

Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

MAY 1998

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 at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday May 13.

Program: Seth Wilson will present a slideshow of several trips he has done recently. Seth has done trekking in the Wind River Range and kayaking in Montana and Idaho. Come hear how Seth slept with a Canadian goose on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River.

Business: Elections for club officers will be conducted at this meeting.

TRIP CALENDAR

May 16-17, Lolo Peak. Overnight trip to Lolo Peak (9139 feet) which is visible from Missoula to the southwest. This is the first weekend after the road is opened on May 15. On Saturday, the route will follow a trail from the 5800-foot trailhead up to the 8250-foot Vista Point, then descends down to Carlton Lake where camp will be made. On Sunday, a moderate snowshoe or ski trip will take participants to the top of Lolo Peak where excellent ski opportunities exist. Call Matt Grandy at 728-0647 for more information.

May 17, Sunday, Bonner Mountain. Hike to Bonner Mountain (6811 feet), which is east of Bonner. A 6-mile trail with about 3500 feet of elevation gain will lead hikers to the summit. There probably won't be any snow at this time. Participants may have the opportunity to observe mountain sheep since there are several in this area. Call Penny Palm at 258-2000 for more information.

May 23-25, Saturday-Monday, Emigrant Peak. Climb Emigrant Peak (10,921 feet) which is in the Absaroka Beartooth Wilderness about 25 miles south of Livingston over the Memorial Day Weekend. The four-mile route with about 5500 feet of elevation gain is entirely off-trail. Even though the route is considered to be a scramble, an ice ax will probably be required as there may be some late season snow at the higher elevations. Depending on participants' interest, camp may be made in a campground or a bivi on the mountain. Also, it may be possible to soak in the hot pools at Chico Hot Springs. Call Tony Sabol at 728-7221 for more information.

May 31, Sunday, Gray Wolf. Climb Gray Wolf Peak (9001 feet), which is in the southern portion of the Missions. The initial portion of the route follows a faint trail up a steep ridge and then traverses into the basin below the peak. Then, the route involves climbing up the south snow couloir, which is perhaps the most classic snow climb in Western Montana. Then, fourth-class snow and rock climbing is required to reach the summit. Call Tony Sabol at 728-7221 for details.

May 31, Sunday, Bobcat Creek. Hike up Bobcat Creek which is 30 miles up Lolo Creek or five miles on this side of Lolo Pass. The route follows closed logging roads, so participants should be able to avoid most of the ticks which would be a problem on overgrown brushy trails. There is no set destination and the group can hike as far as they want. Call Julie Warner at 543-6508 for more information.

June 6, Saturday, Como Peak. Climb one of the three Como Peaks (probably the Middle Como Peak, 9530 feet) which are the three symmetrical peaks in the Bitterroots southwest of Hamilton. The initial portion of the route follows a trail and then heads off-trail through brush, boulders and snow to the basin below the peak. Three snow ramps, requiring an ice ax leads to the summit. Call Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 for details.

August, Mt Merrit. A backcountry reservation application is in progress for the club for Upper Glen's Lake in the Belly River in NE Glacier Park, hopefully in early August. It is a 12.5 mile backpack, and on the next day we'll attempt Mt. Merrit (10,004 feet) with 4600 feet of elevation gain, and a few pitches with fourth-class climbing. It is a fairly strenuous trip, not for beginners. Because of the distance, we must leave Friday evening and make a car camp, then start early Saturday. Monday will be the hike and drive back day, so participants must arrange a day off work. Rules also say only four people in one site, so call Steve Schombel at 721-4686 soon if you want to go. Or call me and I'll tell you how to apply for a campground reservation on the same weekend, but no guarantees.

Summer mountaineering trips. Plans are being made to climb a few mountains this summer. Several big mountains with technical rock and ice routes will be climbed. These include: Mt Bryce, Mt Edith Clavell, Mt Fay, Mt Temple, Stanely Peak, Mt Lefroy, Mt Victoria, Mt Andromeda, and Mt Athabasca in the Canadian Rockies; Mt Sir Donald and Mt Sir Sanford in Central British Columbia; The Grand Teton, Mt Owen and Mt Moran in the Tetons; and Mt Rainier and Mt Baker in Washington. Individuals wishing to climb the above mountains need to make early arrangements and demonstrate their ability on prior trips. Closer to home, several mountains in Montana will be climbed. These include: Emigrant Peak, Whitetail Peak and Mt Cowen in the Absaroka-Beartooths; Crazy Peak in the Crazy Mountains; Como Peak, Canyon Peak, El Capitan, Sky Pilot, NW couloir of Trapper Peak, King's Crown of the Bass Creek Crags, Boulder Peak, and North Trapper in the Bitterroots; Gray Wolf Peak, E. St Mary Peak, W. St Mary Peak, McDonald Peak, W. McDonald Peak, Sheep's Head, Mt Calowahcan (Harding), Daughter of the Sun, and the Mission Trek with eleven 9000-foot summits which will complete all 18 peaks or points in the Missions above 9000 feet; and Warren Peak in the Pintlers. And, we will do a lot of rock climbing suitable for mountaineers. Many, or most, of these trips will not be advertised with a specific date and some will be climbed in the middle of the week. If interested in any of these trips, contact Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 or Tony Sabol at 728-7221 and express an interest and help choose the dates.

May/June 1999, Mount McKinley. A trip is being planned for Mount McKinley (20,320 feet) in Denali National Park, Alaska. If interested, contact Gerald Olbu at 549-4769 or Tony Sabol at 728-7221 to express an interest and also participate in the several training sessions we will have.

Want to lead a trip? If you are interested in leading a trip, contact Matt Grandy at 728-0647.

TRIP REPORTS

East St. Mary Peak, April 5. Ben Irej, Scott Murry, Adam Pfiffner and Tony Sabol left Missoula determined to bag a peak despite marginal weather. It was drizzling when we left Missoula, but had stopped and the sky was merely overcast at the trailhead. We hiked to about 6500 feet where deep snow brought our snowshoes to use. Snow was lightly falling now and throughout most of the day. Visibility became more and more difficult as light was very flat. Navigation was slowed to a crawl at times, but eventually we found ourselves scrambling with ice axes up the final ridge on the peak. A ten-foot high snow cliff blocked our passage, so we hacked a channel up through it and 'axed" our way up onto the summit. The view was obscured but we had a great party on top anyway. We descended and celebrated at Adam's house with a feast of barbecued elk steaks and trimmings. - Tony Sabol.

() Mountain, April 18. It was a cold and rainy week, so no club members called about this hike. However, it started to clear on Friday, and I got a call from Greg Gylten, who read about it in the Independent. Late Saturday morning we set out on a beautiful warm sunny day. We huffed and puffed some but got to the top in a couple of hours. We saw a few wildflowers, a small herd of elk, many groups of deer and saw and heard lots of different birds. There was only a little ankle-deep snow left on top. There were no cars at the trailhead when we left, and only one on our return. We did not see another person during our hike. Such solitude is becoming hard to find in the Missoula area. I am withholding the name of this area until it inevitably becomes discovered by the crowds that plague other Missoula recreation areas. Go on a hike with me some day and perhaps I'll tell you. - Steve Schombel.

Rocky Mountaineer Cabin, April 25-26. Matt Grandy and Gerald Olbu enjoyed a wonderful spring weekend at the Rocky Mountaineer cabin. There was still much snow, and snowshoes were needed. Matt left his high-tech aluminum Sherpa snowshoes behind, and brought an old-fashioned set of wooden snowshoes instead. He said they made him feel like Yukon Jack. Actually, they compared evenly in weight with aluminum shoes, and performance on a trip like this was fine. It was good to see the cabin in such good shape after a winter of heavy use. Many thanks go to Gerald and his workers who put the new roof on the cabin last fall. It has held up well. Sitting around the woodstove drinking hot cocoa, we talked well into night of past exploits and future adventures. This time of year, cabin trips are a great time. Your pack is not very heavy because a summer weight bag is just fine, and you can leave your stove behind. The hike down on Sunday was absolutely gorgeous. The sky was deep blue and cloudless, the mountains were dazzlingly white, and the smell of the ponderosa pines carried on the warm wind was beyond explanation. We stopped at the picnic table and sat watching the Bass Creek Crags across the drainage for over an hour. Neither of us spoke, we just soaked up the beauty of a springtime afternoon in the mountains. It was a great time to be alive. - Matt Grandy.

Rock Climbing, May 2. We were going to do a hike along the North Fork of the Jocko River, but nobody wanted to trudge through snow, so Dan Chishclm, Gerald Olbu and Sara Rider decided to go rock climbing at Kootenai Canyon instead. It turned out to be a real social event. We met former club member Greg Zlock and his fiance Sandy Sorrell in the parking lot who later joined us. At the climbing area we met Phippen Wallace, who is one of the better rock climbers in Missoula, and his team members, Jonathan and Gabe. Phippen showed us a new route - new to us anyway. It was somewhat involved setting up the climb due to the long distance between the anchor and the edge of the cliff. We spent most of the afternoon on this climb and none of us reached the top. We did eventually figure out where the easiest route was and next time can probably do it. It was great being out on a sunny day and we look forward to more. - Gerald Olbu.

OFFICERS

Gerald Olbu, President - 549-4769
Julie Warner, Secretary-Treasurer - 543-6508

Peter Dayton, Newsletter Editor 728-8101
Len Brober, Vice President - 549-6031

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____ Phone: _____

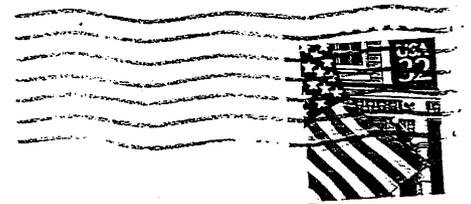
Address: _____

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

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

THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS
P.O. BOX 4262
MISSOULA, MT 59806

FIRST CLASS MAIL 1998



Schombel, Stephen
2200 Applewood Ln
04/99
Missoula MT 59801