



# MOUNTAIN EAR

**Monthly Newsletter of the Rocky Mountaineers**

**The Rocky Mountaineers is organized as a nonprofit Club for the mutual benefit of its members to promote all phases of recreational use of mountainous areas.**

**\*\*\*September 2003\*\*\***

## **Wet Spring, Smoky Summer and monthly meetings begin**

A few of you may remember how wet it was last spring. We had some weekends with nothing planned, and several trips cancelled due to wet weather. Then in June it cleared up. We had several nice weeks with something going on every weekend. Our trips were well-attended, and everyone seemed happy. But then the fire season hit quite unexpectedly. Who can forget the smoke-filled skies of August? Most of us kept going out in the mountains, and found some clean enough air. Check the trip reports.

We do have some trips planned for the last half of September and early October. Hopefully there will be some rain before then. The important one is the annual cleanup and firewood day at the cabin on September 28<sup>th</sup>. Art Gidel has offered his chain saw, and we thank him.

The Rocky Mountaineers are also starting their monthly meetings at 7 P.M. on Wednesday, September 10<sup>th</sup> downstairs at the public library. This will be a members night, when people are asked to bring slides, photos and stories about the things they did last year. For example, Julie Warner has some bear photos from the Many Glacier area, and Steve Schombel has some Missouri Breaks slides. The meeting on Wednesday, October 8<sup>th</sup> will also be in the library, and has slides and stories from Steve's springtime trips to Arizona and New Mexico. On November 12<sup>th</sup> we are trying to arrange a tribute to David Line and David Pengally, concentrating on their time as active members and leaders of the Rocky Mountaineers. This will be upstairs at the County Courthouse. And on December 10<sup>th</sup> we'll have a family oriented talk by Mary Lynn Swick, dinosaur researcher, explaining her field work. This meeting place is not known. All of the meetings start at 7:00 P.M. and are free and open to all.

## **Trip Reports continued . . .**

stateline trail from Torino Peak there are no trail signs but three trails junction there. If you climb up a small incline to the east there is a fantastic spot to view the lakes below. From this point look somewhat south towards Eagle Cliff and you will see the trail that continues south on stateline. From the view point I just mentioned, head up the ridge to the trail. Heart Lake was another unsigned trail, but look west at that junction and there is a sign in a tree that reads Heller/Simmons. the trail for Heart Lake is on the east side of stateline at that point.

On trail to Heart Lake and down the Dry Creek drainage and all was fine until we came to the mass of splintered downfall of avalanche trees. Floundering and checking the maps we finally worked our way through the mess and were back on trail before too long. Then came the loooooong hike to my rig, which we finally reached at 7:15 PM. Drove up to get Fred's car and headed for Superior for supper and a beer. What a day!!!! Frustrating at times, but the views are beautiful. I think we must have hiked at least 16 miles. I'm still waiting for confirmation from the Superior RD. on that. - Lois Crepeau

### **CLUB CONTACTS**

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## Trip Reports

**June 28<sup>th</sup> Union Peak :** Five of us started up an old logging road on the southwest flank of Union Peak in the Swan Range, and soon got into some horrible bushwacking with a jumble of downed timber. Steve Schombel bailed out here, but Bret Doucett, Robin Young, Steve Niday and Ron Pierson forged on to the base of the peak. This group, while skirting Dog Creek, gained 3000 feet in elevation in the canyon. It was very brushy and hot with the added attraction of swarms of mosquitoes in our face the whole way. It was another 1625 foot climb to reach the summit. From the top we enjoyed an excellent view of a glacier below and Pony and Cat Lakes. It was determined that we had a great day as soon as we finished the returning bushwack. - Ron

**June 29<sup>th</sup> Burdette Creek:** There was some discussion on if to reach this creek in the Fish Creek drainage it was shorter to come in from Lolo Creek or I 90. We did both and Lolo creek was definitely closer. We did get turned around on the Fish Creek Saddle and ended up coming down the road to the White Mountain Lookout instead of the main Fish Creek Road. No one complained though because we got to see a bull elk with antlers in velvet on the road. The trail head was just a short ways from where we got back on the main Fish Creek road. Eileen and Fred Schwanemann and Julie Warner had been there before, so David Kahl and John Wolverton were the only new comers.

The trail was as we remembered except that due to private land at the mouth of Burdette Creek you have to come in over the ridge from the next drainage, a up and down hill traverse of 1 mi. After that the trail is fairly level, going through meadows and open ponderosa forest and past two beaver ponds. Further back you cross some talus slopes and boggy areas. The trail ends in a campsite 3 1/2 miles up the creek. Faint trails go on from there, with the crest of the Petty Creek /Fish creek divide about two more miles yet. We ate lunch in the shade of the big trees at the campsite and headed back. A great way to spend a hot Sunday afternoon. - Julie

**July 6<sup>th</sup> the Canoe Trail:** It was a great day to be on the water, sunny and pleasantly warm. And the Clearwater River was slow and calm, a good place for children and beginning paddlers. There was wildlife, wetlands, backwaters and many meanders. Often there were views of the surrounding mountains. We had a lot of interest in this slightly different outing for the club. Participating were: Fred Schwanemann, Steve Schombel, Cathy Burleson with son Michael Bowles, Genevieve Andrus, Linda Azure, Nancy Schrader with daughter Marcy, Charlene Phlypo, Robin Young with son Jesse, John Wolverton, Liz Sweeney, Linz Sweeney, and Ron Pierson. There is an easy 1 1/2 mile trail between the two points, with a wildlife viewing blind along the way. The whole trip can easily be done in an afternoon with no shuttle required. - Steve

**July 13<sup>th</sup> Sheepshead:** Ron Pierson, Eric Hyndman, Kahlil Detrich, Ales' Horeni, Steve Schombel and Bret Doucett set out for MacDonald Peak after camping at the end of the road to the Ashley Lake trailhead. We got slowed by a maze of deadfall around the first knob, but continued up the trail to the west base of Sheepshead. Then Steve showed the traverse across the south face of Sheepshead. The group had to drop a lot to get around cliffs above Duncan Lake. In the upper basin Steve pointed out the way he climbed to West MacDonald, but it looked too steep, so the group continued to the saddle. Bret pointed out the glacier route he did many years ago when he first got involved with the club. This was also steep, and it was getting too late to get back before dark, so the group opted to do the easier east ridge of Sheepshead. We really enjoyed the view of the highest part of the Missions and the Swan Range to the east from the top of this 9417' peak. We returned the same way, and all got back with not much daylight left. But all returned safely, and enjoyed the long day in some really wild mountains. - Steve

**July 20<sup>th</sup> Grant to Rattlesnake Creeks:** Steve Schombel and Fred Schwanemann did a "point to point" hike: Ravine Road (Grant Creek) to Rattlesnake Trailhead. About half a mile up the Ravine Road trail, the old trail was covered with brush. New switchbacks had replaced it. The trail junction was about half a mile north of Curry Gulch. There were no signs of bear or cat on this early morning trek, but we did beat the heat. - Fred Schwanemann

**July 27<sup>th</sup> Grave Peak:** One can't visit this peak in the Selway Bitterroot Wilderness and not wonder about its history of the Indian Issac supposedly buried there. Where? The top is huge talus. For this trip everything went as planned. David Kahl and Julie Warner camped at the Kooskooskia Meadows trail head. John Wolverton and a new friend, Nate, came in about 11 PM. We were on the trail by 7:30. The trail started out first on an old road, then a nice trail that goes up the ridge between Cedar and Swamp Creeks. Then drops down to Swamp Lake and on the other side states up to Friday Pass. We knew from a trip done last year that the trail to Grave Peak goes through a notch below Friday Pass, but once again we missed the trail turn off and found ourselves at Friday Pass. We just crossed over to the notch got on the peak trail and it goes fairly level to a second notch just below the peak. A nice switch back trail goes up the east flank of the peak and we summited by 11:30. It was windy so we only opened three of the four cupola windows and tried to pick out familiar landmarks as we ate lunch. On the way out we found that the side trail to the peak is somewhat obscured for the first 50 feet or so where it meets the main trail. It got hot as we were winding our way back, but no one minded, we couldn't have asked for a nicer day. - Julie

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND LIABILITY WAIVER

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

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

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

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

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

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

I have read this release and indemnity agreement and have fully informed myself of its contents before I have signed it. When I join or renew my membership I also sign on to this agreement.

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian if Participant is Under 18 Years of Age \_\_\_\_\_

I, (print name) \_\_\_\_\_ hereby state that I wish to participate in courses and/or activities offered by The Rocky Mountaineers, a non-profit organization. I recognize any outdoors activity may involve certain dangers, including but not limited to the hazards of traveling in mountainous terrain, accidents or illness in remote places, forces of nature, and the actions of participants and other persons. I further understand and agree that without some program providing protection of its assets and its leaders, the Rocky Mountaineers would not be able to offer its courses and activities. In consideration of and as part payment for the right to participate in the activities offered by The Rocky Mountaineers, I agree to RELEASE, HOLD HARMLESS, AND INDEMNIFY The Rocky Mountaineers and its members from any and all liability, claims and causes of action arising out of or in any way connected with my participation, or the participation of any minor that I am signing on behalf of, in any activities offered by The Rocky Mountaineers. I personally assume all risks in connection with these activities. If I am signing on behalf of a minor, I further agree to RELEASE, HOLD HARMLESS, AND INDEMNIFY The Rocky Mountaineers and its members from any liability, claims and cause of action, which the minor may have arising from the minor's participation in activities. The terms of this agreement shall serve as a release and indemnity agreement for my heirs, personal representative, and for all members of my family, including any minors. (Parents or Legal Guardians must sign for all persons under eighteen (18) years of age).

**August 3<sup>rd</sup> Morrell Falls:** The prediction was for rain, but we never got any despite a mostly cloudy and cool day. The four kids on this Kids Trip were Jesse Young (13), Michael Bowles (10), Mollie Newton (11) and Gharrett Warner (8). Adults accompanying them were Robin Young, Cathy Burleson, Cathy Umphery, David Kahl and Julie Warner. The two mile hike to the falls went easily. Gharrett busied himself catching frogs (but no snakes that he promised us he'd catch). Robin, David, Jesse, Michael and Mollie climbed to the top of waterfall and reported more waterfalls beyond. On departure we bushwacked down the creek to the lake and explored some more, the kids encountering a baby killdeer. It was a great afternoon full of everything (water, rocks, wildlife) that a kids trip should be. On the trip to Seeley Lake we saw a herd of big horn sheep trying to cross Highway 200 not far out of Bonner. - Julie

**August 10<sup>th</sup> Graves Peak:** Lois Crepeau, Zona, and Karen Aplan from Wednesday Outdoor Women (WOW) joined wife Cathy Goss and myself in Superior for a one hour drive above the smoke near Hoodoo Pass on the border with Idaho. We leisurely hiked the State Line trail generally in a northwesterly direction near treeline, but with partial views along the way. Our hazy views improved with increasingly steady winds, at the expense of firefighting efforts elsewhere. We lunched above St. Joe Lake, with 4 well defined 7,000' peaks crowning the headwaters of the

St. Joe River. With our renewed energy, we scrambled off trail through fairly open terrain to a short knife edge which led to the actual summit. As weather was optimal, we spent over an hour trying to identify 1/2 dozen new fires, along with peaks that could be seen in all directions. We exited in the opposite direction of our climb, completing a small loop when we met up with our trail. Lois and Zona maintained an aggressive pace as we completed the ups and downs of 2 minor ridges before reaching our cars. It is the leader's opinion that the brisk pace was kept for the sole purpose of a well deserved beer before the WOW crew headed back to Missoula. - Jim

**August 24<sup>th</sup> State Line loop hike:** Karen, Fred, Eileen and I drove up Dry Creek road number 342 out of Superior to just before you get to Fourth of July Gulch. This is an unmarked trailhead which starts (or ends in our case) on an old road on the left. There are surveyor markers and piles of brush so you can't miss it. It's actually between Ann Arbor Gulch and Fourth of July Gulch on road 342. Left my rig there and drove Fred's rig on up the Dry Creek road to the trailhead for Torino Peak. On trail by 10:30 with lunch over looking Cliff and Diamond Lake. What a beautiful area. Headed south on the state line trail for Heart Lake trail number 151. Some of these trails that intersect state line are not marked. When you approach  
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## Upcoming Trips

**Note:** The following are fire and weather dependent. Be sure to call the leader, because there is often an alternative destination if the first choice isn't possible.

**September 14<sup>th</sup> Fuse Lake:** This is a short hike suitable for all ages. The lake sits in a pretty basin about two miles from the Skalkaho Pass road and has 700-800' elevation gain. There is a neat waterfall along the road with rocks to climb on. Call Julie Warner at 543-6508 if you're interested in a pretty fall day with other youngsters along.

**September 21<sup>st</sup> McCormick, Blackrock and Josephine Peaks:** These three summits are close together on the Reservation Divide above the 9-Mile Valley. A logging road climbs to within about 2 miles and 1250' to McCormick, with a good trail to the top. Then it is about a mile and a half with a 250' drop and 400' up to Blackrock, the highest at 7628'. This is off trail with easy talus and alpine timber. Then back over McCormick and the trail to Josephine, about 3 miles with a 500' dip in the saddle. Last, down about 2 miles and 1500' to a second trailhead. Where else can you reach 3 summits on a moderate day? Call Steve Schombel at 721-4686 to participate.

**September 27 or 28<sup>th</sup> Cabin Work Day:** A lot has been written about the cabin in past years, so most of you know the routine. Basically, the club has had a cabin for most of its history. The permit for the present cabin says it should be used only in the winter, and must be open to all. Traditionally a work party goes up every fall to cut a supply of firewood and to clean up, caulk and maintain the cabin. The day we go up this year will depend on the day we can get a chain saw. If there are still fire restrictions we'll wait until October. Call Julie Warner at 543-6508 or Steve Schombel at 721-4686 to help.

**October 3 -5<sup>th</sup> Siyeh Bend to Many Glacier:** We are hoping for a splendid fall weekend like last year. Friday afternoon will be the day to drive up and leave cars at Many Glacier. Saturday we will do this mostly downhill 10 mile hike over Piegan Pass. Sunday there will be time to enjoy more of Glacier's fall scenery, and to get home at a reasonable hour. Unfortunately, our cars are full, so others will have to have their own transportation and sleeping arrangements. Call Steve Schombel at 721-4686 or Fred Schwanemann at 542-7372 if interested.



**Rocky Mountaineers  
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