

JUNE 2009

THE MOUNTAIN EAR

A photograph of two mountaineers ascending a steep, snow-covered mountain slope. The climber in the foreground is wearing a blue jacket, tan pants, and a red helmet, using a black ice axe. The second climber is further up the slope, wearing a dark jacket and light-colored pants. The background shows dark, rocky mountain peaks under a clear blue sky.

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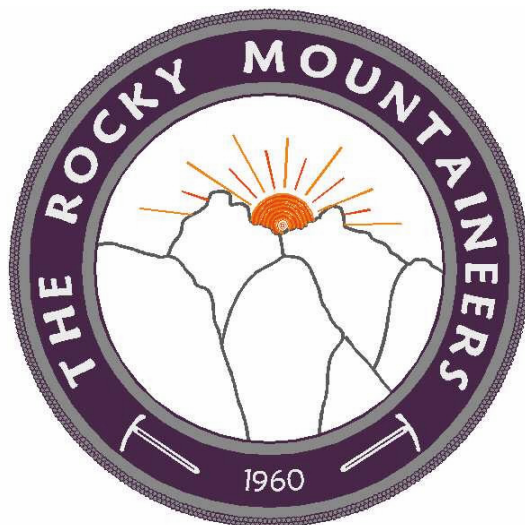
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The Monthly Newsletter of The Rocky Mountaineers



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

May Picnic and Awards



Steve Schombel receives the Missoula Area High Points award from VP David Wright.

In lieu of holding our usual monthly meeting at Pipestone Mountaineering in May, we instead opted to go outside and have a party! On Wednesday, May 10th we assembled at Bonner Park with food and drink. While this was primarily just a picnic, we did take care of a couple items of business. First, we presented our first ever Achievement Awards. A little over a year ago, we had developed some lists of peaks in various ranges and areas around western Montana. Any member achieving the completion of these lists will then be forever recognized by The Rocky Mountaineers as having done so. At this first awards ceremony we recognized two individuals who have completed two of the achievement lists. I am sure the media attention they are now receiving for their efforts is a bit overwhelming.

**Missoula Area High Points – Steve Schombel
Bitterroot Mountains- 8500' Summits - Steve Niday**

Interestingly enough, these two individuals are also our previous two Presidents. A big congratulations to both! See our website for the mountains that make up these two lists, as well as the several others we have developed.

Next, we also re-elected the current slate of officers to serve another one year term. Those names are:

**President- Joshua Phillips
Vice President- David Wright
Secretary- Julie Kahl
Treasurer- Steve Niday**

The remainder of the party was for eating and drinking. We will resume our monthly meetings on the second Wednesday in September. Be prepared to bring your pics from your trips this summer and over the past several months. We always use the first meeting of the fall as a "Picture Potpourri" for members to show off their trips.

President's Message

President's Message

I have been informed that I was voted to serve as The Rocky Mountaineers President for a second term. After missing the May meeting and the election due to a work conflict, I was almost certain that someone would campaign hard enough to sway the members and oust the incumbent. I guess I got lucky.

I have enjoyed serving as your President this year and am looking forward to the next year and what it may bring. Thank you for this opportunity. I hope to catch up with you all at the Glacier Classic!

Joshua Phillips

2009 – The Rocky Mountaineers – CLASSIC SERIES

<i>Date</i>	<i>Destination</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Leader(s)</i>
June 6	CANYON PEAK	Climb	Forest Dean
July 25	GREAT NORTHERN MTN	Scramble	Forest Dean
August 28-30	GLACIER CLASSIC (Rising Sun)	Various	Forest Dean/Steve Niday
September 19	HOLLAND PEAK	Scramble	Paul Jensen
October 3-4	MCDONALD PEAK	Scramble	Forest Dean
November	LOLO PEAK	Scramble/Snowshoe	
December	WARD MOUNTAIN	Ski/Snowshoe	Joshua Phillips

Cover Photo: Chris Dunn and Greg Cohn ascend the South Couloir on Gray Wolf Peak. F. Dean photo.

The Rocky Mountaineers **5th Annual** **GLACIER CLASSIC**

Friday, August 28 – Sunday, August 30
Rising Sun Campground,
Glacier National Park

Mark your calendars now for what promises to once again be a fun weekend of climbing, hiking, exploring and most of all, having a good old time with your fellow members and friends in our wonderful Glacier National Park. Each year this event has continued to grow in popularity and it is now likely out most attended single event. It is a great chance to explore this spectacular place with a bunch of like minded folks; it's a great chance to meet and make some new friends; it's a great chance to learn why a "Hanou Burrito" is heaven sent after a 12 hour climbing day!

Each year we have moved the "basecamp" from place to place to attempt to give attendees the chance to see different parts of the Park. Previously we have visited: Blankenship Bridge (outside of West Glacier), Two Medicine, Fish Creek Campground, and last year, Many Glacier. This year we have chosen Rising Sun Campground on the eastern side of the Park by St. Mary Lake. A plethora of great climbs and hikes exist within just a short drive from Rising Sun. We are still in the process of putting a final schedule together, but a few listings are below. As always, we would love to have some new trip leaders, so if something interests you, let us know! Even if you aren't comfortable leading the trip, throw it out there, and chances are someone will want to do it with you.

Although you will be free to arrive and depart anytime you chose, as well as take part in any activities (or none at all) that you are capable of, the following is the basic itinerary:

Friday, August 28 – Drive up to Glacier and Rising Sun Campground. Hopefully, we will have a couple of volunteers to arrive early and secure campsites. Cost and campsites can be shared by number of attendees. Also, we may have a couple of hikes or climbs listed for Friday afternoon for those who can get up there early. Friday evening, bring your own food and drink for dinner in the campground.

Saturday, August 29- Florence Falls- Hike- Leader: Julie Kahl

Little Chief Mountain- Scramble/Climb- Leader: Forest Dean

Goat Mountain/Siyeh Pass- Hike/Scramble- Leader: Tom Hanou

Saturday evening- return to camp...eat, drink and be merry!

Sunday, August 30 – Bearhat Mountain – Scramble- Leader: Jim Cossitt or Forest Dean

Divide Mtn or Red Eagle Mountain- Scramble- Leader: Dean Stensland

For more information, contact: Forest Dean – mtnear@gmail.com , C: 406-240-7612

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.

Saturday, June 6 – CANYON PEAK (Bitterroots) – *CLASSIC SERIES TRIP*

Rating: Class 4-5, *Distance:* 13 miles, *Elevation:* 4300'

Description: We will get an early start and hike the trail up to Canyon and Wyant Lakes. From there we will ascend to the saddle north of the peak before climbing the narrow North Ridge Route (class 4-5). I will bring a rope. The reviews are mixed on whether or not one is needed for the ascent, but I like to be prepared. And we will likely rappel on the descent. So, harnesses and helmets are required too.

Additionally, we may need snowshoes and/or crampons for the approach.

Leader: Forest Dean, 240-7612 or 721-6384, fdean@midlandimplement.com

Sunday, June 7 – CONTINENTAL DIVIDE TRAIL TO GREEN MOUNTAIN

Description: This trail starts at Rogers Pass and Green Mt. is the 1st high point north of the pass' summit mount. It is about 5 mi. one way. The trail climbs from the pass up to the ridge and at this time of year will go through several vegetation zones with earlier blooming flowers just starting above. Once on the summit ridge the walk is along the ridge to Green Mt. Those who just want to do the "wildflower walk" are welcome. It takes 2 hrs. to get to Rogers Pass east of Lincoln on Hwy. 200, there maybe snow on the ridge.

Leader: Julie Kahl - 543-6508

Sunday, June 21 – WARRIOR MOUNTAIN (Swan Range)

Note: Trip is co-listed with Glacier Mountaineering Society and thus uses their format below:

-For all mountaineers & HIKERS

Coordinator: Jim Cossitt (sign-up by email) Limit: 20 Rating: II(2)MS-I General area: Swan Range

What to expect: A summer solstice warm-up. Starting at 6,400 feet at Napa Point in the Goat Creek State Forest, hike the Alpine Trail to Inspiration Point and ascend Warrior. Snow travel is likely on this non-technical outing. EXPECT: 4,669 feet VERTICAL UP AND DOWN; 10 miles R/T distance; a full day at a moderate pace. NOTE: Ice axe required. Dogs are welcome.

Fri-Mon, July 3-6 – NORTH FORK OF THE BLACKFOOT (Bob Marshall Complex)

Rating: Class 1 (trails); *Distance:* 15+ miles; *Elevation:* 400+

Description: Camp at the trailhead Fri. the 3rd. Hike 4th and set up a camp. Checkout the area on the 5th, return the 6th. There is also the possibility of doing loop trails that cover more ground. The trail will be about 7 1/2 miles long but with an elevation gain of like 400 ft. A water fall on the North Fork of the Blackfoot River is near by, as is a ranger station, but we will camp a short ways away from both.

Appropriate grizzly bear precautions expected from participants.

Leader: Julie Kahl -543-6508 - jawkal@hotmail.com

TRIP FORUM

Hyalite Peak - Hyalite Peak, south of Bozeman would be a long day hike. This will tentatively be scheduled for the weekend of August 1st. Julie Kahl -543-6508 - jawkal@hotmail.com

Bob Marshall backpack: It would be fun to take a long backpack into the Bob. One destination would be the Flathead Alps, deep in the southern half. It looks to be about 18-20 miles from Benchmark to Camp Creek Pass. From there it would be a short scramble to Junction Mountain, highest in this small group at 8695'. Just east of the pass are the slightly higher Twin Peaks, but, are they part of the Flathead Alps? We could return on a loop trail down to the South Fork of the Sun River, and maybe even take a side trip to the Chinese Wall. I'm not sure how I'll allot my vacation time this summer, but if this interests anyone I could get more serious. Late July or early August would be suggested times. stephenschombel@yahoo.com.

Glacier Backpack: I have a campsite reserved at Lower Kintla Lake on August 22, then at Upper Kintla for the next three nights. I'm thinking of driving up Friday afternoon and paddling across the lower lake. There are many places to go from there. There is only room for, at most, three people beside myself, so call soon if you are definitely interested. Steve Schombel at 721-4686.

Bitterroot Grand Traverse (attempt #2): Last year three of us attempted this and got 3/5ths of it (check out the September 2008 edition for the Trip Report). Back for a second attempt! Targeted date is August 15th. The goal of the trip is to climb El Capitan, The Lonesome Bachelor, and the three Como Peaks (all 9000'+) in one day. Will likely camp at the trailhead and start moving about 3 am. If things go right, we should be done by 9-10 pm. A LONG, LONG day with a lot of ups, downs, scrambling, trail running, bushwacking, climbing....sound fun? Make sure you're in shape for it, then give me a call or email: Forest Dean – 240-7612, mtnear1@gmail.com

Great Northern Mountain: More details next month on this July Classic Series climb. The targeted date is July 25 or 26. Forest Dean- 240-7612, mtnear1@gmail.com

TRIP REPORTS

May 16 – Gray Wolf Peak (Mission Mountains)

This month's "Classic Series" trip was yet another TRM trip to attempt Gray Wolf Peak (9001'). Gray Wolf is one of those rare mountains in our area that just doesn't have an easy way up. Not only is the approach a strenuous one, but the actual climbing requires at least class 4 to achieve the summit. We started from the truck at 7:15 am with a beautiful morning. Greg Cohn, Ben Irej and Chris Dunn had all met me an hour



earlier at Muralt's. Amazingly I didn't get lost on the way to the trailhead this time around. So things were off to a good start. We hiked up the sometimes brutal trail to an elevation of about 5800' where we encountered consistent snow. Here Chris and I strapped on snowshoes, and Ben and Greg put on their skis. About 10 minutes later, Greg broke his binding. After a failed repair attempt, he started walking. The snow was pretty solid, so the postholing was minimal. Around 6300' we encountered some relatively recent wolf tracks. At about 7000' or so, we finally break out of the huff puff up the ridge and forest and into the open and our first view of the south couloir

Ben, Forest and Chris ascend towards the South Couloir route. Traversing across a sometimes 45 degree slope dropped us into the Riddell Lakes basin. We then made a beeline for the great south couloir. As we ascended the route gradually steepened and the snow became softer. We had all removed our skis/'shoes at the base of the couloir, and now we took turns breaking a route up. The going was slow, but we eventually topped over the cornice at the top of the couloir at about 1:00 PM. The view of the ridge leading to the summit was depressing. Perhaps in the summer with no snow it would be less so. What we were looking at was a traverse along a very broken ridge to get to a deep notch. From there we would have to climb out of the notch to head to the summit. While this was all very attain-



Forest and Greg nearing the top of couloir. B. Irej photo.

able, we realized it was already after 1:00 in the afternoon. Our chances were slim since nearly all of the remaining route would have to be done one at a time while on belay. Nevertheless, we thought we'd give it at least a bit of a try. We roped up and I led a traverse across the west wall of the south summit (around 100'). After setting an anchor, I then got ready to bring Ben across. Just before he started the traverse, we seemed to all come to the realization that this was a futile effort unless we wanted to be on the mountain till dark. And with the warm day, we had our concerns about the snow sliding while in the couloir on the way down that. So we threw in the hat. Ben skillfully skied back down the couloir. Greg drooled and wished his binding hadn't broke. The three of us did have a great glissade. We hiked and skied out, arriving back at the truck about 5:00 PM. Even with no summit, it was still a great day and a great climb.

Forest Dean



View of the north (true) summit from top of couloir. B. Ireys photo.

May 17 – Lochsa Lodge Cycling Tour

Due to a scheduling conflict we opted to move the ride to Sunday. It was a chilly morning at 7am when Kyle Balke and I left Missoula. Being a Sunday morning, traffic wasn't an issue as we rode down to highway 12. Turning west onto 12, we began to experience a bit of a head wind. We kept the pace nice and easy and eventually made it up to the pass. I had been looking forward to a complimentary cup of coffee at the Visitor's Center, but found it closed for maintenance. There were a few snowmobilers headed out of the parking lot as there was no lack of snow up there. Even the Visitor's Center roof still had a big drift on it! The decent into Idaho was a little chilly, but it warmed as we lost elevation. We sat out on the back deck at the Lochsa Lodge and enjoyed the sunshine. I had forgotten that we gained an hour when we crossed the state line and asked for a lunch menu. The waitress informed me that it was 10am in Idaho and that all they were in the middle of serving breakfast. Kyle and I laughed and ordered the French toast. After a leisurely meal, we headed back up to the pass. On our way, we saw another cyclist heading down toward us at mach speed. It was Alden Wright on his new cyclocross bike! We shouted and waved but weren't sure that he saw us. At the pass Kyle and I took another break and visited with some inquiring motorists. Just as we were about to head down toward Lolo, Alden showed up! The three of us enjoyed the fast decent with intermittent tailwinds all the way back to highway 93. We pace-lined back to Missoula

and parted ways with Alden at Reserve street. Back home, the odometer read 115 miles. That should help in our preparation for RATPOD! *Joshua Phillips*



Memorial Day Weekend – Massacre Rocks Climbing Trip

It turns out that all camp sites in Idaho State Parks can be reserved online. I learned this the hard way by



Jason Miller climbing. Joshua Phillips belaying.

trying to reserve a spot at City of Rocks for the holiday weekend. The City was completely booked so I opted for the nearby Massacre Rocks. I'd never been to Massacre, but have had several friends come back with good reports on its basalt sport climbing. Noel, Jason Miller, and I drove down (separately) Friday morning to set up camp and get in a few routes. Of course, we rendezvoused at the Patagonia outlet in Dillon to score on the deals at the Memorial Weekend Sale. We arrived at the campground and found that our site offered a great view overlooking the Snake River and the basalt cliffs on the other side. Available real estate for tents was limited and Jason had to set his up on the asphalt. They also gouged us (\$5.50 per night!) for having two vehicles even though our two cars took up less room than most of the RVs and truck/camp trailer combos throughout the camp. There were nice bathrooms and coin operated showers though.

Not having brought a boat, we had to drive back to American Falls dam in order to cross the river to access the climbing area. We followed the directions that we'd printed off the internet and found ourselves driving

down rutted two tracks through cattle country. When we came to a ranch gate that was covered in climbing stickers, we knew we were in the right place. After finding the cliffs, the toughest part was figuring out which cliff and which climb we were looking at. Jason and I grew tired of trying to decipher



the “guide book” and jumped on a route we thought we could climb. Noel took a more patient approach and walked back and forth trying to figure out where we were. Jason led up to the second bolt and could get no further. I took the sharp end and couldn’t even get as far as he did. It was at about this moment when Noel came over and said, “You guys are on an 11c.” I untied. Noel cleaned the draws and down climbed the route. We never asked her for the guide book after that. She was our guide. We found a few 8s and 9s that evening and started to get a feel for the area. The climbs are generally very short and the area almost feels like an outdoor climbing gym. We climbed until it was too dark to see holds and headed back to camp.

The next day we climbed several routes ranging from 5.8 to 5.10c. Noel continued to show us where we were and we enjoyed the sun and heat. Just as the day heated up to the point that we started to think about shade, several thunderstorms developed and kept the temps moderate. One thing that amazed us

was how few people there were at the area. On Saturday we only saw about 8 other climbers! So much effort went into developing the area that we just couldn’t understand why there weren’t more climbers there on a holiday weekend. Most of the time, we had entire cliffs to ourselves! We climbed until our forearms gave out and as we headed back to the truck it began to rain.

That evening we had a camp fire and visited with neighbors at the camp. The rain continued throughout the night and we started to wonder if it was going to break. We awoke Sunday morning to fairly damp



Noel on toprope

conditions. After a leisurely breakfast we decided to find some bouldering near the campground and wait to see what the weather was going to do. Finding a nearby boulder, the three of us began working a few boulder problems. Just as we unlocked the final moves of a particularly devious problem, the rain grew in its intensity. We headed back and struck our camp and headed for home. We felt that Massacre Rocks was a worthy climbing area that we'd like to return to in the future. *Joshua Phillips*

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.

Rocky Mountaineers Merchandise

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Fleece Beanie's	\$16.00 (\$20.00 non-members)
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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



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