



# Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

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MAY, 1996

## 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, May 8.

**Program.** Rafael Grana, a local climbing veteran with 13 years of extensive experience on rock, ice, big walls and alpine climbs, will present a slideshow/demonstration. Rafael will show slides of some of his recent trips and discuss climbing techniques and demonstrate equipment. This slideshow will be especially useful for those wishing to plan their own mountaineering trip.

**Elections.** Club elections will be held at this month's meeting. So, come to the meeting or you might be elected to something.

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## CALENDAR

**Thursday Evenings and Saturdays.** The rock climbing group will meet on most Thursday evenings and Saturdays. The group will climb a variety of climbs suitable for beginning- and intermediate-level climbers. This is an excellent way to prepare for some of the Club's mountaineering trips. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for details.

**May 11, Saturday, Como Peak.** Climb the north face of one of the Como Peaks. These are the three symmetrical peaks which can be seen from the highway south of Hamilton. The middle peak has a large snowfield which is composed of three ramps leading to the summit. An ice ax will be required and crampons may be needed. This will be a long and strenuous trip. The first portion of the trip follows a trail, and then bushwhacking is required until we reach the snowfield. The snow climb portion should be a great mountaineering experience. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for details.

**May 25-26, Sat-Sun, St. Regis Cutoff of the Clark Fork River.** Overnight backpack trip along the St. Regis Cutoff of the Clark Fork River through a scenic canyon. Only two short hiking days will be required for this 10-mile trip since the trail is mostly level. There are bridges across the larger creeks and the smaller creeks should be easy to cross. There may be good fishing opportunities. The snow should be gone, but participants should be prepared for rain. Call Steve Schombel at 721-4686 for more information, or leave a message with Julie Warner at 543-6508.

**May 25-27, Sat-Mon, McDonald Peak.** Three-day backpack trip over the Memorial Day weekend to McDonald Peak, which is the highest peak in the Missions. The route on the first day will begin along a trail followed by lots of off-trail travel through brush, rocks and deep snow. We will try to camp on the upper snowfield. The final approach to the peak will involve travelling up a large snowfield, requiring an ice ax. Views of the Missions from the summit will be spectacular. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for more information.

**June 1, Saturday, Turquoise Lake.** Hike to Turquoise Lake, which is the most scenic of the larger lakes in the Mission Mountains. The 6-mile hike will follow a trail, although, there probably will be snow in the basin near the lake. The lake may be partially ice covered, if so, the edges of the white ice submerged in the turquoise-colored water will be quite beautiful. Call Dan Chisholm at 542-1266 for more information.

**June 9, Sunday, Bass Creek Crag.** Climb the Bass Creek Crag which are the jagged spires easily seen from the highway south of Florence. The first portion of the route will follow a trail, then bushwhacking will be required to reach the cirque below the crags. An ice ax and fourth-class climbing will be required to ascend the snow and rocks to reach the top of the crags. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for more information.

**Kayaking.** What do you call somebody who lives for the moment? A hedonist. What do you call somebody who lives for the spring runoff? A kayaker. If you want to go kayaking, contact Art Gidel at 543-6352 or Peter Dayton at 728-8101. If they aren't in, leave a message; they'll call you when they get back from kayaking.

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

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#### TRIP REPORTS

**Selway River, April 12-14.** Art Gidel, Peter Dayton, Mike Worrall, and Dan Hoheim took a three day self-contained kayak trip down the Selway River. The water level was just a hair under five feet when we put in, which provided a fast and action-packed trip. It snowed about two inches the first night, but other than that the weather was really quite nice. We saw a number of heavily eroded side drainages, which washed out during the storms last December and February. At the end of the trip we had to portage around Selway Falls and float an extra twelve miles because the end of the road was closed due to washouts. However, the high point of the trip was the wildlife. We saw a mountain lion, two black bears, two moose, a couple hundred elk, and a couple hundred deer. - Peter Dayton.

**Rock Climbing, April 20.** Even though the forecast called for rain, George Kerscher, Jordy Kerscher, Gerald Olbu and Mike Wysocky, decided to go rock climbing. We did an easy climb and practiced rapelling. During the day, it snowed periodically, making the rocks cold and wet. It was almost like real mountaineering. Nobody got cold, though, except for their fingers at the end of a climb. - Gerald Olbu.

**West St. Mary's Peak, April 27.** In an open ended trip, Andre Duran, Gerald Olbu and Drew Turner attempted West St. Mary's Peak. We bushwhacked up the steep hillside to gain access to the ridge, which we followed up the mountain. The snow depth increased progressively from no snow at the bottom to deep snow with a foot of fresh powder on the summit ridge. We continued along the snow-corniced ridge. It was snowing and we were in white-out conditions with only about 50 feet of visibility. Occasionally, we could look over the cornice and see cliffs disappearing into the whiteness. After a while, we heard a very faint, but unmistakable calling of a pizza. So, we quickly headed back and responded to the emergency. - Gerald Olbu.

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#### OFFICERS

Gerald Olbu, President - 549-4769

Peter Dayton, Newsletter Editor 728-8101

Dave Pengelly, Secretary-Treasurer - 728-6512

Dave Siemens, Vice President - 549-0102

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#### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

Mail a check payable to  
"Rocky Mountaineers" to  
Dave Pengelly  
P.O. Box 4262

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

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

Missoula, Montana 59806

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

(STAMP)

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