

September 2006

Monthly Newsletter of the Rocky Mountaineers

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MOUNTAIN EAR

The Rocky Mountaineers is a non-profit club organized to promote all types of recreational use of mountainous areas.

President's Message

Monthly Meeting: Wed, Sept. 13, 7:00 PM at Pipestone Mountaineering
129 West Front Street, Missoula, MT

Four-score and six years ago, the By-Laws of The Rocky Mountaineers were approved. Thirty-one members paid their dues, \$5 for singles, \$8 for couples, to become the charter members. Today, thanks to the majority of members choosing the electronic newsletter option for a \$10 family membership, we have been able to keep our costs very low. We do still have to print and mail some newsletters, pay for our Post Office box, website fees, and Forest Service Special Use Permit for our cabin. Eight dollars in 1960 is worth \$52.73 in 2006 dollars, so you could consider our membership dues a very good deal.

As with most organizations, we are only as good as the participants. You are welcome as a beginning hiker or experienced mountaineer. Our outings range from kid's trips to big mountain adventures, museum visits to almost-extreme skiing. Bring your enthusiasm and use the Club as a platform for whatever kind of outdoor adventure you like.

What you did on your summer vacation.

Monthly meetings are held at Pipestone Mountaineering from September through May, on the second Wednesday of the month, at 7:00 PM. There is a business meeting from 6:15-7:00 PM, also at Pipestone, for those who want to get more involved.

September is the month for Club members to bring photos from their summer adventures. We will have a slide projector and laptop/digital projector for your images. Please contact me if you have any questions about the technical details, or need to turn your prints into digital images. This will be an informal meeting, so feel free to bring snacks and beverages. Beer is almost always appropriate and appreciated.

At the other montly meetings we have a variety of interesting presentations. These have ranged from hard core climbing in the Himalayas and Andes, to eco-bike touring in the Wyoming gas fields, to extreme caving in Montana. We are always looking for willing presenters, so this could be your chance to practice for one of those reality talent shows on TV. It's almost always worthwhile. ~Steve Niday

In memoriam

Our Secretary, Frank Kleschen, passed away August 12, 2006. Frank first appeared in the newsletter as Secretary in the August 2005 issue. He was an enthusiastic member of the Rocky Mountaineers and great friend. We will miss him.

TRIP REPORTS

August 5-6, Parke Peak (9038')-Glacier National Park- Ron Pierson and I canoed up Kintla Lake for about 3 miles to a small stream. From there, it is about 3000' of bushwacking through a burned out forest to a small unimpressive lake on the west side of the peak. From the lake, the terrain is easy until the upper 400', and then it gets kind of hard (hard 4th class). I think we got off-route. The views of Kinnerly and Kintla were impressive. The climb was not. The bushwacking was a bore, not even bad enough to be memorable. (The Ahi tuna dinner and beer at Polebridge after the climb - now *that* was memorable.) The first entry in the register was by Bill Blunk and Ralph Thornton, on August 5, 1984. They comment, "No records in previous Register Jar, No lid." For some reason, they climbed it again on August 2, 1991. There are not many entries in this register.

Just a reminder, it is an offense in GNP to sleep in your vehicle at a trailhead. Be nice when the park ranger opens your door and maybe you can avoid posting a bond. Or even better, remember to turn off your headlights and keep your heads down, then maybe he won't open the door. ~Steve Niday

August 13, Gray Wolf Peak (9001')- Paolo and I met Guy Bateman at Twin Lakes and drove up to the trailhead. We parked at 4540' and hiked the steep trail to Upper Riddell Lake, eating huckleberries along the way. From the lake, we headed east over the prominent 7540' saddle, down to Scenic Lakes. Guy headed back at this point and Paolo and I continued up onto the southeasterly ridge of Gray Wolf. There is a difficult short pitch coming out of the first major notch east of the summit. We found no easy way around it, but didn't explore the north side of the ridge, which could have a better way. We went up a bit south of the crest and came back a different way, farther south of the crest. The return trip included a nasty little awkward ledge with lots of space below. A 30m rope and a couple slings would be welcome for this one pitch. The trailhead is at 5236878.7 M N 279905.2 M E Z12 NAD83. The round trip distance is 9 miles. ~Steve Niday

AUGUST 18-20: GLACIER CLASSIC

Glacier National Park- Two Medicine Area

August 19- Rising Wolf Mountain & Flinsch Peak

Steve Niday and Forest Dean left camp (5160') at 6:30 am and headed west along the north shore of Two Medicine Lake. Jim Goss thought he would join us for an early morning stroll and tagged along until we went off trail at about 1.6 miles. Here we ascended up a dry creek bed for several hundred feet. This drainage is about half way down the lake. We kept ascending alternating between the creek bed and the grass covered slopes to its east. The grade continued to steepen and after a couple thousand vertical feet we were primarily on class 3 rock- the standard crumbly, loose Glacier stuff. We sort of picked a route up toward the ridgeline- angling toward the northwest as we climbed. Topped out on the ridge just to the west of the east summit of Rising Wolf. From there it was about a 1500 meter ridge walk with some more class 3 scrambling mixed in near the summit. We attained the summit of Rising Wolf (9513') at about 10:15 am then headed west, descending to the ridge to Flinsch Peak. Rising Wolf to Flinsch Peak is about 2.5 miles. The entire walk from Rising Wolf to Flinsch provides some outstanding views of much of the south side of the park and is a fairly easy off trail hike. The climb up Flinsch is a fairly easy scramble up surprisingly solid talus slopes and small rocky benches. Near the top we picked our way up a couple of several short class 3 sections and attained the summit (9225') at about noon. Here we enjoyed lunch as we met up with Tom Hanou. Tom had left camp just shortly after us and hiked the trail to Dawson Pass, then ascended Flinsch Peak from there. He had arrived about an hour before us and watched us traverse the ridge from Rising Wolf to Flinsch. Tom said he had seen a large moose on the way up as well as some Bighorns and Mountain Goats. After taking in the outstanding views while eating lunch we descended back down to Dawson Pass. Here we met Pat Caffrey and his son as they were heading up to Flinsch. Pat pawned some 12 ounces off on us- didn't think he needed to carry all six to the summit. They were spending the night at No Name Lake after taking a boat across the lake that morning. From Dawson Pass, Tom and Steve decided to head back down the trail on the seven mile return journey to camp. Forest decided to seek a bit more adventure and hiked south from the pass climbing about 1000' to the summit of Mt. Helen (8538'). This is an easy but worthy summit for the splendid views looking directly down at Upper Two Medicine Lake, and across it to Mt. Rockwell. Leaving here just after 2:00pm, Forest hiked down to Dawson Pass and then east on the trail back to the campground arriving back at 4:30pm- about 45 minutes after Steve and Tom. This is a big round trip with nearly 7000' of elevation gain (and loss, of course) and 15 miles of travel (17 for Mt. Helen). However, the climbing doesn't get any worse than class 3 and the views are spectacular! Additionally, I wouldn't recommend descending Rising Wolf the way we went up- it is doable, but wouldn't be much fun. Also, bring along a guy like Tom Hanou, who makes awesome burritos for everyone when you get back to camp! *Forest Dean*



Steve and Forest from the summit looking at Rising Wolf Mountain.



Scenic Point Hikers: Doug Kitchen, Michael Schombel, Jim Goss, Lorraine Riedl, Bret Doucett, Kathy Schombel, Steve Schombel.

This hike started at a comfortable 10:00 am. We had a calm encounter with a mama bear and cubs less than a mile up the trail. The views from the top were spectacular!

August 20 Sinopah Mountain Originally scheduled to be an ascent of Mt. Rockwell, the trip was changed to accommodate the interests of others who wanted a climb limited to Class III obstacles. The change had nothing to do with the fact that Forest climbed three peaks the day before, totaling 8,000' vertical.

Forest Dean, Steve Niday, Bret Doucett, Doug Kitchen, & Jim Goss started on the trail at 7:00 AM. The wide trail skirts to the south of Sinopah with the real climbing beginning just before Rockwell Falls. The faint trail brought us above treeline in short order, with relatively good footing on crumbly ground. It is not until we were right below Sinopah's maw that we could discern that the wide couloir above us was anything but a technical climb.

Approximately 1,000' of vertical through many rock bands required only minimal care in selecting an optimal route, as we picked our way to the top. We enjoyed an early lunch on the 8,271 foot summit at 10:30, with excellent views all around, including yesterday's Rising Wolf climb to the north and Scenic Point hike to the east. We were back to our cars by 2:30 and reluctantly departed by 3:00. ~ Jim Goss

August 26, Going-to-the-Sun/Matahpi Peaks- I had two partners lined up until Friday afternoon, both cancelled. After way too much coffee, I left Missoula at 6:00 AM Saturday with my wife Patti. It was a foggy drive to Lake Inez, where I dropped her off. The echo in the car, "SLOW DOWN", lasted until around Swan Lake. It seems there are millions of deer just waiting to jump in front of you when it's foggy and you have consumed more than the usual amount of caffeine. I

climbed the diagonal chute route, which is well described in Gordon Edward's book and by Forest Dean in the September, 2005, Rocky Mountain Ear. Exiting the chute can be done a few yards down from the top of it, or several other places along the way. Re-entry seems easier a few hundred feet below the top of the chute. I went back to the saddle between the two mountains and then up the very easy (class 2) south ridge of Matahpi. The views from Matahpi are superb, and this would make a nice easy day trip for someone looking for great views and easy terrain. The round trip distance to Matahpi would be 5.4 miles, with a one-way vertical of 2500 feet. I made it back to Lake Inez for dinner at 6:30 PM... love those 10 mile-per-hour tourists on Going-to-the-Sun Highway. *Steve Niday*

UPCOMING TRIPS

September 8-10, Fri-Sun: Rainbow Peak/Mount Carter- Glacier Park- We will drive to the campground at the foot of Bowman Lake and camp there Friday night. Very early Saturday morning we'll get in a boat and motor or row up the lake about 5 miles. From there, we will climb Rainbow Peak and traverse to Mount Carter, then descend to the Lake and make our way back to the boat late Saturday. The drive back will probably be on Sunday. This will be a physically demanding trip with some difficult terrain. *Steve Niday, 721-3790.*

September 16th and 17th, Unnamed Point 6933' in the West Cabinets (Scotchman Peaks). We will backpack up to Little Spar Lake on Saturday, about 4 1/2 miles with 1700' elevation gain on a good maintained trail. Then on Sunday we will bushwhack to a saddle SW of the lake and follow a ridge around to the peak. This appears to be about 3 miles with another 1700' gain. There are some cliffs at the base of the east ridge, so if this direct approach goes, I hope to have time to detour around to the west ridge. Last year I found a way around the worst of the brush. The mountains in this part of the state are not high, but they are rugged and appear to be little visited. Call Steve Schombel at 721-4686 for information.

September 23 St. Mary Peak-Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness- or Mountain Biking in the Rattlesnake, whichever generates the most interest.

Leader: Lorraine Riedl Category: Hike or Bike. Hike would be up the standard trail route to the summit (9351'), about 3.25 miles. Elevation gain is 2500 feet. Plan to begin hike about 10:00 AM (takes about 1 1/2 hours to get to trailhead from Missoula). Anyone in reasonably good hiking shape should be able to make the summit. There is likely to be some snow near the top. Bring appropriate footwear and adequate clothing for windy cool weather. Call Lorraine 327-0566 or lorrainieriedl@aol.com for more information.

Sept. 30 Swan Peak in the Swan Range, be prepared for a long day, call for details, *Steve Niday, 721-3790.*

OTHER INTERESTS

Basic Map & Compass Skills course is being offered by Missoula Parks & Rec. Dates/Times: Friday September 8, 6:00 – 8:30 pm, then continued Saturday September 9, 9:00 – 4:00 pm. Ages 16 and up. Cost for course \$54. Call 721-PARK for more info.

LOOKING AHEAD...

Upcoming Programs

You read about it in the *Missoulian*. On Wednesday, October 11th at 7 PM the Rocky Mountaineers will host a show by Michael Moore and John Smiley about their climb of Mount Rainier by the Kautz Glacier Route. For more details you can find the article entitled "Mount Humble" in the *Missoulian* archives. It was in the Outdoors Section on 7/20/06.

**All members and non-members are welcome
at our monthly meetings as well as on all trips.**

**ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND LIABILITY
WAIVER**

Family Yearly Membership: _____ \$20.00 for paper newsletter
_____ \$10.00 for electronic newsletter

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

The Rocky Mountaineers, PO Box 4262, Missoula, MT 59806

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: -

I have read this release and indemnity agreement and have fully informed myself of its contents before I have signed it.

PRINT NAME: _____

Signature/Date: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian if Under 18:

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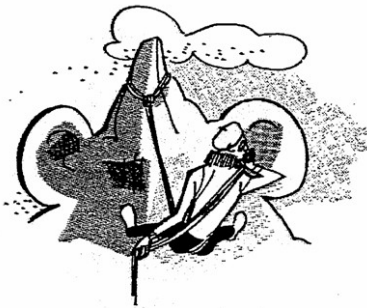
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