we traversed around to the north side. The fun began here as we descended a snowslope and crossed a snow-covered boulder field. It was extremely difficult and slow to climb up a steep couloir filled with deep snow; luckily Jeff had lots of energy and made a good trail. We reached the top of the ridge and shortly were at the summit. We had a breath-taking view of the Missions in their winter splendor. We were right next to the Garden Wall, with Mountaineer and Turquoise Peaks; East and West St. Mary's Peaks and Sonielem Ridge were a short distance to the south; and McDonald Peak, the Sheeps Head, and Mount Harding were to the north. This was a loop trip, so we headed down the southeast side of the mountain. We encountered cliffbands and were required to climb down a snow chute, which was lots of fun. We continued down, trying to avoid cliffy areas and minimize bushwacking. At about sunset, we reached the Mission Creek trail head near Elizabeth Falls. It was interesting trying to follow the trail after dark. We reached the trailhead and completed another 14-hour trip. - Gerald Olbu.

OFFICERS

Gerald Olbu, President - 549-4769

Dave Pengelly, Secretary-Treasurer - 728-6512

Peter Dayton, Newsletter Editor 728-8101

Dave Siemens, Vice President - 549-0102

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

P.O. Box 4262

Missoula, Montana 59806

THE MOUNTAIN EAR
P.O. BOX 4262
MISSOULA, MT 59806

(STAMP)

FIRST CLASS MAIL