

OCTOBER 2008

THE MOUNTAIN EAR

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The Monthly Newsletter of The Rocky Mountaineers



Climb. Hike. Ski. Bike. Paddle.
Dedicated to the Enjoyment and Promotion of
Responsible Outdoor Adventure.

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The Mountain Ear is the club newsletter of The Rocky Mountaineers and is published near the beginning of every month. Anyone wishing to contribute articles of interest are welcomed and encouraged to do so- contact the editor.

Membership application can be found at the end of the newsletter.

ABOUT THE CLUB:

Mission Statement:

The Rocky Mountaineers is a non-profit club dedicated to the enjoyment and promotion of responsible outdoor adventures.

Meetings and Presentations:

Meetings are held the second Wednesday, September through May, at 6:00 PM at Pipestone Mountaineering. Each meeting is followed by a featured presentation or speaker at 7:00 PM.

Activities:

- ☐ Hiking
- ☐ Backpacking
- ☐ Alpine Climbing & Scrambling
- ☐ Peak Bagging
- ☐ Backcountry Skiing
- ☐ Winter Mountaineering
- ☐ Track Skiing
- ☐ Snowshoeing
- ☐ Snowboarding
- ☐ Mountain Biking
- ☐ Rock Climbing
- ☐ Canoeing & Kayaking
- ☐ Rafting
- ☐ Kids Trips
- ☐ Terracaching/Geocaching

Monthly Meetings and Presentations

The Bitterroot Peaks and SummitPost.org

Wednesday, October 8th

Michael Hoyt will do a slide show focusing on Bitterroot peaks, including some summits which are seldom visited. He will also talk a little about SummitPost and try to explain its use as an excellent information source. How long he talks will depend on how interested the audience is and how many questions there are. Come out and see why he goes by the moniker *thephotohiker*.

This and all monthly meetings are held at **Pipestone Mountaineering**. The business portion of the meeting starts downstairs at 6:00 PM, and all interested are encouraged to attend. At 7:00 PM we move upstairs for the Feature Presentation. Hope to see you there!

Future Presentations:

November 12th – **Steve Lamar** will talk about Swan Valley place names. Steve has written his first book, *Swan Valley Place Names, a Mosaic of History, Stories and Local Lore*. For our meeting he will focus on the origins of names of mountains and other wild features like “The Angel’s Bathing Pool”. He will also show how he used our archives and archives of an older group called “The Montana Mountaineers” for background material.

December 10th - *Dudley Improta or Steve Karkanen*. Dedicated to Avalanche Safety and Awareness, and hopefully will coincide with an Avalanche Training clinic.

January 14th – **Nancy Shrader** will show slides of her recent trip to Madagascar. She spent a little time in a rainforest but spent most of it doing three hikes in Parks in the rugged, rocky interior.

February 11th - *Stephen Porcella* will talk about his new, updated guide book to the California 14’ners, with new routes and photos. He will also have shots of climbs in Lost Horse Canyon, and will talk about the sad fact that they are quarrying rock in what should be a prime recreation area.

President’s Message

Well folks, the fall colors are coming out and there’s a cool, dry, crispness in the air. For many of us this is as good as it gets in Montana. I hope everyone takes time to get out and enjoy it while it lasts! I will be spending my fall weekends in a Wilderness First Responder course offered through Aerie. The course involves 72 hours of class: 5pm to 9pm on Tuesday and Wednesday and three weekends (both Sat. and Sun. 8am – 5pm) with the last weekend spent up at Lubrecht Experimental Forest doing field rehearsals. I’m looking forward to the intensity of the course, but am sad to miss out on all the club activities in October. I won’t even get to make Mike Hoyt’s presentation on the 8th. It should be great!

If you haven’t led a trip and you’ve been thinking about it, October is a great month to do it. Whether it’s a hike up Stewart Peak to possibly hear an elk bugle, a short hike up Mount Sentinel to take in the fall colors from high above Missoula, a bike ride up the Rattlesnake just to get the heart thumping, or an afternoon climbing the last bit of warm rock before the snow flies, there’s no outing too great or too small for you to offer it up to the rest of the club. Anyone can put together an outing. Just email Forest or I and we’ll send out an APB!

Joshua Phillips

UPCOMING TRIPS AND ADVENTURES

Trip Notes:

Please contact the trip leader for more information regarding any listed trips.

Mileage listed is round trip mileage. Elevation listed is gain only. For information on Class Rating see below:

Class Rating System

CLASS 1 – HIKING Mostly on trails, but may also include some easy cross country travel.

CLASS 2 – EASY SCRAMBLING Rugged off trail hiking, no hands required.

CLASS 3 – SCRAMBLING Use of hand to ascend some sections of rock. Little to no exposure; a fall would not likely cause serious injury.

CLASS 4 – CLIMBING Easy climbing, great exposure; a fall would quite possibly cause serious injury. Use of a rope and protection at times possible.

CLASS 5 – TECHNICAL CLIMBING Use of rope, protection and belay are a must.

CLASS 6 – AID CLIMBING Use of equipment to support your weight as you climb.

Sunday, October 5 – LOLO PEAK (Bitterroots) *CLASSIC SERIES TRIP*

Rating: Class 2-3; *Distance:* 13 miles; *Elevation:* 4300'

Description: This trip will be up the standard route from Mormon Peak Road. My mother (a botanist) tells me that there is a unique sub-species of Larch found almost exclusively on Carlton Ridge, which turn a little earlier than other Larch trees. If we are lucky, these may be in full autumn show for the hike! The trail switchbacks up the side of Carlton Ridge before dropping slightly to Carlton Lake and then ascending Lolo Peak.

Leader: Lewis Kogan – 529-6943 or lewis.kogan@gmail.com

Sunday, October 5 – LEWIS AND CLARK PASS AREA

Rating: Class 1; *Distance:* 12 miles; *Elevation:* 2500'

Description: I am planning on a trip up to Lewis and Clark Pass, 20 miles east of Lincoln. This is a time where the annual, hawk, eagle and falcon migration is in full flight, coming along the Rocky Mountain Front, this time of the year, heading south. From the pass we will be going north along the Continental Divide Trail and do a loop trip back to the trailhead. Route is by trail all the way, 12 miles total with about 2,500' elevation gain. I have been on this trail a couple of times at this time of year and have seen 60-70 birds each time, many that are below you, rising up on the thermals on their journey southward. Bring binocs. This is a dog friendly hike. We will be getting an early start, I live outside Florence, call if you need a ride from there, although I can't take many in my Civic. In Missoula, we will be meeting at the K-Mart parking lot at 8:00AM and will be leaving shortly thereafter.

Leader: Tom Hanou - 360-3564

Sunday, October 12 – PETTY MOUNTAIN (Bitterroots)

Rating: Class 2; *Distance:* 10 miles; *Elevation:* 4000'

Description: At 7270', Petty Mountain is one of the prominent points on Missoula's skyline to the west. This time I would like to try a route I have never done; hike up from lower Petty Creek. There is a little over 4000' elevation gain in 5 miles on this route, but there is a trail all the way. There should be some nice fall colors out this time of year.

Leader: Steve Schombel at 721-4686 or stephenschombel@yahoo.com

Sunday, November 2 – MITTEN MOUNTAIN

Rating: Class 1-2; *Distance:* 8 miles; *Elevation:* 2000'

Description: This is the nearby mountain we put on the list of Missoula Horizon Peaks instead of Dean Stone, which is posted. The hike will be along a closed road from the Patty Canyon Ski Area parking lot for the first part, and then we'll follow the ridge top for the last couple of miles over two smaller summits. The distance is about 4 miles one way, with 2000' of elevation gain, (perhaps a little more with the ups and downs). I've done this route before, the terrain is really gentle, there is no bad brush, and, even if there is some snow it should be about a half day outing. It will still be hunting season, but I don't mind hiking on days other than opening day. Wear some orange and stay with the group.

Leader: Steve Schombel - 721-4686.

Rocky Mountaineers Merchandise - For Sale!!

Short Sleeve T-Shirt	\$13.00 (\$17 non-members)
Long Sleeve T-Shirt	\$17.00 (\$22 non-members)
Caps	\$18.00 (\$23 non-members)
Fleece Beanie's	\$16.00 (\$20 non-members)
Stickers	\$ 1.50

Shirts and hats are available in various sizes and/or colors. For more information, or to place your order email: seniday@yahoo.com or call Steve at 721-3790. Additionally, all of the above will be available at the Club meetings as well as the racks at Pipestone Mountaineering

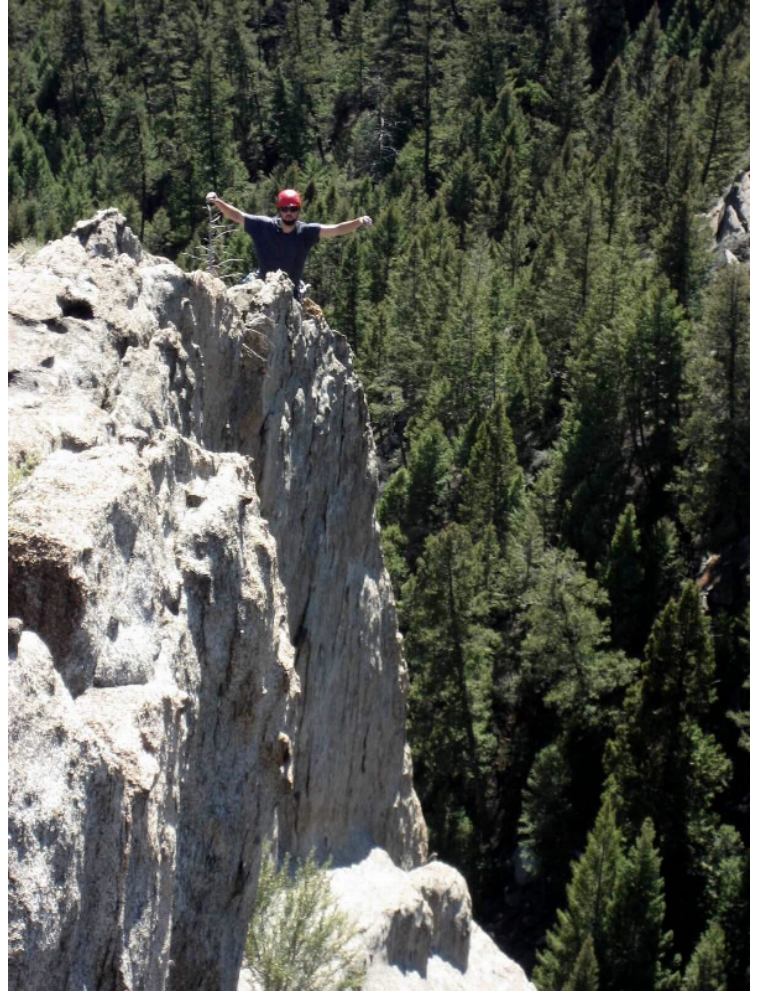
Editor's Note: In the Glacier Classic Trip Report in last month's issue, Alden Wright and Steve Schombel were credited with purchasing firewood for our campfire on Saturday night. Steve would like to vehemently refute this claim. He is not such a good guy after all. Rather it was JIM GOSS who ponied up sufficient funds with Alden. So, thanks Jim!

Cover Photo: Fall color in the upper portion of the Camas Cirque, Bitterroots. Photo by Mike Hoyt. Please come and see more of Mike's wonderful images at this month's meeting, or check out the 1400+ photos he has posted on Summitpost.org: http://www.summitpost.org/image_list/27417/thephotohiker.html

TRIP REPORTS

September 14 - Homestake Pass Rock Climbing

Eric Larson (new to Missoula) and I teamed up for this outing to Homestake Pass. The forecast showed even better weather for Sunday, so we pushed the trip back one day to take full advantage. After driving out to the pass and parking well off the interstate, we hiked down to the base of the Dragon's Back. Eric, eager to lead more trad climbs, scoped out the first pitch of Proboscis (5.8+). Liking the looks of it, he ended up leading the first two pitches with confidence. I led the last pitch and we walked to the top in perfect weather. As we prepared to rappel we noticed a very large group of climbers making their way up to the base of The Ramp (5.5). Eric and I eyed Owl Dihedral (5.8) for a bit, but were discouraged by the many weeds and grasses growing out of the crack. It looked like a bit of gardening might be required. So, we headed down and around the base of Proboscis to do Heinous Anus Cookies (5.9), a beautiful, steep, right leaning splitter crack. Although very short (only 40 feet) the crack is physical and offers perfect hand jams. I loved it, just my style of climbing. Eric's comment was that it was an exercise in pain toleration. After that we headed back to Missoula, talking more about the upcoming backcountry ski season than climbing. Thanks for joining me Eric. Now, let's start praying for snow! *Joshua Phillips*



Eric Larson atop the Dragon's Back. Photo by JP.

September 20 – GrizzlyMan Adventure Course Development

I thought I'd be going by myself until my phone rang at 7am the day of the outing. It was Alden, gung ho to head up to Lubrecht with me! Knowing we could cover more ground on our mountain bikes, we loaded them up and headed out of town (after stopping at City Brew to pick up some coffee). On our way up the Blackfoot, Alden shared with me his experience racing in the 50 mile course of the *Butte 100* mountain bike race a month prior. Continually blown away by Alden's ability, I inquired about what other activities he has pursued. He told me his active lifestyle started with running, inspired and motivated by the writings of Dr. Kenneth Cooper (the guy who coined the term *Aerobics* in 1968!). He then moved toward sports that involved less impact such as cross country ski racing and mountain biking. Sorry, Alden. I just can't help myself from bragging about you. You are truly inspiring to us.

Alden and I rode about 24 miles and scoped out what looks to be a challenging and beautiful course. We stopped along the way to pick mushrooms and take pictures. After about 8 hours, we made it back to the car. I can't tell you where we went, but I can tell you that we came away even more motivated than we were before to put on a great race! *Joshua Phillips*

September 27 – Little St. Joe Cabin Work Day and Party

There was a great turn out for the workday. Some met at Kmart and some at the trailhead. We packed the tools and other equipment up to the cabin and began work. Greg and Erin brought Erin's mule to help in packing the 60 lb bags of concrete up! What a luxury! Thanks Erin! Ken began felling snags and others of us limbed the snags and split wood. It was nice to have so many axes and split mauls. Steve Niday and David Kahl worked on engineering new supports for the cabin. Trevor went and got water and Cody diligently stacked wood under the cabin. Everyone had something to do and the work went by quickly. As the evening began to cool, a few members departed early. By 3:30, we had packed things up and were headed down the trail. Many thanks are deserved to those that participated: Patrick, Paul, David, Julie, Steve N., Steve S., David, Greg, Erin, Tom, Lewis, Trevor, Ken and Cody. Back at the trailhead, we were joined by Ken and his two boys, Andrea and Noël. We stood around the campfire eating burgers, brats, and other delights. Just before dark, after most folks had gone home, Trevor came running out of the woods and informed us that there was a forest fire about 100 yards up hill from the trailhead! Those of us remaining grabbed what tools we could find and ran up into the woods to see what we could do. The fire was not large (about 25 feet wide) but had obviously been burning for a few days! Noël called it in, but apparently the Forest Service was already aware and had decided to let it burn. We worked on it for a while and got it put out...for now. Steve Niday used the fire extinguisher out of his vehicle as well as his Nalgene bottle. Others of us used our feet to stamp it out. Unfortunately we only had one shovel and one axe. Someone recommended pouring the remaining beer on the fire but that idea was quickly overruled. After about an hour we felt we'd done our best. We said our goodbyes and drove home smelling like we'd rolled in our campfire. Thanks everyone for your hard work! Now, pray for rain...I mean snow! *Joshua Phillips*



Thanks to this hard working crew our cabin is once again winter ready. Photo by JP

September 28- Swan Peak (CLASSIC SERIES)

Chris Dunn, Jared Trilling, Katy Ellison, Brett Svetlik, Chris Hayes, Amanda Uerlengs, Walker Kuhl, and myself (an assorted group of Rocky Mountaineers and Outdoors Club-ers) met at a 5:45am rendezvous at Eastgate, and still trying to stuff breakfast into our mouths in the pre-dawn hours, piled into two cars for the two-hour ride up the Swan Valley, past Condon to the Squeezer Creek 'trailhead'. We arrived at what I hoped was the correct locked gate just

before 8am, and started up what I hoped was the right logging road, following a route map provided by Steve Niday. My anxiety as to whether we were on-route eased somewhat after the road faded into a very nice trail which quickly led into a thick creek-bottom cedar and hemlock forest, with dark mossy boulders and autumn-yellow aspen groves. Our group was moving at a good clip up the trail, which was very well-maintained and pleasantly graded (kudos to whoever had been volunteering their time to keep the Squeezer Creek route open). The trail stayed in the creek bottom for most of four miles, with minimal elevation gain and easy creek crossings, and ample opportunity for



The upper lake- above Squeezer Creek

ogling up at the magnificent old larches, which had not yet begun to turn. There was a pleasant crispness and the smell of fall in the air... that decaying vegetation scent that always reminds me of the best early autumns.

The assorted participants were in good spirits, and kept up lively conversation between stops to adjust boot

laces and enjoy the scenery. At about four miles, the trail promptly charged uphill, wasting no time in gaining elevation. It was a much shorter climb than anticipated, however, and before we knew it, we were spilling over into the first lake basin and rewarded with a jaw-dropping view of the west face of Swan Peak towering 2500 feet over our heads, plastered with fresh snow and looking quite majestic and imposing. We stopped here to snack, and Katy and Amanda decided to remain at the lake to sunbathe and scan the cliffs for mountain goats, while the other six of us continued toward the peak. The upper lake proved to be much more scenic than the lower, and I vowed to come back sometime just to enjoy the



Jared, Walker and Brett on the ridge line below Swan Peak.

little campsite with a view across the glacial turquoise water to the dark cliffs plunging in at the far end, the snow blasted ridgeline to the south, or turning around, the sunny Swan Valley below and the Missions beyond. However, no time to stop here today, and we kept on plodding up to a small and scenic saddle before

scrambling through steep, loose rock to gain the NW ridge of the summit proper. We had to tread cautiously on this part, and fan out horizontally across the hillside, as we couldn't help sending bowling ball-sized rocks careening downward to explode in rock dust a few hundred feet below... a good reminder for us to keep a good eye on each other. We traversed across to a large, hidden cirque just north of the peak and still filled with snow from last winter, probably at least four feet deep, and more in places.

Looking up at the ridge to the summit, I wasn't too sure if we ought to proceed or call it off and ascend the smaller peak just north of Swan instead. The NW ridge had taken a good dumping of fresh snow in the last week, and what looked to have been a moderately challenging class 3 ledge scramble now appeared to be a very intriguing and somewhat intimidating mixture of tricky snow and rock. After a short discussion, we decided there was no harm in continuing upward so long as everyone felt comfortable, and we would re-evaluate at the crux if and when we came to it. We were able to negotiate around



Chris Hayes coming up the steep pitch below the summit.



Summit Photo after lunch. Van Peak in background

Lake and the Missions and ranges fading westward into the horizon, the very snow-covered tops of the Swan Range to the South, and us plopped down right in the middle of it, elated and very, very ready for lunch. The deep, solid snow made quick work of the way down, and the most difficult part of the decent came when trying to negotiate the bowling-alley of loose rock coming off the ridgeline just above the low saddle to the north. We

the snow for a while, and at the last few hundred feet, found we had to move into the steep gully just below the summit. However, the snow was just right for kicking steps, and it seemed to make this pitch even easier than it probably would have been on bare rock. Most of the party then chose to ascend easy class 4 rock out on the crest of the ridge to the false summit, while I chose to wallow up the crusty snow in the gully... probably more difficult, but more secure. A quick waltz across to the true summit, and we were treated to what I must say may be the most splendid view I've had from any peak, anywhere. Blue sky and wispy clouds trailed off over the Bob and the Sun River, the Great Bear, all of Glacier, the Whitefish Range and what I think was the southern end of the Cabinets, Swan

took it very slow here, one at a time and waiting until each person was safely clear of falling projectiles, and got to enjoy at least one dinner-table sized rock clear the loose rock out of our gully and vaporize itself with impressive force and noise, enough to provoke applause and whistling from the bystanders. We took a little extra time to enjoy the late-day sunshine on the headwall and upper lake, and sample the bumper-crop of Grouse Whartleberries, before charging down in pursuit of Katy and Amanda and the rapidly setting sun. Trotting out of the Cedar forest just at dusk, we found the rest of our party also recently arrived at the car after spending a very enjoyable day exploring the lakes, and we piled into the cars and dodged Bambi's back to the Hungry Bear Steakhouse, where it took all our self-control not to cannibalize the wait-staff as we waited ravenously for our food to arrive. Gorging ourselves with steaks and pizzas and massaging our sore knees, we all agreed: Swan Peak well deserved its status as a 'Classic.' *Text and Pictures by Lewis Kogan*

The Rocky Mountaineers – Meeting Minutes for: 10 Sept. 2008

1. Call To Order at 6:12 PM

2. Record Attendance

Josh Phillips, Alden Wright, Steve Niday, Forest Dean, Julie Kahl, Steve Schombel, Lewis Kogan, Tom Hanou, Katy Ellison, Jered Trilling, Chris Dunn, Greg Cohn, Randy Diday and a few others who chose to remain anonymous

3. Minutes from 14 May 2008 accepted without comment

4. Correspondence none

5. Treasurer's Report -Steve Niday had transferred funds from saving to checking to cover the last merchandise order. \$489.83 -checking, \$55.13 savings

6. Club Business

A. Old

- GMAR race planning status,

**date April 18th 2009

**sanctioned US Adventure Race event

Usual- 6 hr sprint race, for long course there will also be a short 2 hr course.

**GMAR used \$150.00 from The Rocky Mountaineers -for the posting of the website. To get service from Spectral Fusion would be \$35/hr for updates. More funds from TRM for website? Only if necessary. Joshua was recruiting a website task force.

**Have to recognize the UM Forestry Dept. as a sponsor, there will be no fee for use of Lubrect Forest area, but don't know about Lubrect building facilities yet.

**seeking sponsorship from Probar, 7 or 8 sponsors last year. Pipestone Mountaineering will provide space for clinics, and Search And Rescue will be on the site

**Need 4 port potties, Sweet Pea can provide for \$65.00 each.

- Fall cabin maintenance trip/ club party

**At trailhead after cabin work party.

** Cut fire wood, clean stove pipe, Alden Wright has a brush.

**Take up old newspapers to use for lighting fires, donation envelopes etc.

**Steve Niday has a chainsaw, take up stuff to enhance existing cabin supports, concrete, house jack etc. work on the supports if time allows.

- When to present our achievement awards

**Paper certificate now, something more substantial later

**Meetings in May, Sept & December suggested

**general consensus was for May, with a deadline of the previous March meeting for submissions

B. New

- Rocky Mountaineers Website redesign

- ** previously Alden Wright (webmaster) has focused on content not being fancy, other club sites more substantial, check them out and give Alden feedback
- ** Having others do the design? May charge a coup of hundred dollars. Any new members who can do it? Maybe.
- ** Discussed Jumya format
- ** Set up trip blogs like we did for The Glacier Classic

-Marketing strategies

- ** Julie will add the web site to community calendar postings
- Merchandizing -2009 calendars -next time

-Future speakers

- **If anyone knows of anyone...
- ** Steve Karkanen (Avalanche presentation in Dec.) is out of town so no replay as of now -Steve Schombel

-Bitterroot Summit Registers- Next time

7. Adjourn Meeting 7:PM

THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Annual Membership Fee: \$10.00 for electronic newsletter

Note: Membership includes all members of a family or household.

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

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

Name: _____

Additional Family Members Names: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone (optional): _____

Email: _____

Additional Email (optional): _____

Joining or maintaining your Rocky Mountaineers membership has never been easier! PayPal is now available on the Rocky Mountaineers website. Click on the membership link on the main page.

THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

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