

Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS
OF WESTERN MONTANA

September, 1989

Time and Place: 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, September 13, in the Montana Power Building at 1903 Russell Street in Missoula.

Program: The program for the September meeting has traditionally consisted of slides taken on club trips during the past year. All members are cordially invited to assist in the perpetuation of this honorable tradition. If the trips taken during the last year are well represented in the slide show, we should have an outstanding presentation. Or at least amusing. Better than watching television, anyhow. Even if you missed the trips, you can still see the slides.

TRIP CALENDAR

Sat-Sun, September 16-17, McDonald Peak: Climb McDonald Peak, the tallest mountain in the Mission Range, from the east. Call Dave Pengelly, 721-6512, for details.

Saturday, September 23, Mission Mountains. Day climb of the prominent unnamed peak in the Missions which is south of McDonald and North of Kakashe. A grunt and scramble, nothing serious. Call Peter Dayton, 728-8101, for details.

Sunday, September 24, Cabin Work Party: Everybody who has used, or who wishes to use, the club's rustic and picturesque cabin on Little St. Joe Peak in the Bitterroots is invited to join a work party to prepare the cabin for the winter. Firewood will be cut and a new stovepipe will be installed. Anybody with access to double or triple walled stovepipe is asked to call the trip leaders. These trips are fun and have gone fast in recent years, due to good participation. Call Dave Pengelly, 721-6512, or Art Gidel, 543-6352, for details.

December 19-24, Mt. Cleveland. An attempted winter ascent of Mt. Cleveland in Glacier Park. Death will be defied by all participants. Call Steve Niday, 721-3790, for details.

TRIP REPORTS

Mt. Jackson et al., June 30-July 4: Rick Murney, Steve Niday, and Dave Pengelly drove to Mount Ranier to make an attempt on Liberty Ridge. After hiking in from White River Campground to Glacier Basin and crossing over St. Elmos Pass to Winthrop Glacier, we bivied for the night due to rain, snow, and low visibility. The weather continued bad the next day so we packed up and returned home.

Steve and Dave dried out their gear and zipped up to Glacier National Park to salvage the weekend with climbs of Mt. Jackson and Blackfoot Mountain from a base camp at Gunsight Lake. The weather was great, but the mosquitoes were quite hungry. - Dave Pengelly

Middle Fork of the Flathead, July 1-4: On July 1, Peter Dayton, Art Gidel, Dick Barrett, Bill Hudson, Dave Ryan and his father, Wayne Hecker, and Beverly Chin flew into Schaeffer Meadows in the Bob Marshall Wilderness to float the Middle Fork of the

Flathead River in four kayaks and two rafts. A number of flying services are willing to carry people and gear into this grass airstrip, and some will take kayaks. The river is fairly small, rocky and technical, a bit like the Middle Fork of the Salmon above Pistol Creek, but with steeper and somewhat harder drops. There are a number of solid Class IV drops, some of which are apparently Class V drops at higher water. We had a great time on the water, and the scenery is quite nice. The river is not heavily used - no permits are required, there are no designated campsites, and we saw only one other group on the river. We can recommend the trip heartily. The river is best floated in June or early July. The water was at 4 on the gauge at West Glacier and 0 at the gauge at Essex when we did it. We were told that it remains floatable well off the gauge at Essex, and that commercial outfitters start chickening out when the water is over 4.5 at the gauge at Essex. - Peter Dayton.

Various Other River Trips: Members of the Club went on a number of great river trips this summer. Some of the longer trips are listed below in case you want to get more information about any of them:

Delores River, Western Colorado - Art Gidel, Wayne Hecker.

Green River, Desolation/Grey Canyon, Utah - Gidel, Hecker, Dave Ryan.

Middle Fork Salmon, Idaho - Peter Dayton.

Mt. Sir Donald, July 21-22: At noon on July 21, a quadruple of intrepid mountaineers (Art Gidel, Ralph Flockerzi, Dave Pengelly, and Jim Ullrich) departed from Missoula on an epic attempt at climbing Mt. Sir Donald in Canadian Glacier National Park near Golden, B.C. After a ten hour drive in a luxury automobile and an invasion of the warden's private quarters, the group registered and found shelter for the evening. An early departure the next day was delayed due to a light rain shower; nevertheless, the group started the long hike in. About three hours later, it was jointly decided that the loads were too heavy, so extra clothes and flashlights were stashed. Later, additional gear was cached at the saddle near the famed NW arete. Sir Donald is one of the "Fifty Classic Climbs", and its reputation is deserved - granite and quartzite, good handholds, little loose rock, and lots of exposure.

A small thunderstorm somewhat damped the enthusiasm of the group as they ascended the arete, but the group continued climbing. Just short of the summit, at about 4 p.m., an approaching thunderstorm sparked the group's interest and the descent was begun. About 15 rappels later, wet slippery moss, loose rock, darkness, and fatigue prevailed and it was decided that a bivouac was in order. Ralph managed to demonstrate his mountain savvy by sleeping with a snowbank as a pillow, Dave tested his long-wear contact lenses, Art found out why it is nice to carry a space blanket, and Jim demonstrated classic Type A behaviour by pacing back and forth all night. Fortunately, the temperatures were quite mild and no appendages were frozen. When first light appeared in the morning (as usual), a short scramble with an exquisite move by Dave put the group back at the saddle. Stashed gear was retrieved, and the hike out was begun. Many people, including the garbage collector, were concerned about the group's delayed return. Much joy ensued as the wide-eyed group returned safely to Missoula. - Jim Ulrich.

Mt. Clements and Mt. Reynolds, July 29-30: Dave Pengelly and Steve Niday drove to Glacier National Park to climb Mt. Clements via its south ridge and east face. The route was quite exciting on the east face due to exposure and lack of rope. We also climbed Mt. Reynolds via the "spiral staircase" route which makes use of a wonderful goat trail on the north face. - Dave Pengelly

West and East St. Mary's Peak, August 5, 1989: Driven by an overpowering urge to go bushwacking, Peter Dayton and Art Gidel climbed West and East Saint Mary's Peaks in the Mission Mountains, starting from the campground at the east end of Mission Reservoir.

After a 5,000 foot climb up the ridge to the south of the reservoir, we were rewarded with a spectacular view of Soneilem Lake and the mountains that surround it - Soneilem Ridge, Peak Y, Peak X, Vacation Pass, and East and West Saint Mary's. Another thousand feet of climbing brought us to West Saint Mary's. We saw a number of mountain goats and two elk on the way. We then crossed the saddle to East Saint Mary's, which involved a bit of scrambling and about another 400 feet of altitude gain. From there we dropped down to Vacation Pass and into the cirque above Soneilem Lake, which contained a lot of snow and a number of iceberg-littered lakes. Getting down to Soneilem Lake involved a bit of route finding through cliff bands, but easy routes can be found by the base of Soneilem Ridge. Once past Soneilem Lake the bushwacking became a bit more serious, with numerous cliff bands and some "Class V" vegetation. We went down the west side of the creek, and were glad we had brought a rope with us. I would be interested to know if the east side of the creek is any easier. After arriving at the base of Mission Falls and crossing the creek, we had to fight our way back up hill to the trail. Although this extremely scenic basin is only about three miles from a trailhead, it is not easy to reach, and probably is only visited by a handful of people each year. - Peter Dayton.

Club Member Wins Race. We are pleased, but not particularly suprised, to announce that Vice President Steve Niday won a 25 mile off-trail race in the mountains west of Hamilton in August. Steve claims that this was the first time that he has entered any kind of formal race.

1656d

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

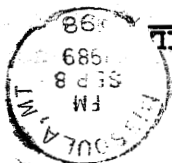
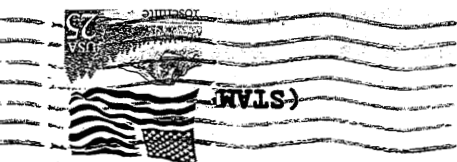
Name: _____ Phone: _____

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

Missoula, MT 59803
 Dave Line
 1135 Whitaker Dr.
 11/89



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