

Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS
OF WESTERN MONTANA

SEPTEMBER 1983

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NO MEETING IN SEPTEMBER. BE SURE TO COME TO THE OCTOBER MEETING:

DATE: October 12, Wednesday

TIME: 7:30 p.m.

PLACE: Montana Power Building, 1903 Russell, Missoula

PROGRAM: Bill Bevis will present a slide show on a two-week canoe trip in Glacier Bay, Alaska which he and his wife and another couple enjoyed this summer. Sounds like a good program!

The Mountain Ear
P.O. Box 4262
Missoula, MT 59801

FIRST CLASS



Dave Line
1135 Whitaker Drive
Missoula, MT 59803

Thanks to those who volunteered to lead trips, several good Mountaineer hikes took place during the summer of 1983. Reports by the leaders follow:

June 4-5: The trip to Stanley Hot Springs in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness Area included only one other person besides myself due to rain. We hiked six miles to the hot springs, where we had lunch and set up camp. We then hiked several miles beyond the camp until we ran into snow, and returned to camp by dark. We did get some rain, but also got some nice weather. The hot springs, which were uncrowded, made the rain more pleasant.

--Dan Weinstein

On an unsettled June 18, the Bensons (Bob, Eric, and Anna), Charles Hamma, and Bill Morgan set out to maintain the Glen Lake trail. There were a few logs to cut, and most of the work consisted of cleaning and installing erosion barriers, plus a little cleanup at Glen Lake. The weather provided a little of everything from sunshine to snow but stayed bearable. This is an easy 2½-mile hike, and the lake is quite nice.

--Bill Morgan

On June 19 (Sunday) six of us (including the youngest mountaineer, Julia) undertook the loop trip of six easy round-trip miles into Burnt Fork Lake via Palisade Mountain. A beautiful day, and things went swimmingly until we hit the north slope of Willow Mountain where snow blocking the road persuaded us to change our plans. We had planned to hike at least up to Willow Mountain Lookout, but none of us had the stomach for sloshing through soft snow to do that. After admiring a magnificent display of mountain buttercups, we back-tracked to the old Palisade Mountain trail (a nice hike in itself) and went up to the rock formation which gives the mountain its name. You may have read Kim Williams' account of this trip (with a little poetic license thrown in) in one of her Sunday columns.

--Allison Easterling

We have no report on the June 25 trip to Stark Mountain which Virginia Vincent had planned to lead, and assume it did not go. If it did, a report will appear in the next newsletter.

(Trip reports continued on page 3)

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July 9: The Shearman Lakes are three small lakes at the head of Shearman Creek. It's a fairly easy six miles into the lowest lake, and we made the trip accompanied by overcast skies and an occasional fine drizzle. Once we set up camp, however, the situation changed. It started raining hard and never let up except to change to a very wet snow the next morning. Still, everyone managed to stay dry, and we proceeded with the cold task of breaking camp and a very damp trip out. The stalwarts who braved the weather were Charles Hama, Dan Weinstein, Devi Ericson, and Bill Morgan.

--Bill Morgan

July 23: The Heart Lake trailhead, fifteen miles up Trout Creek from Superior, was clouded over and rain threatened as six mountaineers headed up the 3 1/2-mile trail to Heart and Pearl Lakes. Dave Line, Nancy Schrader and Joe Lainger and baby, Nancy Decou, Kim Williams, and Vera Myers followed the left side of the creek through lush vegetation and were occasionally dampened by showers before reaching the meadows at the upper end of the valley. From there, the trail heads southward up to Heart Lake, nestled below the Montana-Idaho ridge. Snow was still in evidence at the crest. Mosquitoes and ground squirrels were seeking their food.

Kim, Nancy Decou, and Vera crossed the outlet and headed for the upper end of the lake where a trail (left at junction) leads upward to Pearl Lake (45 minutes). The hillsides were deeply covered with paintbrush, mountain bluebells, wild delphiniums, red and yellow monkey flowers, and others. Two weeks later, the south side of Pearl Lake had some of the largest blue gentians I have ever seen. The plentiful moisture enabled these flowers to reach heights of two feet or more. A lovely snow cornice still filled one of the ridge-top recesses. Despite off and on showers, on the return trip Heart Lake still looked blue from above. Several parties of campers and fishermen were on the trail. The return trip was made in under two hours. This is a hike I would highly recommend for those who enjoy the beauty of the back country of Montana.

--Vera Myers

July 24 - Holland Peak: The worst part of most hikes is getting to the higher elevations where one can see things, and this hike was no exception. By "things," I mean vertical and almost-vertical rock walls a thousand feet high, vast expanses of peaks, deep valleys, and many lakes miles away. The first half of the hike is about 2400 feet elevation through the trees at about 4000 to the lower lake, and up some distance, over rocks of all sizes, to the upper lake. From this lake, we have steep inclines to the top. We nibbled a few nuckleberries at the lower elevations, always a good reason to catch one's breath. All the members seemed to enjoy the hike and were glad they came along. The group included Bill Morgan, Ethel Macdonald, Dan Weinstein, Brett Doucette, Jeanne Ensign, Myra Bair, June Tatt, and myself. It was a beautiful, sunny day, with the rain holding off until we were back at the cars -- very nice indeed! We were nice and cozy in the cafe, eating hamburgers, when the rain let loose. (I didn't go quite to the top of the peak with the five who did, but did go to the top a week and a half later. One party member said I was a glutton for punishment for going up a second time, but I'd like to go up again next year, because it is one of the most interesting hikes.)

--Charles Hama

July 30-31: We backpacked to Greywolf Lake in the Mission Mountain Wilderness Area from the east side, and found a campsite by Graywolf Lake, a very spectacular scenic area. In the afternoon, we climbed Sunset Crag, a peak above the north side of the lake. The climb was both very scenic and interesting climbing. On and near the top we saw about eight mountain goats, some at very close range. The following morning we took a hike along the lake and then backpacked back to the car after lunch. The weather was hot and dry, and nobody bothered carrying a tent.

--Dan Weinstein

August 6: Five Rocky Mountaineer members took Stuart Peak by a different route. We left the Rattlesnake road after about two miles, then went up to the saddle at the end of Strawberry Ridge. Here we left the trail. After some steeper hiking through the trees, we emerged on a more open and wide, level ridge which to me is the best part of the hike. Then it was up hill to the top. Many people have not gone this way, which is a nice change from going up the trail the usual way. We did come back on the trail. The group included Myra Bair, Nancy DeCou, Ethel MacDonald, Dan Weinstein, and myself. Dan carried a backpack, and stayed to explore the Rattlesnake for another day. The rest of us ate huckleberries most of the way home.

--Charles Hamma

At press time (Sunday, September 11, 9:30 p.m.) there has been no word on the September 4 Trapper Peak hike from leaders Joe and Nancy. Last Sunday looked like no day to be on the top of Trapper, but if they made it, a report will be included in the next Mountain Ear.

Also at press time, there's no answer at Bob Benson's. Either he's stuck in a giant mudhole (on his bike) in the Rattlesnake, or he's still soaking in a hot tub to recover, or he decided to do something other than bicycle in the rain this weekend. Watch the next Mountain Ear for anything he wants to report.

Potlucks during the summer were held at Joe and Lois Crepeau's, Jacob's Island Park (Andy Beal was the organizer), and Nancy Shrader and Joe Lauinger's. After dinner at the Crepeau's, some of the participants hiked to McCauley's Butte to see the bitterroot.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

New member:

Susan C. Dodd
P.O. Box 345
Stevensville, MT 59870

Renewals:

Mary Ambrose
Myra Bair
Arnold Finklin

George Votruba
Pauline Kirscher
Martha Lawrence

DUES: \$5.00 Individual; \$7.00 Family - Annually; join at any time.

Remit to: Rocky Mountaineers
P.O. Box 4262
Missoula, MT 59801

The Rocky Mountaineers welcome all persons interested in hiking, camping, ski-touring, snowshoeing, river floating, bicycling, and technical climbing -- summer, autumn, winter and spring. One complimentary copy of the Mountain Ear will be sent upon request, and non-members may attend meetings and participate in activities before deciding to join.

A number of trips were canceled this summer for various reasons. Due to untimely, unwanted, unappreciated, and totally unnecessary tendonitis and torn cartilage which finally demanded surgery, Martha Yale had to cancel all of her trips. Allison Easterling had to cancel the Storm Lake trip in the Pintlars because her right foot was recovering from minor surgery and couldn't keep up with her left foot for that long of a hike. She says it's a really nice hike (the area was described by Kim Williams in one of her recent columns) and she hopes to make it next year. Morrell Falls was canceled due to rain (which turned into sunshine by the afternoon, but it was too late then). Kootenai Lakes, Sweeney Creek (Peterson, Duffy, Holloway Lakes), Bryan Lake, and perhaps some others were canceled due to lack of participants. The Blue Mountain moonlight hike was canceled when Joe figured out that it was scheduled for Sunday night and Monday morning was a work day! Rumor has it that Kim had an injury which caused her to cancel the Lake Mountain trip, but the editor hasn't checked this one out for sure.

If anyone out there likes to hike up to the top of Mount Sentinel, but doesn't like the hike down, you might be interested in Ilona and Ethel's new route combining a nice early-morning hike with an easy 8-mile-or-so run. From the top of Sentinel, follow the road down the other side, and you'll have a beautiful run down Crazy Canyon, coming out between the picnic grounds and Larch Camp Road in Pattee Canyon. It took us about two hours, and was thoroughly enjoyable.

A 6.2 mile "Freeze Walk" to express concern over nuclear arms buildup will be held in Missoula (and over 240 other cities) on October 1. Walkers may obtain pledge forms to raise funds from: Missoula Valley Freeze Walk, 1501 Cooper Street, Missoula, 59802, or telephone 543-8461. See the calendar for details about going as a group.



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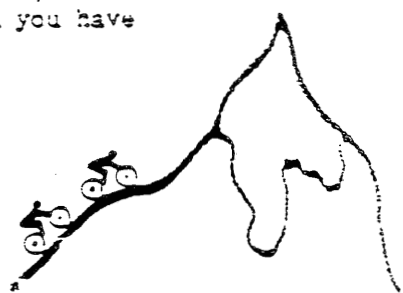
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