



# MOUNTAIN EAR

**Monthly Newsletter of the Rocky Mountaineers**

**HIKING-CLIMBING-MOUNTAINEERING-SKIING-  
EXOTIC TRAVEL-EXPLORATION OF PEAKS AND  
MOUNTAINS OF MONTANA AND OF THE WORLD**

**\*\*\*JUNE-JULY 2001\*\*\***

## MEETING REPORT

Many of you are probably wondering what was the outcome of the May 16<sup>th</sup> meeting at Bonner Park. About 20 people showed up with some old members renewing their interest. Certain parties that had come to the May 9<sup>th</sup> meeting did not come, but Tony Sabol (the secretary) reported that he had a long phone conversation with ex-president Gerald Olbu that morning, the gist of which was that: Gerald said that the hostility of the May 9<sup>th</sup> meeting had been intentional as he had been "trying to pull a sneak attack on us like we pulled on him two years ago." He is referring to the May 1999 meeting in which another person was voted in as newsletter editor and he was elected to be vice-president, a position he immediately resigned from upon being voted in.

We had a lengthy discussion concerning various aspects of the club, including that Tony and Tami Sabol no longer wanted to be vice-president and secretary, and the very confusing situation with the bylaws. A motion was made and passed that I and Steve Schombel would be the de-facto officers of the club until September, there would again be elections in September and anyone who was a paid member by August 31 will be eligible to vote. Thank you, Steve, for volunteering to do the newsletter.

David Pengally has supplied us with a set of generic bylaws to use as a guide for rewriting the bylaws, I have an application for tax exempt status pending, and I started a hotmail e-mail account for the club. The address is: [rockymountaineers@hotmail.com](mailto:rockymountaineers@hotmail.com). This can be used for mail, questions or comments to the officers but is most useful for newsletter articles: upcoming trips, trip reports and other interesting items. It's my understanding that we get a free home page with this if anyone is good at that stuff. Other problems facing the club are that we need to do some fire-marshall related repairs on the cabin. I don't know exactly what yet, and that we need to structure our club finances to safely cover the almost \$200.00 a year expenses above and beyond the cost of printing the newsletter. This is a time of restructuring and growth for our almost 50 year old club.

I would like to send out a request that the nice young lady that I gave the money bag to, please return it to us, with all of the contents including the slide pointer that was in it. This is easy enough to do, just take it to the main post office and ask the person at the counter to put it in our P.O. Box #4262.

Thanks- Julie Warner

## OTHER CLUB BUSINESS

We have several whose membership has expired. We do not send out separate renewal notices, but instead put the renewal date on the newsletter mailing label. When you dues are up this date is set in bold. So check your label, and please renew. If there is no date or an error please contact one of the officers listed on p. 3.

Next, this newsletter is for all members. As space and fund allow we can run some photos, drawings, and articles of interest. Send all items, especially upcoming trips and trip reports to our e-mail which is: [rockymountaineers@hotmail.com](mailto:rockymountaineers@hotmail.com); or to me directly at: [ssbell@montana.com](mailto:ssbell@montana.com); or hard copy to: Steve Schombel, 2200 Applewood Lane, Missoula, MT 59801. The next issue should come out in early August, but we are informal in the summer. Then we will try to return to a regular monthly schedule with a deadline for contributions the last Wednesday of the month. Also, because of a job situation it looks like the general meetings will have to be on Monday or Tuesday. If you have a preference call Julie or e-mail us.

Last, there is no liability waiver in this newsletter. No one was keeping track of them, but copies are available for trip leaders who want them.

## TRIP REPORTS

### Heart Lake Snow Walk

May 20th was a beautiful day for Lois Crepeau, Eileen Evans, David Kahl and Julie Warner to be in the HooDoo Pass area. The road was open to the trail head, but not much further. Not knowing what to expect we found ourselves walking on mostly snow within a half to 3/4 of a mile from the trail head. The snow was solid enough to hold us up, even on the way out. Heart Lake was still iced in and streaked with the snowmobile trails from winter. The trail to Pearl Lake was obscured under snow banks and we didn't attempt it. While enjoying lunch among the bear grass patches, clear of snow at the north end of the lake, we saw a snowmobile on the state line trail above, high marking it on a ridge. (Someone correct me if I'm wrong but isn't this area closed to snowmobiles?) It was interesting to be in this area this early in the spring and everyone enjoyed the hike.

-Julie Warner

### Mt. Rainier, Emmons Glacier, May 24-28:

Tami and Tony Sabol set out from the Missoula area and arrived late Thursday in time to finalize their permits and camp reservations. Mt. Rainier requires a climbing permit and a fairly detailed itinerary before a party can climb the mountain. We were up early Friday, hiking the many miles and 5,000+ feet of vertical up to Camp Schurmann. The camp is located below the "Prow", a cliff, at 9,460 ft elevation. We set up a camp and began the tedious process of melting snow for water. The route had just been climbed the day before.... for the "first" time this year! The Emmons Glacier was in horrible shape, and the normally straightforward route to the summit instead zigzagged up the mountain past towering seracs, countless crevasses, and water ice. Being only a two party team, we opted for a rest day allowing other teams to get the route set in, and to wait and see how conditions were. The teams returning from the summit Saturday afternoon reported horrible conditions....team members going through crevasses....multiple times each; hard dangerous ice to climb up...then down climb later; weakly supported snow bridges (the mountain only received 60% of its normal snowfall this year explaining somewhat the poor shape of the route). After talking with five different teams, we decided the route was probably too dangerous for a two-person rope team. We spoke with the climbing rangers, and soon after we met and joined up with a 2-member team from the Seattle area. We headed out at 12:30 am Sunday and had excellent, hard frozen snow up through the route. Around 12,600 feet, we began to encounter sections with hard ice and our pace slowed. At 13,600 feet, we debated turning around. Weather was predicted to be worse later in the day, steep ice sections would slow our descent, plus the wind was raging over 30-50 miles per hour. The group eventually decided on one fast push, and soon we were being blasted about on the 14,411 foot summit. We had mostly clear visibility of most of the area volcanoes...Hood, Adams, St Helens, Baker, Glacier Peak, plus Mt Stuart. The wind was horrible and wind chills approached -20F. We spent less than 5 minutes, before retreating down the mountain. By the time we reached 12,000 feet, the storm was hitting the upper

mountain....total white out. We reached our tents content with the fact that our timing had been perfect. The clouds moved in as we rested, and soon you could barely see more than 50 feet. It turns out that we were the only team to make the summit that day! Upon awakening the next morning, it was clear, but clouds were moving up from the lower elevations. We made haste and retreated off the mountain. It began snowing, then eventually raining. We finally made it back to the trailhead, and the waiting cooler with a couple of cold beers. We noticed a Montana "4" license plate, and upon further inspection discovered it was Shannon Bolton (from the New Rocky Mountaineers), Brady Warren, and Chris Stephenson. They soon approached the car loaded down with packs, and we enjoyed hearing them recount their trip up the Liberty Ridge. Soon we were all on our way to good steak dinners. Post Note: The following day a team of four mountaineers was struck by an avalanche on the Liberty Ridge....the event and rescue made national news. As most of us already know...timing is everything when it come to a successful mountaineering trip.

-Tony & Tami Sabol.

### Ear Mountain, May 27, 2001

First a correction. The Sawtooth Range seems to refer to the group of mountains between the Sun River and the plains, in which case there are several summits higher than Ear Mountain. with Rocky Mountain the highest. Ear Mountain is still the highest in that first wall that soars up from the plains.

A good place to start is the Ear Mountain Wildlife Management Area parking lot. Hike up the gated dirt road until it enters a fir and pine forest, which is the lowest part of a long ridge which drops from the northeast end of the cliffs on top. Scramble through the forest and up to where the scrub brush turns to talus. From here, @6800', contour around the north side to a saddle NW of the summit. Look for a faint climbers trail which will make crossing all the scree easier. Scramble up the ridge south of the saddle to where the climbers trail becomes more obvious. Do not climb any higher unless you are prepared to get technical. The trail traverses the west face below the cliffs and leads to a rubble filled couloir with a steep headwall. From the top of the couloir it is an easy scramble back north to the summit.

Ear Mountain has a ship's prow like summit, with the gentle slope abruptly ending in a rounded point with cliffs on three sides. Unlike western Montana there are nothing but plains to the north and east stretching for scores of miles. It is also one of the high spots that was often used for vision quests in bygone years, which makes one wonder whose feet were the first to tread the climbers trail, and when. Things to muse upon during a solo climb. There is no easily found evidence of such activity on the summit; just a cairn with no register and a USGS monument.

As befits a mountain that is exposed to so much sun, almost all of the snow was gone. It was a rare treat to climb a peak in May without getting wet feet. Left at 8:30, summited by 1:00 and got down at 5:00.

-Steve Schombel

## TRIP CALENDER

June 16<sup>th</sup>, Bear Creek Overlook. Hike the few miles of switchbacks to this spectacular viewpoint in the heart of the Bitterroots. Will start at 9 A.M. Call Lois Crepeau for the place and more information at: 728-5321.

June 17<sup>th</sup>, Rattlesnake Recreation Area. Hike the Walman Trail up Spring Gulch and head east back to the main trail. A good workout in a popular area with an engaging companion. Call Fred Schwanemann for the meeting time and place at: 542-7372.

June 23<sup>rd</sup>, Rattlesnake Creek. Mountain bike about fourteen miles up the creek and then hike four more miles on the Boulder Lake trail to Boulder Lake, the largest lake in the Rattlesnake Wilderness. And then glide back down. Call Karen Apland for the time and place and more information at: 542-3737.

July 1<sup>st</sup>, Sleeping Woman Peak. Climb this scenic high point northwest of Missoula formerly known by a dirty name. Takes about eight hours. Starting time at 8 A.M. Call Charles Tree for meeting place and more information at: 549-7547.

July 7-8, Borah Peak. Will drive to Idaho Saturday and meet a partner at the base camp, climb the high point of Idaho on Sunday, return to Missoula on Monday, rest a couple of days then to Glacier, July 12-15, for a backpack trip or a couple of day climbs, whatever is open. These plans are very tentative now, but anyone interested can keep in touch with Steve Schombel at 721-4686 for the latest plans.

Most members also do a lot of outdoor activities that they do not put in the newsletter. Do we have a volunteer to update our contact list, or create a web page to go along with the e-mail address? Feel free to call other members you may know.



### DEFACTO OFFICERS

President Julie Warner 543-6508

Editor Steve Schombel 721-4686

ssbell@montana.com

---

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

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

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

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Household Yearly Membership: \$13.00

Make checks payable to: "Rocky Mountaineers"  
and send to :

Rocky Mountaineers  
P.O. Box 4262  
Missoula, MT. 59806

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Household Yearly Membership: \$13.00  
Make checks payable to: "Rocky Mountaineers"  
and send to :

Rocky Mountaineers  
P.O. Box 4262  
Missoula, MT. 59806

-----



**Rocky Mountaineers**  
**P. O. Box 4262**  
**Missoula, MT 59806**

Steve Schombel  
2200 Applewood Ln.  
Missoula, MT 59801  
Membership Renewal 04/2001

**FIRST CLASS POSTAGE**