

October 2006

Monthly Newsletter of the Rocky Mountaineers

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MOUNTAIN EAR

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

President's Message

October 22 is the opening day of the general hunting season. Don't let that scare you out of the woods. Odds are you will die on the way there, not by some errant bullet. If you do venture forth, it is a good idea to wear something bright and make enough noise to scare all the game away from you and the nearby hunters. Take note of the vehicles at the trailhead. Do they have gun racks in the cab and empty beer cans in the back? Regulations for hunters and those accompanying them is 400 sq. in. of hunter orange above the waist, visible at all times. In other words, put the vest on the outside of the pack. Or, you could just not worry about it and behave normally, whatever that is for you. ~Steve

Monthly Meeting: Wed, Oct. 11, 7:00 PM

at Pipestone Mountaineering

129 West Front Street, Missoula, MT

TRIP REPORTS

September 9: Mount Carter (9843') and Rainbow Peak (9891')- Surveyor's Route- The North Fork of the Flathead River is a unique experience. What's so special about the North Fork? It could be Polebridge, wolves, Kintla Peak, grizzly bears, great canoeing, or just fantastic car camping. For me it is one of the most idyllic mountainous areas in Montana. If I had a million dollars I would seriously consider buying the Polebridge Mercantile, it's for sale for just under that. A person could die happy in Polebridge, or die

of boredom. Among the giants of the area are the two mountains named above, with a mere 1.6 miles separating them. Round trip from Bowman Lake, 6.6 miles. How hard could that be?

I don't know when Mount Carter was first climbed, but in 1924, according to an International Boundary report, some hardy surveyors used a hammer and star drill to set a brass cap and reference monuments on top. In 1939, another group of surveyors packed a transit, tripod, target lights, batteries, tent, and everything else necessary to spend some time on top making observations of other high points during a triangulation survey. Any mark, or station, that is part of the National Geodetic Survey's database has "Station Recovery" information. This is basically a "how to get there and find the monument description." Although the information can be very dated, it can be very valuable and was one reason I chose to try this route. The link to finding this information is:
http://www.ngs.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/ds_desig.prl

This trip started with a pitcher of Northern Lights Porter at the Northern Lights Saloon in Polebridge, followed by too much Jim Beam at the Bowman Lake campground. At dawn, we boarded an almost too small boat, and motored 5 miles up Bowman Lake (4030') to the NE side of the drainage draining the basin north of Rainbow Peak. The brush is never bad and the game trails make this portion of the route very reasonable. Around 6000' the vegetation becomes minimal and we found ourselves in a large basin with some prominent steep gullies leading up through the sedimentary ledges, with Rainbow Peak visible in the background. Some really fun, never very hard, climbing took us to the 9200' notch, 0.4 mi. north of Rainbow Peak. Forest and I used the ledges to traverse to the south side of Mount Carter and then climbed easily to the summit, while Eric napped in the notch. We went back to the notch and Eric led us to the top of Rainbow, while hints of a thunderstorm added some urgency. Back to the notch and all Forest and I could think of was getting down to water, we were a bit compromised by a lack of water. We retraced our route to the boat and ripped back down the lake at 5 mph, cruising by hikers on the Bowman Lake trail. Darkness fell and as we approached the foot of the lake, a light came on which guided us in. It seems a nice couple armed with a flashlight were out for a stroll and were interested in what we had caught. We told them we "caught" a couple of big ones.

This is a very fine route through some fun terrain. The views were somewhat obscured by the smoke, but are quite impressive. This whole area is big, high, wild, and inspiring. Thanks to the surveyors for finding a good way to the top, and thanks to Forest Dean and Eric Jones for a most gratifying trip. *Steve Niday*

September 30, Saturday: Swan Peak- This mountain has a reputation for being difficult. Difficult to get to mostly, and because of the distances involved and elevation gained, difficult to climb. I am somewhat sorry to report that the difficulty has been significantly reduced lately, due to Jim Valentine's trail clearing efforts. The trail up Squeezer Creek is now in fine shape, which makes Swan Peak a very pleasant 8-10 hour trip. Round trip is about 11 miles, and one-way elevation gain is 5000'. The last 700' is a scramble, no significant exposure. Paolo Segre, Brett Doucett, and I had a very enjoyable fall day in the mountains, and met two GMS members and their friend on the summit. I recorded a

GPS track of the trail from the lower lake to the trailhead, and from the trailhead to Hwy 83. Old Squeezer Loop Road is signed at Hwy 83, take this road to the turn off at 47.71150167 -113.75512479 NAD83. The trailhead is at 47.71581282 -113.73728030 NAD83. Follow the trail to the lower lake, then follow the drainage to the upper lake. North of the upper lake is a prominent saddle, which provides easy access to the west ridge. Follow the ridge to the top. *Steve Niday*

UPCOMING TRIPS

Saturday, Oct 7 is our autumn work day on the Rocky Mountaineers cabin the Bitterroots. We will be stocking the cabin with firewood for winter use. We will be meeting at 8:00 am Saturday morning in the Kmart parking lot. Bring gloves, lunch, and lots of energy. See www.rockymountaineers.com for pictures of the cabin.

Sunday, October 15th we will do a half day afternoon hike in the Blue Mountain area. There are some rerouted trails to follow. Some of the eroding, steep routes have been closed. We will see some nice fall colors and hike through a burned area. The hike can be as long as participants want. Call Steve Schombel at 721-4686 for information.

October 21, Saturday: North Canyon Peak- This is an 8500'+ peak just north of Canyon Peak, hence the name. It is an 11 mile round trip with no technical difficulties. I reserve the right to change the destination or cancel, due to conditions, mine or the mountains. Contact Steve Niday if you are interested. 721-3790.

October 28 With hunting season in full swing on Sat. Oct. 28th, we'll head over Lolo Pass to tromp around in Idaho. What the trip will be will be determined by conditions. Julie Kahl 543-6508 (Alternate dates Oct.. 29th, Oct. 22 possible)

OTHER INTERESTS

Joining or maintaining your Rocky Mountaineers membership has never been easier! PayPal is now available on the Rocky Mountaineers website. Click on the membership link on the main page. Unfortunately, you have to pass through a PayPal advertisement page to get to the page where you pay by credit card.

**THINKING ABOUT VENTURING OUT AND WANT SOME COMPANY?
VOLUNTEER TO LEAD A TRIP! BIKING, HIKING, SKIING, SNOW SHOEING ARE
ALL POSSIBILITIES!**

We're still looking for a logo.....know a hungry student with an imagination and some artistic talent? Have some talent yourself? We are offering \$100.00 if for the logo chosen. Submit entries by mail or email any club contact!

LOOKING AHEAD...

.....Upcoming Programs

You read about it in the *Missoulian*. On Wednesday, October 11th at 7 PM the Rocky Mountaineers will host a show by Michael Moore and John Smiley about their climb of Mount Rainier by the Kautz Glacier Route. For more details you can find the article entitled "Mount Humble" in the *Missoulian* archives. It was in the Outdoors Section on 7/20/06.

**ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND LIABILITY
WAIVER**

Family Yearly Membership: _____ \$20.00 for paper newsletter
_____ \$10.00 for electronic newsletter

Make checks payable to 'Rocky Mountaineers' and send to:

The Rocky Mountaineers, PO Box 4262, Missoula, MT 59806

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: -

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/Guardian if Under 18:

Club Contacts

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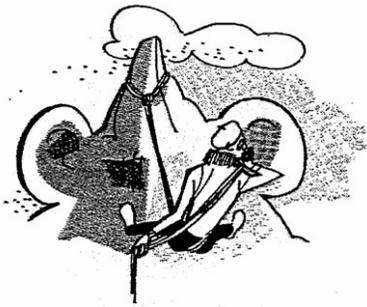
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