

MOUNTAIN EAR

MONTHLY NEWLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS OUTDOOR CLUB

HIKING-CLIMBING-MOUNTAINEERING-SKIING-
EXOTIC TRAVEL-EXPLORATION OF PEAKS AND
MOUNTAINS OF MONTANA AND OF THE WORLD

OCTOBER 2000



CLUB MEETINGS: The fires have really put a damper on folks getting out to enjoy the great wilds. Due to fires and poor climbing conditions there will be no September meeting. We will reconvene October 11th, 7pm, Missoula Public Library, for our next meeting. In October, we will have our "potluck" slide show. Please bring your trip photography from your summer trips, so you can either pass around prints, or give a mini-slide show to our members. Show off all of your great trips. Please also contact the club secretary to have any trips you have done listed in our "trip report" column...let others know about the fruits of your efforts in the wilds. Members of the **general public are welcomed** to our meetings and on our trips. Please contact the President for more information, or you can mail in the attached membership application and waiver.

TRIP CALENDER

Open Climbing for interested folks: Many members of our club are unable to get out and climb the scheduled trips on the weekends. If you are one of these people, and would like to become part of a "weekday" climbing group, let us know you are interested in finding similar climbers to join on weekday outings. Call the Secretary- Newsletter Editor at 273-2566 to be placed in this special interest climbing/hiking group.

October 7th, Saint Joseph Peak (9,587ft): Hike up Bass Creek with the Rocky Mountaineers, then turn and bust butt up the south flank of this big Bitterroot peak. Near the top we'll take the southeast ridge, plus do some very interesting scrambling. Snow may be present and the days will be short. Bring appreciate clothing, and expect an early start on this one also. Call Tony Sabol at 273-2566.

October 8th, Rocky Mountaineer Cabin Spruce Up: The R.M.'s maintain a cabin in the Bitterroots. It mainly serves as a winter shelter for backcountry skiing, snowboarding, and mountaineering. A yearly clean up, some low maintenance, and some wood cutting/splitting are necessary to ensure a pleasant winter stay. Please volunteer either your time and/or send a check (for those pledging financial support) c/o the CABIN FUND to the R.M. post office box. We'll need some chainsaws, axes/splitting mauls, strong backs, humor, and good attitudes. Come give us a hand and support your cabin. Call Penny Palm at 258-2000 to get on the list.

October 14th, Sky Pilot Peak (8,792ft): Hike and scramble up this beautiful Bitterroot Peak. Located west of Victor, this peak offers a nice autumn challenge. Call Tami Sabol for more information @ 273-2566.

October 15th, Black Mountain (5,951ft): Hike up this fine peak located just west of Missoula for some great views of the Mission, Rattlesnake, and Bitterroot Mountains. Call Julie Warner for more information @ 543-6508.

October 22nd, Trapper Peak (10,157ft): So you don't want to go out to get wild meat to feed your family today? Well join the Rocky Mountaineers for the opening day of hunting season climb of the highest peak in the Bitterroots. The wearing of blaze orange/bright clothing will be mandatory. Call Matt Grandy for information @ 728-0647.

TRIP REPORTS

Bearhat Mountain, August 6th: Next to Cannon Peak in Glacier Park, Rick Hanners and Jim Cossitt took on this peak. Our route included some steep icy snow slopes above Hidden Lake. We found a very interesting 500-foot long by 5-to-20-foot wide icy snow gully that topped off at the summit ridge. It averaged 60 degrees with a 30-foot vertical section that lasts well into late August. It was a beautiful sunny day, saw two pine martens sliding on the snowfields like otters as they scrambled to protect their food cache from the marauders that were only us. We also watched some summertime-hired college students without proper gear losing themselves on various parts of the wrong route... 8 hours roundtrip. -Rick Hanners.

Mt Athabasca, Canadian Rockies, Sept 1st-4th: The Rocky Mountaineers mounted their annual Labour Day Mount Athabasca trip. (note Canadian spelling...). This year found eight Rocky Mountaineers in Canada; Karen Aplan, Trent Ingraham, Tim Sharp, James Banister, BJ Banister, Jordan Shapiro, Erin Shirley, and Matt Grandy. We arrived at the Columbia Icefields to find a fresh coat of snow on the ground, with more falling. The rangers at the Centre remembered us from last year's avalanche, remarking "you Yanks always bring bad weather...." We organized into two rope teams, and got an alpine start at 4 am Sunday. We found no other cars at the trailhead, and no parties had logged in for several days...the weather was keeping the mountain untouched. Fresh avalanches had come down in several places. As we moved onto the central part of the glacier, twice members punched through the snow cover and into unseen crevasses. Judging the conditions too severe, we wisely turned around. All in all, it was a very good trip, even though we did not summit. We did some good training though, and made new friends. A good time was had by all! -Matt Grandy.

Mount Stanton, Sept 16th: Located in Glacier Park, Rick Hanners and Jim Cossitt took a long trail approach but descended via the Edwards guidebook route. The mountain begins right at the shores of Lake MacDonald. Jim Cossitt wants to do a bunch of skiing on this great peak winter. 7 hours slow roundtrip. -Rick Hanners.

Southwest Climbing and National Parks Extravaganza, Sept 1st-19th: Tami and Tony Sabol set off on a Friday afternoon bound for the High Uinta Mountains of Utah. We approached via the north side and bivied $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way up the trail. The next day we made for Gunsight Pass, dropped down slightly on the back side, then took a short cut over and around to the base of **Kings Peak**...the highest in Utah at 13,528 ft. There is water everywhere...so if you go don't be concerned about that. The final ridge offered some fun talus hopping and bouldering. The views from the top were awesome. This is a great alpine trip, with timber groves of lodge pole pine and aspens all the way to 11,300ft. We then continued south to Moab, Utah and spent an afternoon visiting **Canyonlands National Park (N.P.)**. The following day we crossed the highway and went into **Arches N.P.** This park has over 2,300 natural arches spanning distances of 3ft to 328ft. There are many hiking trails which permit folks to get out and see many of these wonders...sorry, there is not much climbing allowed in many of our national parks...do that elsewhere...just visit the parks and enjoy the scenery in an environmentally sensitive way. We did 3 great hikes, spent the night in Moab, then headed for Colorado. We next visited **Mesa Verde, N.P.** This park is the only national park established to protect things built by man...namely the cliff dwellings built by the Anasazi people who inhabited this area from roughly 600AD to 1300AD. The biggest cliff dwellings require a ranger guided hike...we did two. We also were able to do self-guided hikes into many other of the dwellings...set your own schedule. We left Mesa Verde and headed north into the Wilson group of peaks in southwest Colorado. There are 55 peaks in Colorado over 14,000 ft. The majority of them are "walk-ups". The Wilson group, however, are some of the hardest of the 55 peaks. We opted for **Wilson Peak (14,017ft)** due to accessibility and our time constraints. We approached via the north side (from Telluride area) and made our way to a large pass and onto the west ridge. According to Gerry Roach...author of **Colorado's Fourteeners**, this route is a class 3...don't believe him...this is a major sandbag rating! We made it to the 13,900 foot false summit. From here you have to drop down very exposed 4th class and very loose sedimentary rock, covered with snow and ice. You then need to climb back up 160 ft of the same type of rock before summiting out. We had left all rock gear and a small rope in the car back at the trailhead, thinking this peak was "just" a class 3. Don't leave your stuff!! We talked to a group coming off the peak who called the route a major sandbag...and rated it high 4th class...any slip would entice a 2,000 foot fall down 80 degrees of pain. We retreated and will not underestimate, or place too much faith in any more guide books. We spent a night in Cortez, then made our way to the south rim of the **Grand Canyon**. Of course you know it is beautiful and big...so I won't ramble here. We then proceeded southward to Flagstaff, Arizona. The next day we were up at 3am and pounding out the miles to the highest point in Arizona...**Humphrey's Peak (12,633ft)**. With day time temperatures in the 95degree range, it was nice to be traveling under a full moon with temps in the 60-70's. We arrived at the top to find only an Apache man who had spent the night. Together we watched the sun come up over the Arizona desert...fitting seeing how there is a rising sun on the Arizona state flag. We dropped down to a saddle, then climbed up and over to **Mt Agassiz (12,355ft)**, the second highest

