



MOUNTAIN EAR

Monthly Newsletter of the Rocky Mountaineers

December, 2005 Missoula, Montana

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



December 14th, Wednesday: Keele Peak Yukon, Canada

Pat Caffrey, author of *The Climbers Guide to Montana*, will present a slide show on a weeklong, solo excursion into a remote part of the Yukon to scout out an approach to Keele Peak. Keele Peak is the highest point in the Mackenzie Mountains, which form the border between the Yukon and Northwest Territories. It is a large massif with about 100 sq. km of glacier. Due to its remoteness and difficult access, it is rarely visited. Reconnoitering such a peak can be a serious undertaking and an interesting aspect of mountaineering. Join us for what is likely to be a colorful presentation.

The Club meeting and Keele Peak presentation is on Wednesday, December 14th, at Pipestone Mountaineering, 129 W. Front Street, and starts at 7:00 PM.

From the President:

We are still selling raffle tickets for a slightly used copy of Pat Caffrey's best-selling, definitive guide to Montana's mountains, *The Climbers Guide to Montana*. They are available at most sporting goods retailers in Missoula and at the meeting on December 14.

As part of a mutually beneficial agreement with the Glacier Mountaineering Society, we are offering the following information about one of their fund raising activities. At the July Celebration of Life program for J. Gordon Edwards, a painting by Kalispell artist Jim Clayborn (based on the John Mauff photo of Gordon atop Mt. Siyeh) was presented to the Edwards family. The painting was commissioned by the Glacier Mountaineering Society, and 100

limited editions of the painting were produced. The limited edition prints are being sold for \$50.00, plus a shipping fee of \$5.00 per order. The funds from the prints help the GMS finance the original framed painting presented to the Edwards family. For more information, visit the GMS website: www.glaciersmountaineers.com

Upcoming Trips

December 10, Saturday: Chief Joseph Pass Ski-

As promised, I will be able to lead the December 10 ski trip to the trails. I am still recovering from the shoulder surgery, so for the most part I will be skiing with one arm in a sling, I will be avoiding steep downhills, etc. I should be able to lead a group around the groomed trails and if a subgroup wants to go off on an ungroomed trail, I can suggest where to go. Alden Wright alden@wrightmontana.net or phone 542-1966, or Steve Schombel 721-4686.

December 17, Saturday: Ch-paa-qn, Sleeping Woman, AKA Squaw Peak-

I'm still not sure what the name is. This could be a rather long ski trip, depending on how far we can drive, and which way we go. Most of the terrain is very easy. Steve Niday 721-3790

Your trip goes here!

January 6-8, Fri-Sun: Apikuni Mtn, Glacier

Park- This will be around 27 miles round-trip, with a climb of 4400'. We will leave the Many Glacier Entrance Station and take the Cutoff Trail, to Redgap Pass Trail, past Swiftcurrent Ridge Lk., and then up the east ridge. Call if you are interested. Steve Niday 721-3790

Upcoming Trips

Waterton Ice Climbing: mid-January- Looks like folks will roll into Waterton on the evening of Friday the 13th, climb on Saturday, Sunday & Monday and drive back either Monday evening or Tuesday the 17th. Don't forget to bring your skis (there is some good cross country and B/C skiing there, and you may need them for the approach to Lineham Falls if you go climbing up there).

The Lodge has 3 rooms at \$114, \$134 and kitchenettes for \$144. Take a look at the lodge website to see what kind of rooms they have. It sounded to me like we could get 3-4 folks in a room and split the cost. The lodge is at: www.watertonlakeslodge.com Please let me know who is interested and we can try to put together room sharing & travel arrangements. So far, we have 3 gals, 2 guys (Hagler & myself) and Mr. & Mrs. Foster. Jim Cossitt, jhckal@yahoo.com

Trip Reports

November 5, Saturday: Woody Mountain-

There was a bit of snow on the ground, but by the time we met for the hike it had melted. The rest of the day was cool, overcast and dry. We skirted along the base of the mountain along game trails from the park and ball field in West Riverside, and found the Woody Mountain trail near the mouth of the gully that Bret remembered working in. We followed it on up to the top of a hill SW of Woody, where most of the group was ready to turn back. We also took into consideration how early it would be getting dark. Bret and I continued a few more hundred yards and reached the road; so we are sure it is the same trail we found last spring. The upper part of this trail is a lot steeper than newer trails, like the ones on Mt. Sentinel or the Rattlesnake. Overall it was easy to follow, with the exception of one logged- over section. Some attempt had been made to clear off the trail, but more work needs to be done removing slash. It was amazing how distinct it was 30 years after Bret worked on a crew that cleared this trail. There is also some question about land ownership. I had assumed that we would be on Plum Creek Land after leaving the park. On the way down, two of us took a shortcut

to a street past some mailboxes and dumpsters and turned and saw no trespassing signs. Please check ownership before any of you try to repeat this hike. Participating were: Dick Yeaw, Linda Cooper, Diane Friary, Fran Coover, and leaders Bret Doucett and Steve Schombel.

Here are some things Bret told us about this trail: It was promoted by a State Forester named George (last name forgotten) as a means to get horses and crews up the mountain in case of a fire. John Proctor led the YCC crew in the summer of 1975. They would ride past an old ball field to the mouth of a gully, then carry shovels, pulaskis and other gear up the mountain, a little farther each day. They would dig and scrape and clear brush for several hours, working through most of June and July. Bret said that the trail never did extend past the saddle where you now hit the logging road, he doesn't know why. And that it was only a couple of years after all their work that the road was constructed. He, and all of us, were saddened to see that the original access has been blocked off by housing. *Steve Schombel*

November 12, Saturday: Pattee Canyon- You know how it goes folks, all week long it looked like Saturday was expected to be cold and rainy. Given that I changed my plans to an indoor trip of course then the weather would be fine. I would have taken only Hannah Warner (8) but when I changed it to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation's new Visitor center I also decided to bring 5 year old twins Briar and Wyatt Bargmeyer. They had a new diorama, but unlike the old diorama that you could walk around all four sides and "look across," the new diorama is stretched out across the room against a wall. The animals were roughly the same, but it didn't have the "habitat" feel of the other diorama. The room was filled with many interactive displays. The twins loved getting down on the floor and looking "under the water" in the diorama. There were fur pelts, skulls, horns, antlers and other stuff to touch, even elk and deer dropping preserved under glass. One area had sound booths with buttons to push to hear sounds like elk bugling, beaver tails slapping water and threats to elk like ATV's. Interactive displays discussed ecosystems, various wildlife, fire, Native Americans, elk, and the history of conservation

Trip Reports

going back the the early 1800's. It was nice that they had a separate display area for the trophies, and a video's-playing-constantly small theater. I didn't see an art gallery as the previous center had, and the small gift shop had the usual tourist items. This would be a good resource for older kids to go and have plenty of time to get into the subjects in more depth. *Julie Kahl*

November 19, Saturday: Little St. Joseph Peak-

This was our November Classic Series trip. Bill Martin, Forest Dean, and I parked at the locked gate and skied up the ridge to the trail and on to the cabin. We dropped off the fire extinguisher and chatted with three guys who had spent the night. Bill's snowshoes were sinking badly, so he bedded down in the sun. Forest and I reached the top of Little St. Joe, looked over at St. Joe, then at our watches, then at each other, then back down the mountain to meet up with Bill. *Steve Niday*

November 27, Sunday: Mill Point W, N Ridge-

Bitterroots- I scrapped this objective and opted for a trip up Sweathouse Creek to see if I could get into the head of the drainage and climb Hidden Lake Peak. The trail ends less than a mile past the Wilderness boundary and the downfall is bad. I struggled on for awhile, working on my log skiing skills, and finally gave up. *Steve Niday*

Access Report

Swan Peak (9289') in the Swan Range- This peak is a worthy objective. It has a reputation for being tough to approach, and requiring a long day to climb. Jim Valentine has been doing some trail work and has developed a good way in. The following is his description.

Trail access is made at T23N R17W Sec 34. This is at a gated Plum Creek road, which forks from the Squeezer Loop Road. Walk up the Plum Creek road approximately 1/8 mile and take the first fork to the right. Continue on this road until it ends, which is about 1.4 miles. You will be in the Squeezer creek drainage and heading East towards Swan Peak. The trail starts at the end of this road. The trail continues up the Squeezer

drainage until you reach the lower of the two lakes. There is very little brush between the two lakes, so the route to the upper lake is not difficult.

The trail is on the south side of Squeezer Creek for the first 1/2 mile and then crosses over to the north side for the next 4 to 5 miles. The creek is crossed again in Sec 32 of T23N R16W. This is shortly before a junction of three small streams. The trail will be on the south side of Squeezer and will continue going East. The trail will begin to get fairly steep as you will climb over 1000 feet to the lower lake.

The trail travels through a dense forest of Spruce and there are not many views until you start the climb to the first lake. There are numerous blow downs every year and Plum Creek did some logging in the lower section this summer. I have not been up the trail since the logging was completed. I will make a trip in again in May to start cutting out the blow down. You can usually get to the lower lake in early July and the upper Lake is usually open after the middle of July.

I hope this helps. Take a good map. *Jim Valentine*

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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 .

