



# MOUNTAIN EAR

Monthly Newsletter of the Rocky Mountaineers

October, 2005 Missoula, Montana



**The Rocky Mountaineers is a non-profit club organized to promote all types of recreational use of mountainous areas.**

## October's Presentation: Wed., Oct. 12th

### *Gassing the Big Sky*, by Gene

Bernofsky, aka, THE BIKING VIKING. This is a film about a bicycle tour from Sheridan, Wyoming, down the Tongue River. Gene will talk about the impacts of coalbed methane extraction. The show will start after a few announcements and other business, on October 12th around 7:30 PM, at Pipestone Mountaineering, 129 West Front Street, Missoula, Montana.

## From the President:

The Bitterroot Cross Country Ski Club recently announced that they were very successful with fund-raising, and also were able to get a grant. They are going to be able to purchase a nice pickup for the Club to use for hauling trail grooming machines and other chores.

## About the Cabin

We had a small but sufficient turnout at our cabin workday on Sunday, September 25<sup>th</sup>. It was mostly the regulars, Julie and Dave Kahl, Bret Doucett and Steve Schombel, joined by young Hannah Warner and newcomer Jack Kuehn. The only reason this small crew was sufficient was that we were not planning on doing much work this time. Next year we plan on covering the roof with metal roofing. We carried a few sheets up and found it relatively easy, but we will need a major work crew to get all the materials up there and complete the job. There is plenty of firewood stored for another ski season, but we will need to cut more next year. We would like to challenge the users of the cabin to step up and offer to lend a hand when we start our big re-roofing project next summer. All in all it was a very pleasant sunny day spent with friends up in the mountains.

The Rocky Mountaineer's Board has also gotten copies of the cabin Special Use Permit to review. We thought that this would contain a list of rules and conditions that cabin users would like to read, but it just briefly states that the club can "maintain(ing) a 14' X 24' Cabin to be used in connection with recreational ski touring and mountaineering during the winter months", preceded by a legal description of the location of the cabin. This is followed by several pages of "Terms and Conditions", including a section on FEES. The Rocky Mountaineers pay \$51.00 every year and twice as much in the renewal year. This is why we have envelopes in the cabin for donations from users. During the past several years we have not come close to getting this much donated, with the shortfall being covered by the membership dues. Is it really too much to ask for each person who stays there to leave a couple of dollars, or send in a donation when you get back to town? The rest of the "Terms and Conditions" mainly cover things the Forest Service could do, and responsibilities of the permit holder. Two items of note: we are supposed to have fire extinguishers which are tested yearly; and plans for improvement of the area must be submitted in writing and approved in advance by the Forest Service. This would certainly include plans to repair the roof. Are there volunteers to help us with the above?

To me, there doesn't appear to be any conditions in the permit that require the club to keep the cabin unlocked and open to all at all times. Unless we get more help from users when we make the major repairs, I feel Rocky Mountaineers may have to rethink this free and easy policy. Those who use the cabin most should be prepared to shoulder at least some of the burden of providing firewood, general maintenance, and repairs. *Steve Schombel*

## October 8th Saturday Classic Series and Annual Party

A Club party will follow these hikes and is open to members, or those wishing to become one. The party will be held at the Charles Waters Campground and start around 4:00 PM. This will be a potluck. Contact Forest Dean or Steve Schombel, see contact information on last page.

### St. Mary Peak-Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness-

Leader: Forest Dean; Category: Hike. This will be a hike up the standard trail route to the summit (9351'). Distance to the summit is about 3.25 miles. Elevation gain is 2500 feet. Plan to begin hike about 10:00 AM (takes about 1 ½ hours to get to trailhead from Missoula). Anyone in reasonably good hiking shape should be able to make the summit. There is likely to be some snow near the top. Bring appropriate footwear and adequate clothing for windy cool weather. Contact Forest Dean for more information, 721-6384 or cell: 240-7612, or fdean@midlandimplement.com

**Larry Creek Trail-** We will hike the 6.5 day trail in the Larry Creek complex near the Charles Waters Campground. This trail follows the closed road north and then climbs into the foothill about 700' and returns to the trailhead near the entrance to the campground. This trailhead is well marked by signs. Other options in the Larry Creek complex are: a ½ mile nature trail, a ¼ mile fitness trail, and a 2½ mile fire ecology trail. We will meet at the trailhead at 1:30 PM, and should have plenty of time to finish before the member's pot luck party. Call Steve Schombel at 721-4686 for more information.

**Charles Waters Kids Trips-** There are several very short hikes in the Charles Waters Campground area suitable for little kids 3-6yrs. It's 1/4 mile up the main trail to a cataract and pool. Also several short hikes at the Larry Creek Loop and investigating the environs of the camp area. Hikes will be staged at 11:00 AM, 1:00 PM and 3:00 PM from the campground. Call Julie Kahl for more information 543-6508.

## Upcoming Trips

**October 15, Saturday: Walman Trail-** It has become kind of a club tradition to do a fall hike in the Rattlesnake. This trail is about eight miles round trip, and stays in a no hunting zone. It climbs about 1500 feet. There is a nice lunch spot near the summit with a good view of the University area. Call Steve Schombel at 721-4686 for more information.

**October 22, Saturday: Rock Creek-** Julie Kahl will lead a trip into the "wildlife viewing area" on the east side of Rock Creek about 6 miles up Rock Creek from I-90. The hike goes up into a canyon with broad open slopes where big horns like to hang out. We may get to hear some elk bugling. The trip will be approximately 6 miles round trip. It's difficult to guess trail conditions now. Julie Kahl 543-6508

**October 22, Saturday: Hoodoo Lake Trail to Hoodoo Pass-** This will be a variation of two trips recently led by Jim Goss during the last couple of years, with exact route contingent on snow level. The plan is to hike up toward Hoodoo Lake, but then hang a right heading southwest to Hoodoo Pass on the state line. This allows us the opportunity to hike along the ridge towards Heart Lake, or, if enough snow has fallen, to do a few backcountry turns up above Hoodoo Pass. This will be a moderate hike of about 2,000 feet vertical gain. Rendezvous will be at Durango's in Superior at 9:30 AM, but call Jim at 822-5000 for details before the trip.

**April or May ski trip:** The last 2 weeks of April or the 1st week of May, probably a 4-7 day trip.

Several members of our Flathead Nordic Ski Patrol group have already expressed a strong interest in a spring trip to either the Wapta Icefield (the Wapta or Des Poulis traverse) or the Asulkan cabin in Glacier Park.

We are trying to gauge interest in this outing to make plans fairly soon. We will also be asking those interested to commit some nonrefundable \$\$ early on so as not to disrupt the event as the date draws nearer. If interested, contact Jim Cossitt at: jhckal@yahoo.com

## Trip Reports

**August 27, Saturday: West Cabinets-** Due to some sore aching muscles I had to postpone the planned trip to the Montana high point of the West Cabinets, or Scotchman Peaks until August 27<sup>th</sup>. I found time consuming bush whacking past the end of the trail at Upper Spar Lake. I reached the turn around time while still several hundred yards away from the base of the mountain below some cliffs, and limped back to the car just before dark. This is definitely one to try again next summer, probably with an overnight backpack to the upper lake. *Steve Schombel*

**September: Missouri Breaks-** I went to eastern Montana and hiked to the top of the isolated hills on my list. One of some interest is called Tip Top, and is, after much map study, the hill I believe to be the highest point along the Missouri Breaks. This is not the highest point in the National Monument. It was kind of disappointing, being just a little knob outside of a wheat stubble field. You can drive to within less than a mile on ranch roads, and only gain a hundred feet or so. You really should ask landowner's permission, but I found the houses shown on the map closest to this point to be vacant and abandoned. It would be a much more interesting side hike for canoeists on the river, and would be on BLM land. It lies on the north side of the river a mile or so above the mouth of Arrow Creek. *Steve Schombel*

**September 10, Saturday:** The indomitable Bill Martin spurned an unfavorable weather forecast to join Jim Goss for a hike up to Heart Lake, Pearl Lake, and a saddle between Pearl and Dalton Lakes on the way to the State Line trail at our high point of 7,100'. After a mile of ridgeline hiking with 1 inch of snow from last night, we picked up a trail on the other side of Heart Lake to complete a loop for a total of about 8 miles of hiking. Though we only saw occasional flashes of sun, we also only experienced one brief corn snow shower. Even our feet managed to stay dry for most of the trip, as the trail was brushed out well. Though the views were limited somewhat, we did enjoy seeing cloud banks battle each other as they swept across cliffs and ridges. It was a day that proves that perseverance can pay off. *Jim Goss*



*Pearl Lake by Bill Martin*

**September 18, Sunday: Warren Peak-** There were many people interested in going on the Warren Peak climb, however the weather was less than desirable. It rained most of the day before, and the morning of the climb. Three people showed up at 7:00 AM at Jim Wilson's cabin near Georgetown Lake. After being fed a gourmet breakfast of hash brown potatoes filled with garlic and expensive spices and smothered with fresh scrambled eggs, the four of us, Jerome, Amy, Kit and Jim, weathered the fierce elements of snow and rain all the way to Edith Lk. After arriving at the Lake, it was determined that a climb was not possible in zero visibility. The foursome headed back down the trail only to be confronted by the Pintlar District Ranger, who promptly asked the four if they had registered to go into the Wilderness. Low and behold, Jim had unprecedently registered and was spared the \$100 fine. What a Lucky Day it was! *Jim Wilson*

**October 1, Saturday: Murphy Peak-** I climbed this peak from the north- Finley Lakes drainage. Good little climb- 9 ½ miles round trip- 3500 feet of gain. Nice area back there- yet so close to home. It was snowing at the top, raining the rest of the way- I don't think it stopped once. *Forest Dean*

**October 2, Sun.: Clearwater River Canoe Trip-** Jim Wilson, Frank, Zeita, & Peter Kleschen, Julia Michels, Steve Schombel, and Lorraine Riedl, put in north of Seeley Lake and took out at the Seeley Lake Ranger Station. The weather was sunny & 50°F, with a crisp wind. "It was a beginning and a positive experience". *Frank Kleschen*

**Submitted by Treasurer Julie Kahl:** I ran across two documents, one from 1976, from 1st Federal Saving & Loan Association of Missoula, referring to a SAVINGS account. The title of the account is "Rocky Mountaineers, Trustee for Montana Mountaineers, PO Box 1575, Missoula, MT 59801." The 1976 earnings was \$14.27, there is also a Tax ID Number associated with this account. The second document shows this account as being closed on 4/12/1979 yielding \$420.28. There are no other savings report documents in the collection. The PO Box 1575 shows up on several club documents (those letterheads and some bank records.) There are those that claim that TRM is a continuation of the original Montana Mountaineers, and those who say it is not. Does this reopen the argument? Does anyone have more information?

Thank you to Steve Schwartzman for a \$30.00 donation for use of the cabin.

## Club Contacts

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## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND LIABILITY WAIVER

Family Yearly Membership: \$20.00 - paper newsletter  
Family Yearly Membership: \$10.00 - electronic newsletter  
Make checks payable to: "Rocky Mountaineers" and send to:

Rocky Mountaineers, P.O. Box 4262, Missoula, MT 59806

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read this release and indemnity agreement and have fully informed myself of its contents before I have signed it.

Print Name

Signature Date

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian if Participant is Under 18 Years of Age

I, (print name) \_\_\_\_\_ hereby state that I wish to participate in courses and/or activities offered by The Rocky Mountaineers, a non-profit organization. I recognize any outdoors activity may involve certain dangers, including but not limited to the hazards of traveling in mountainous terrain, accidents or illness in remote places, forces of nature, and the actions of participants and other persons. I further understand and agree that without some program providing protection of its assets and its leaders, the Rocky Mountaineers would not be able to offer its courses and activities. In consideration of and as part payment for the right to participate in the activities offered by The Rocky Mountaineers, I agree to RELEASE, HOLD HARMLESS, AND INDEMNIFY The Rocky Mountaineers and its members from any and all liability, claims and causes of action arising out of or in any way connected with my participation, or the participation of any minor that I am signing on behalf of, in any activities offered by The Rocky Mountaineers. I personally assume all risks in connection with these activities. If I am signing on behalf of a minor, I further agree to RELEASE, HOLD HARMLESS, AND INDEMNIFY The Rocky Mountaineers and its members from any liability, claims and cause of action, which the minor may have arising from the minor's participation in activities. The terms of this agreement shall serve as a release and indemnity agreement for my heirs, personal representative, and for all members of my family, including any minors. (Parents or Legal Guardians must sign for all persons under eighteen (18) years of age).



**The Rocky Mountaineers**  
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