



Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS
OF WESTERN MONTANA

June, 1989

MONTHLY MEETING

Time and Place: NOTE THE NEW PLACE, DAY, AND TIME OF THE MEETING!!! During the summer the Club holds potluck dinners in Bonner Park instead of meeting inside with programs. This summer we are also going to try holding meetings on the second Tuesday of the month, rather than the second Wednesday, in order to avoid conflicts with some certain other summer activities. In June we will meet on Tuesday, June 13, at 6:30 p.m. at the north end of Bonner Park, which lies south of Evans Avenue, one block east of Higgins Street in Missoula.

Program: Eat, play volleyball, have fun. Be there or be square.

TRIP CALENDAR

Some of the active trip leaders in the Club seem to be preoccupied by floating and big climbing trips this June. Some of you other guys are encouraged to schedule some trips to take up the slack a bit. Give the officers a call if you want to lead a trip and they will help spread the word.

June, Tuesday Mount Sentinal climbs. Every Tuesday evening in June, Ralph Flockerzi will climb Mount Sentinal. A great way to get in shape for the Club's summer hikes. Meet at the parking lot below the "M" at 6:00 p.m.

June, Thursday evening mountain bike trips. Every Thursday evening in June, Ralph Flockerzi will lead a mountain bike trip. Watch the "Around Missoula" column for the time and location of trips, or call Ralph at 549-9986 for details.

Sunday, June 18, Riddel Lakes and/or Grey Wolf Peak. A moderately strenuous and very scenic hike up to the Riddel Lakes, which lie south of Grey Wolf Peak in the South Missions. Those who are so inclined can continue to the top of Grey Wolf via the south couloir. An ice axe and crampons might be useful for ascending the snow in the couloir. Call Ralph Flockerzi, 549-9986, for details.

July 4 Weekend, Mt. Cleveland and Mt. Merrit. Steve Niday will lead a four to five day trip to climb Mt. Cleveland and Mt. Merrit in Glacier Park over the July 4th weekend. Should be a ballbuster. Call Steve at 721-3790 for details.

Sat-Sun, July 15-16, overnight backpack: Dave Pengelly will lead a backpacking trip to be designated, probably in the Bitterroots, Missions, or Glacier Park. Call Dave at 728-6512, for details.

July, Mission Mountain Deathmarch: When the snow leaves the Missions and Peter Dayton gets tired of river trips, he will lead a trip to backpacking trip in to Mountaineer Peak in the Missions from the east, leaving via the Garden Wall, Glacier Peak, Daughter-of-the-Sun Mountain, and similar points of interest. Call Peter Dayton, 728-8101, for the gory details.

TRIP REPORTS

Sun River, May 20. About five years ago I took a float trip on the Sun River, which flows out of the Rocky Mountain Front near Augusta, and was very impressed by the scenery and the whitewater. Each year since that trip I tried to return to the river, but was foiled by lack of water. The Sun is dammed by Gibson Dam and a large diversion dam at the edge of the front, and much of its water is diverted to the Pishkun and Willow Creek reservoirs and other agricultural uses. As a result, the floating season on the river is usually quite short, and water levels can vary on a daily basis depending on how much water is being diverted. Fortunately, you can call the Greenfield Irrigation District and find out how many cfs of water are going over the diversion dam. The scenery and water on the section of river below the dams is sufficiently nice to amply justify dropping everything else and heading for Augusta if and when the water gets high enough. In the middle of May, Peter Dayton and Art Gidel (in kayaks) and Bill Burnett and Jim Greene (in a canoe) did just that, and we had a great time.

We put in about a quarter mile below the diversion dam, a few hundred feet above a small bridge. The water in the section below the diversion dam provides outstanding kayaking and whitewater canoeing in the Class II to easy Class III range. The river contains repeated ledges which create innumerable high-quality surfing and playing opportunities. Watch out - a few of the ledges drop several feet and create holes which extend across much of the river. Almost all of the rapids can be skirted if you are in a canoe and feeling timid. There is a particularly nice ledge a few hundred feet above our put-in, which we carried our boats up to. This would be a great place to camp and play. The best whitewater and scenery are found in the ten or so miles below the diversion dam. Unfortunately, the first public access point below the dam is the bridge a few miles northwest of Augusta, a twenty-one mile float. This makes for a fairly long day if you are playing a lot. After considerable telephoning I was able to locate a takeout which cut seven miles of relatively flat water off the end of the trip; give me a call if you are interested in locating this takeout. The river was probably at 2,500-3,000 cfs when we did it, which is a very nice intermediate level. I understand that it frequently peaks at around 5,000-6,000 cfs, and would be interested in trying it at those levels also. We will definitely be repeating this trip! Peter Dayton.

Dearborn River, May 21. The Dearborn River flows out of the Rocky Mountain Front between Augusta and Wolf Creek, and flows into the Missouri downstream from Craig. The section of river downstream from Route 287 is a very scenic and enjoyable seventeen-mile trip. This section of the river is quite similar to the Smith; narrow and twisty, with many beautiful cliffs. The upper two-thirds of this section is almost completely undeveloped. Much of this section runs through property owned by Michael Curren, whose dispicable treatment of recreationists probably did much to produce Montana's stream access cases and statutes. This section of the river contains a few moderate rapids, but is generally very laid back; it is certainly a canoe trip, and not a kayak trip. This is one of the prettier sections of river I have done in Montana. However, the floating season is pretty short, so make sure that you catch the water while it's up. - Peter Dayton.

Salmon River, May 27-28. Over Memorial Day weekend Art Gidel, Beverly Chin, Colleen Hunter, and I drove down to Idaho and floated a section of the Salmon River between Challis and Salmon. This section of the river is generally pretty flat, sort of like the Bitterroot only somewhat larger. However, there are several minor rapids with large standing waves, so beginning canoeists should approach this section with some caution. The scenery is pretty nice, and kind of like a southwest river, with dry open country and a lot of cliffs. The road parallels the river, but is not too obtrusive. I could have done without the rain we encountered on the second day, but the trip was a pleasant change of pace from western Montana. - Peter Dayton

OFFICERS

Dave Pengelly, President - 728-6512
Steve Niday, Vice President and trip coordinator - 721-3790
Arnold Finklin, Treasurer - 543-8705
Colleen Hunter, Secretary and Newsletter Distribution - 728-8101
Peter Dayton, Newsletter Editor - 728-8101
Ralph Flockerzi, Refreshments - 549-9986

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____ Phone: _____

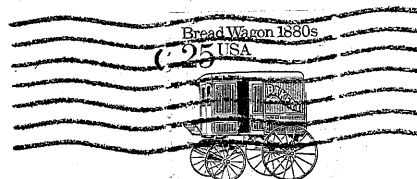
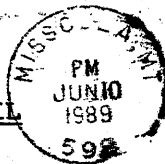
Address: _____

Check one: Individual (\$6.00/year) _____ Family (\$8.00/year) _____

Mail a Check payable to
"Rocky Mountaineers" to
Arnold Finklin, P.O. Box
4262, Missoula, Montana
59806

THE MOUNTAIN EAR
P.O. BOX 4262
MISSOULA, MT 59806

FIRST CLASS MAIL



DAVE LING
1135 WHITAKER DR.
MISSOULA, MT 59803