



Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

OCTOBER, 1997

MEETING

Meeting: Club meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month in the lower level meeting room at the Missoula Public Library. This month's meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 8.

Program: Missoulian Sarah McMillan will give a slide show about the Great Grizzly Hike. From July 17th to August 14th this past summer, Sarah and several others backpacked about 300 miles along the Continental Divide from Chief Joseph Pass to Reynolds Pass at Yellowstone National Park. Come hear about the route, how they did the hike and what they found along the way.

CALENDAR

Wednesday evenings, 6:00 p.m., Mount Sentinel. Need a little bit of mid-week exercise? Meet at the trail head at 6 p.m. for a leaderless tour of Mount Sentinel, or call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for a forecast.

October 12, Sunday, Heavenly Twins. Climb one of the Heavenly Twins (9282 and 9243 feet) which are west of St Mary Peak in the Bitterroots near Florence. The route follows a trail for four miles with 2000 feet of elevation gain, then goes off-trail for about three miles, through some very scenic alpine terrain, mostly up and down along ridge tops. The climb of the peak will involve easy/moderate fourth-class climbing. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for more information.

October 12, Sunday, Pearl Lake. Steve has to go to upper Trout Creek to look for bull trout, so if anyone wants to go for the ride and do an easy hike to Heart and Pearl Lakes, give him a call. Julie will probably lead the hike, but if not, the trail is well used and easy to follow. We did this trip last year and the fall colors in this part of the Bitterroots are simply spectacular. If interested, call Steve Schombel at 721-4686 or Julie Warner at 543-6508.

October 18, Saturday, Burdette Creek. Hike along Burdette Creek, which is in a roadless area near Lolo Pass. The route follows a trail for four miles, then goes off-trail for two miles (12 miles total, round trip). It can be a loop route, or a simple out and back along the same trail, depending on participants' interest. Total elevation gain is about 3000 feet. Even though it is not big game hunting season, bow hunters are out and it is advised to wear orange. Call Len Broberg at 549-6031 for more information.

October 26, Sunday, Trapper Peak. Fourth annual hiking trip to Trapper Peak (10,157 feet) on the first day of hunting season. The route follows a six-mile trail with 3800 feet of elevation gain to the peak. At this time of the year, participants need to be prepared for some early season snow near the summit. Orange clothing is required, but hunters usually don't go up the trail toward the peak. Call Matt Grandy at 728-0647 for more information.

November 2, Sunday, Bass Creek Crags. Climb the Bass Creek Crags (8411 feet), which are the rugged spires easily seen from the highway west of Florence. The route will follow the Bass Creek trail for a few miles, then go off-trail through brush. The climb of the crags will involve fourth-class climbing. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for more information.

November 9, Sunday, East St. Mary Peak. Scramble up East St. Mary Peak (9425 feet) which is in the Missions near St. Ignatius. The first portion of the route is off-trail through brush until the treeline is reached, then the route follows the open ridge top which offers great views of the snow dusted Missions and especially Gray Wolf Peak. Overall elevation gain is about 5500 feet. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for information.

Wanna lead a trip? If you are interested in leading a trip, contact Gerald Olbu at 549-4769.

TRIP REPORTS

Pyramid Lake, September 7. Gimmy Andrus, Brett Doucett, Willis Lambertson, Steve Schombel and Julie Warner took a pleasant hike on a well-used trail through Pyramid Pass to Pyramid lake. Although the trail was muddy, up above the day was warm and sunny and we made good time. While lounging at the lake, most of us decided that a short hike was enough, while Brett and Willis opted to do Pyramid Peak. They did a quick scramble to the top and down the other side and probably could have gotten back to the cars first if they had really wanted to. On the trail down, Gimmy and Julie had a close encounter with a bear and two cubs, but the bell kept them away. The rest of us saw some wildlife and lots of horses and mules. - Steve schombel.

Lolo Peak, September 14. Six mountaineers set off to climb Lolo Peak in the Bitterroot Range. Lolo Peak is the large peak which is visible from Missoula. The mountaineers were Brett Doucett, Matt Grandy, Jo Ellen Lyng, Gerald Olbu, and Charles Tree. Five of us left Missoula. Brett, who was late, caught up to us at the Town Pump in Lolo. It was four miles to a vista point where we took a break. Then we descended to the lake, crossed the dam and went straight up the ridge to a small saddle. A small amount of bushwhacking/routefinding gained us the ridgeline, which we followed to the top. We lounged about and signed the register. We had a fantastic view of the entire Bitterroot Range extending south, as well as the Mission, Swan, and Pintler Ranges. Gerald informed us that we were not on the true summit and took off with three others for the other summit. It was a clear day and the sun was shining when they took off. About 15 minutes later, we saw them standing on the other summit, and we saw them turn around and head back. Suddenly, an evil-looking black cloud came out of nowhere and began racing towards us. We saw lightning begin striking some of the other peaks down the Bitterroots and we reviewed lightning avoidance techniques. Gerald and his crew were running for their lives along the ridgeline as lightning boomed all around us. When the group was together, we bailed off the most direct route down, a very steep boulder field. It was no fun scrambling down in the pouring rain. We ended up in a very pretty meadow where the sun was shining near the lake and retraced our steps back to the car. This experience shows just how rapidly the weather changes at high altitudes. A good time was had by all. - Matt Grandy.

Mount Evans, September 28. On a pleasant Indian summer day, Brett Doucett, Wendell Holmes and Gerald Olbu headed for Mount Evans. The route followed a little-used trail for a short distance, then went off-trail through some lush and pristine meadows to the foot of the ridge leading to Mount Evans. We discussed possible routes to the top of the ridge. We began on a rib, which probably led to the top, but since it was north facing, the smooth slab rocks were wet and icy in places. We traversed to get off of the rib and got onto the wide slope. It was still snowy and icy in places, but there was a lot less exposure, so it was mostly a scramble. We soon were on top of the ridge and the sunshine felt good after being in the mountain's shadow all morning. We walked and scrambled along the ridge top. In one place, there were bands of yellow and orange colors. The rocks looked like they were coated with yellow and orange dust. Soon, we were on top of Mount Evans reading through all the names in the glass jar, which included several Rocky Mountaineers from previous years. - Gerald Olbu.

OFFICERS

Gerald Olbu, President - 549-4769

Peter Dayton, Newsletter Editor 728-8101

Julie Warner, Secretary-Treasurer - 543-6508

Len Broberg, Vice President - 549-6031

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Mail a check payable to

"Rocky Mountaineers" to

Address: _____

Rocky Mountaineers Outdoor Club

P.O. Box 4262

Check one: Individual (\$9.00/year) _____ Family (\$12.00/year) _____ (9398)

Missoula, Montana 59806

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