



Mountain Ear

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

AUGUST 1999

*The Rocky Mountaineers are dedicated to the exploration of Western Montana's mountains
and other high peaks throughout the world.*

MEETING

Club Meetings: The Rocky Mountaineers normally meet the second Wednesday of each month at the Missoula Public Library (lower level meeting room). The club does not meet during the summer months so that we can enjoy the long summer days and explore our beloved mountains.

Our next meeting will be held on September 22 at 7 p.m. **Please note that this is the fourth Wednesday in September.** At the request of several members, the meeting was moved back to accommodate extended climbing trips over the Labor Day holiday. This meeting will be our annual "potluck" slide show, where we all show each other slides of our mountaineering exploits in the past year.

A NOTE FROM THE CO-VICE PRESIDENT –

Hello Mountaineers! I hope all of you have been able to get out and bag several summits this spring and summer. We all look forward to slides or photographs of your trips at the September meeting. Due to severe physical injuries, two of our club officers have been unable to lead or participate in trips. In light of this, the club would love to have any of you experienced veterans or any aspiring alpinists step forward to lead at least one trip every couple of months or so.

What kinds of trips can you lead, you ask? Well, despite some misinformation being published by a "new" self proclaimed club, the true Rocky Mountaineers did not vote at the May meeting to "eliminate traditional mountaineering trips because they are too hard for certain people." It had been noted that one member of our club was listing trips, but was frequently refusing to allow anyone except a select few to go on his/her trips. As a trip leader, one has the responsibility and authority to exclude participants from a trip based upon some valid criteria. These include but may not be limited to the following:

1. Safety and the desire to climb as a team.
2. Appropriate gear and clothing for the route and expected weather conditions.
3. Experience level and appropriate physical conditioning for harder routes.
4. Respect for the mountains and wilderness following the "Leave No Trace" principles.

We recognize that sometimes people may not meet all of the above criteria, but who may want to participate in some way. On some trips, it may be possible for people to go along for the hiking portion of the trip and then either return whence they came, or may opt to wait for the returning summit team. We as mountaineers will not exclude a candidate from any trip based upon gender, age, race, religion, political or personal views, and career or employment history.

So, back to "what kind of trips can I lead?" The Rocky Mountaineers **IS** a mountaineering club. If you are looking for a hiking, birdwatching, or fishing club, please look elsewhere or form your own specialty club. The *6th edition of Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills* describes mountaineering as "more than climbing, panoramic views, and a wilderness experience. It is also challenge, risk, and hardship. And it is not for everyone". It is not for everyone? Yes, it may be extreme to say that mountaineering is not wheelchair accessible, but mountaineering by definition cannot physically or mentally be for everyone. So, where do we draw the line?

Depending on the book you refer to, the breakdown of Class 1 to Class 6 climbing varies. Our interpretation of mountaineering is any peak or route which is listed as a scramble (2nd – 3rd class) up through C-rated (4th class), T-rated (5th class), and finally Aid-rated (6th class). Ascending Mount Sentinel or Mount Jumbo is not mountaineering – it is hiking. Such peaks are appropriate for conditioning and training to climb appropriate peaks. We welcome you to gather friends or club members to train on such types of peaks, but please do not list them as a mountaineering trip. Relevant Bitterroot peaks may include Lolo Peak, St. Joseph, Sweeney, Heavenly Twins, Trapper, El Capitan, St. Mary's, etc. Mission Mountains – East & West St. Mary, McDonald, Mountaineer, Panoramic, Kakashe, and so on. On a grander scale, Mount Blanc, Kilimanjaro, Everest, K2, and Denali are also qualifying peaks. We also recognize that mountaineering involves use of wilderness areas. We therefore welcome and encourage backpacking and trekking trips that are above and beyond the norm. If you would like to lead a week long trip across the Bob Marshall, Wind River Range, Beartooths, etc., please list these types of wilderness experiences. Our more mature members could lead some less strenuous trips that employ a wilderness philosophy.

To summarize, the Rocky Mountaineers are mainly geared towards climbing relevant peaks. You can lead a trip to Lolo Peak or at the other extreme a bold new ascent of the west face on K2. No trip is to extreme!!! The book is open for any aspiring alpinists and we are looking for some of you to lead some cutting edge trips. The Rocky Mountaineers also welcomes trips that include ice climbing, snowshoeing, back country touring/skiing, rock climbing, wilderness backpacking, and exotic or adventure travel.

We would like to welcome back any and all who have strayed recently or in the past due to political or personal reasons. We look for level-headed people who can share their experience without being exclusionary. We all had to learn from someone, so please volunteer your abilities at least a couple of times per year to help bring up the younger or less experienced members. Let's all get along, share experiences, and work to bring this club into a great organization of mountaineers. See you on the summits – Tony Sabol, Co-Vice President

TRIP CALENDER

Collegeweb.com/interact

August 8, Sunday, Lolo Pass Area: Julie Warner will lead an easy hike along the actual Lewis & Clark route in the Lolo Pass area. This trip will cross Wagon Mountain and measures 7 miles point-to-point. Call Julie at 543-6508.

August 15, Sunday, St. Joseph Peak: Penny Palm will lead a trip to St. Joseph Peak (9,587 feet) in the Bitterroot Range. Mountaineers will follow the Bass Creek trail for about 3 miles and then go off trail to gain the ridge. The ridge to the summit is approximately 4 miles. Contact Penny at 258-2000.

August 21 & 22, Saturday & Sunday, Eighteen Mile Peak: Come climb the highest peak in the Beaverhead Mountains (11,141 feet) and the highest point on the Continental Divide in Montana. This peak is a scramble up to rolling terrain with a finish up the northeast ramp. Call Tami Sabol at 273-2566 for more information.

August 21 & 22, Saturday & Sunday, Rocky Mountain: Steve Schombel will lead a climb of Rocky Mountain, the highest point of the Bob Marshall Wilderness Area (9,392 feet). A little too far to be completed in one day, so this will be a weekend trip. On Saturday, we will explore some of the Rocky Mountain Front and camp up the South Fork of the Teton River. Rocky Mountain is a moderate summit, with a 4 ½ mile hike up a switchback trail through Headquarters Pass, then a steep 1600' scramble in 1 mile up the west face. Race down the scree, jump in the cars and we should be home late Sunday evening. Some of us more mature climbers may want a slower trip and camp out a second night and drive home Monday. Call Steve at 721-4686 for more information.

September 2 - 9, Thurs-Thurs, Alaska anyone?: We will be in the Anchorage area during this time and will be climbing multiple peaks in the Chugach Range which stretches from Anchorage, around Prince William Sound, to Valdez and Cordova. These mountains receive heavy moisture and snowfall, and therefore are extensively glaciated. There are routes from simple scrambles to all-out-expedition-type glacier trips and ascents. Interested persons call Tony or Tami Sabol at 273-2566.

September 4-6, Sat-Mon, Mount Athabasca: Join the Rocky Mountaineers for the Second Annual Athabasca Extravaganza!!! Matt Grandy will again lead this trip, which was great fun for all involved last year. Non-climbing spouses are welcome to join us for the car camping base camp, as long as they serve as cooks for the climbers (pancakes on summit day!). This will be a serious climb of a major peak in the Canadian Rockies (12,250 feet). Ice axe, crampons, helmet, and harness are required, and there will be a mandatory training session. Sign up with Matt at 728-0647.

September 18, Saturday, Rocky Mountaineers Cabin: Join us for the annual work party at our cabin in the Bitterroot Mountains. This is our yearly firewood cutting party and winter cabin preparation. Bring a chainsaw and/or strong muscles and lend a helping hand in keeping our cabin a special place. Come join in on the fun. Call Matt Grandy at 728-0647.

September 24-26, Fri-Sun, Three 12,000 footers and One 11,000+: Come climb with us in the Beartooth Mountains near Red Lodge. We'll ascend to Sundance Pass and set up a base camp. From here, we will scramble to Silver Run Peak (12,542 feet) and Point 12,500 (12,500 feet). The next day we will do Mount Lockhart (11,647 feet) and Whitetail Peak (12,548 feet): When the Beartooth Mountains are viewed from the east, Whitetail Peak appears to be the highest peak in the range, and is often mistaken for Granite Peak – the highest peak in Montana. These climbs are an easy introduction to Montana's highest alpine country. Contact Tony or Tami Sabol at 273-2566 for questions.

October 2-4, Sat-Mon, McDonald Peak: At 9,820 feet, this is the highest peak in the Mission Mountains. The peak lies within the annual Grizzly Bear Protection Zone and is closed from July 15 through October 1. This will be our first chance this fall at experiencing this peak. We will pack in from the Swan Valley to a base camp at Cliff Lake. Participants not wanting to climb can explore several nearby lakes and scenic waterfalls. Call Tony Sabol at 273-2566 for more information.

Want to Lead A Trip ? If you are interested in being a Trip Leader for the Rocky Mountaineers, contact Club President Matt Grandy at 728-0647 or e-mail him at matthewg@montana.com.

TRIP REPORTS

Lolo Peak: On July 10th, Matt Grandy and Penny Palm headed up early to beat the heat. We hit snow about ¾ the way up Carlton Ridge. We got to the top and it was so hot we decided napping was a better idea than ice axe arrests. We saw some other hikers headed towards the summit and we decided it was time to descend. On the way home, we stopped for a dip in the Bitterroot River – Matt and Penny

Fisher Peak: On July 17th, Matt Grandy, Ralph Flockerzi, Lois Crepeau, Isaac Kantor, Karen Apland, and Steve Schombel made a good try at Fisher Peak. We were slow and careful, worked together as a group, helped each other, and enjoyed each other's company. We all made the summit ridge, just a few hundred feet from the top. Then, since it was past our turn-around-time and some dark clouds were moving in, we agreed it was close enough. We enjoyed the view of George Lake and the Bob Marshall, and then descended. Just before we reached the bottom of the steep part, some light hail hit. Lucky for us, we weren't up there stubbornly trying to reach the tip-top. With its 4000'+ gain in a steep 2 miles and mild 4th class climbing, Fisher Peak is a true mountaineering experience. Don't let anyone tell you the Rocky Mountaineers no longer do mountaineering. Check out some of the other trips in this newsletter – Steve Schombel

Canyon Peak, August 4th: In order to get out early on the 4th, Ronnie Attaway, Rob McLeod, and Tony Sabol hiked in the night before and bivied at the base of the peak. We planned an early morning ascent, but it rained all night and into the morning. Around 10:00 a.m., the skies began to clear, so we took a shot at the peak. We wanted something more challenging than the north ridge and we found that in a couple crack systems on the east face. The route alternated between 4th and low 5th class, with a few moves as hard as 5.8. The protection we did get in was solid, but very run-out. We soon popped out on the ridge and a short brought us up to the lofty views of Canyon Peak summit. It started raining during our last rappel, so we beat a hasty retreat back to the valley floor – Tony Sabol

Mt. Ranier, August 4th – 8th: Penny Palm, Jordan Shapiro, and Matt Grandy headed for Mount Ranier, leaving Missoula with clear skies. We arrived at the National Park to find thunderstorms and severe weather on the upper part of the mountain. As we left Paradise and headed for Camp Muir, we could hear the winds roaring like a freight train on the upper mountain. We pitched our tents at Camp Muir in a ferocious hailstorm. On Friday, we moved our camp up the mountain to Ingraham Flats. At Ingraham Flats, we again experienced ferocious hail and thunderstorms. We made our first summit attempt at 1:00 a.m. on Saturday, only to be turned back by pea soup fog and poor visibility. We made a second summit attempt at 5:00 a.m. All other parties on the mountain turned around just above Dissapointment Cleaver that day. We made it beyond all other parties turn-around points, making it to the 13,200 foot level. We were battling 80 mph winds and could see thunder and lightening lower on the mountain, which threatened to cut off our descent route. With the summit very close, we made the painful decision to turn around, rather than face a possible bivi high on the mountain. We returned to our camp at Ingraham Flats and enjoyed a hearty lunch. We then packed up and headed down the mountain to our car.



CLUB OFFICERS

President	Matt Grandy	728-0647	Treasurer	Julie Warner	543-6508
Vice President	Tony Sabol	273-2566	Secretary	Penny Palm	258-2000
Vice President	Steve Schombel	721-4686	Newsletter Editor	Tami Sabol	273-2566

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
E-Mail: _____

728-5329

Check One: Individual (\$9 per year) _____ Family (\$12 per year) _____

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