



The Sierra ECHO

Barbee Tidball taking
a rest on route to Mt.
Emerson 06/06/2008
Photo by Yim Lincoln

VOLUME 57 | NUMBER I | JANUARY - MARCH 2013

ECHOS FROM THE CHAIR

Greg Mason, Char, chair@sierrapeaks.org



Hello SPS Members,

Hope to see you at the banquet in January. We will have Tina Bowman as our guest speaker. The Farquhar award was given to her earlier this year for her contribution to mountaineering and enhancement of the Sierra Club's prestige. We will once again be at the Proud Bird near the LA Airport.

The SPS MC is still working on the plan to increase the number of trips lead and creating a better experience for the SPS leaders.

Our last SPS committee meeting of the year was held 20 November. We once again successfully met in via a group Skype meeting. Please see the minutes in this echo.

The spring climbing season is 4-5 months away and leaders should be planning their trips. Please submit them as soon as possible. Let the committee know if you need any help with planning or getting a leader to assist.

Please get to the SPS website to see what is new there.

Thanks and happy, safe climbing,

Greg Mason
Chair, SPS

* * * * *



***Don't forget to vote for the 2013 SPS Management Committee!
See enclosed or link attachment for ballot.***

The new candidates and their bios is as follows:



REGGE BULMAN - I am an M-rated leader and have been actively climbing with the SPS for the past 5 years. Along with my wife Monica, I'm an instructor for WTC in West Los Angeles. I'm a member and supporter of the American Alpine Club and the Access Fund. I am also an associate member of the American Mountain Guide Association (AMGA) and am in the process of getting my Single Pitch Instructor certification. I look forward to getting more involved the SPS section and helping to further promote challenging climbs in the Sierra.



LISA MIYAKE - My name is Lisa Miyake, and I'm running for election on the SPS Committee. I took WTC back in 2010 and have been actively hiking/climbing and volunteering with the Sierra Club ever since. I've taken and volunteered with AMP, and became an Associate Member of SCMA. As an M-provisional leader and WTC LBSB instructor, I have many opportunities to share my passion for the outdoors with others. I hope to have the chance to do that as part of the SPS Committee as well. Thank you very much for your time and consideration.



NEW MEMBERS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Submitted by Eric Scheidemantle
SPS Secretary

secretary@sierrapeaks.org

NEW MEMBERS

Jonathon Bourne Francesca Marcus
Christopher Bomba Stephanie Smith

EXPLORER EMBLEM

Franklin Meyers
Vic Henney - pending
Sue Wyman-Henney - pending

Sierra Peaks Section Management Committee Meeting November 20, 2012 - Virtual Meeting

Minutes

1. Meeting Called to Order @ 7:09 p.m.
2. In Attendance
 - a. Kathy
 - b. Dan
 - c. Matthew
 - d. Greg
 - e. Alex
 - f. Eric
3. Committee Reports
 - a. Approval of Minutes
 - i. approved
 - b. Chair
 - i. Greg opens with discussion of banquet speakers and hands it over to Kathy.
 - ii. Greg raises the motion to donate some SPS reserve to LTC to buy four ropes (approximately \$400.00), Alex seconds the motion and it is passed unanimously.
 - iii. Greg will get to the survey feedback prior to SPS election and send an amended survey for feedback
 - c. Sierra Echo
 - i. Greg will send Sara details about Tina as banquet speaker, e.g. pictures, title
 - ii. We need to get Sara the ballot and speaker flyer for mid-december
 - iii. Sara will need list of
 - d. Outings
 - i. Nothing to report
 - e. Treasurer
 - i. Budget & Reserve
 1. we have \$9676.03 cash on hand
 2. ytd expenses: \$3894.00
 3. ytd income: \$4990.00
 4. ytd net: \$1096.00
 5. Alex asks can we send an email blast to existing members to ask for renewal fee
 6. Eric will update the renewal form and will send to Ron Hudson, Greg and Sarah and update to Google Drive site and distribute link
 7. We have a bank account at Wells Fargo and Ron Silverman is the second signer
 - f. Banquet
 - i. Kathy spoke to Tina about being the speaker. Tina agreed to think about it and agreed to it.

Meeting minutes continued...

- ii. Tina's suggested topic would be how she got into mountaineering and her experiences.
 - iii. Kathy suggested two other climbers for next year: Gerry Roach, Jared Vagy & Kevin Trieu
 - iv. Ed L. suggested someone called Chris Shaw [sic]
 - v. Board agrees to have Tina Bowman be the 2013 speaker
 - vi. Alexander suggests we could spend the extra reserve on a professional speaker, perhaps next year
 - vii. Alex and Greg agree we could not worry about going into red for banquet because of the surplus
 - viii. Alex volunteers to call The Proud Bird to try to make the reservation & Kathy suggests talking to the DPS rep. who just made their reservation, and to ask Henry for the back channel tricks.
 - ix. Greg or Alex will call The Reef in LB if TPB is unavailable.
 - x. We discuss other things going into the banquet
 - 1. name tags
 - 2. door prizes
 - 3. av equipment (borrowed from wtc)
 - 4. silent auction
 - 5. programs
 - xi. We decide to leave the ticket at \$35.00
 - xii. Kathy suggests we try to get another person to be on a Banquet Committee to help with arrangements
- g. Archivist**
- i. Nothing to report.
 - ii. Eric reports who has applied for Emblems since the last meeting
 - 1. Sue & Vic Henney
 - 2. Franklin Meyers
 - iii. We wish to request that Doug Mantle re-submit his paperwork in a typed, electronic form over the hand-written submission
- h. Mountain Records**
- i. Nothing to report.
- 4. New Business**
- a. a Nominations for next year's committee were discussed. All of the current MC members are willing to run again.
- 5. Old Business**
- a. help leaders lead trips
 - i. Greg will send list of rated leaders to SPS
 - b. follow up on some kind of online presence for leaders to meet & greet
 - i. Dan suggests starting with Facebook
 - ii. we'll see how the email Greg sends out with all rated leader names goes
 - c. o.a.r.s. conversion
 - i. Matt will contact Adrienne about what we need to do
 - d. bank account setup
 - i. see Treasurer Report

MEETING INFO

The SPS Management Committee will hold meetings every quarter at a location to be determined. Please contact SPS Chair Greg Mason at chair@sierrapeaks.org. for meeting times, date and place.

MISC BUSINESS

SPS Treasurer's Report Third Quarter 9/31/2012 YTD



Alex Smirnoff, Treasurer, treasurer@sierrapeaks.org

Checking Account

Income

Echo-----1,895.00
Banquet-----2,800.00
Donations-----280.00
Merchandise-----15.00
Total Income \$4,990.00

Expenses

Banquet-----3210.10
Bank Fee-----15.00
Pins -----0.00
Printing-----384.00
Postage-----285.00
 \$3,894.00

OVERALL TOTAL \$1,096.00

FROM THE EDITOR



The Sierra Echo is a quarterly publication of the Sierra Peaks Section of the Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter. For more information, see the back of this newsletter. All questions, copy and photo submissions should be directed to **Sara Danta, Editor, The Sierra Echo**, preferably via email at echoeditor@sierrapeaks.org. Refer to the Schedule of Activities or SPS Roster for mailing address. The Echo will also be available as a PDF download at the SPS website and via a link to all SPS members opting for this method.

See the website for other current committee members which also include:



Kathy Rich, Vice-Char, vicechair@sierrapeaks.org



Matt Hengst, Outreach, outreach@sierrapeaks.org

<http://angeles.sierraclub.org/sps/management.htm>

MORE MISC BUSINESS

The 2013 SPS Annual Banquet will be held Sunday, January 27th



The SPS Management Committee is *proud* to present an evening with *Tina Bowman!*

Don't miss her program on....

"How I Developed and Now Cope with OCPB (*Obsessive compulsive peakbagging disorder)"*

Tina will share how she came to be a peakbagger, and include some autobiography, more on memorable climbs, and the wonderful friends she's met along the way. One of Tina's favorite quotes from T.S. Eliot's "The Waste Land" is:

"In the mountains, there you feel free."



It will be a whale of a time!

See registration form this issue enclosed/attached for more details

REGARDING E-MAIL DISTRIBUTION OF THE ECHO

Please contact this email address (newsletter@sierrapeaks.org) for any issues with hard-copy or email version distribution.

The Sierra Peaks Section maintains a website at
<http://angeles.sierraclub.org/sps>.

SPS List Serve

You can find the information you need as a subscriber by checking out our listserv support site. Go to this address to enroll for the SPS E-mail list service: <http://angeles.sierraclub.org/sps/listserver.htm>.

PASSAGES



*In Memoriam
Art de Goede*

October 23, 1928 - September 7, 2012



Submitted by Jerry Keating

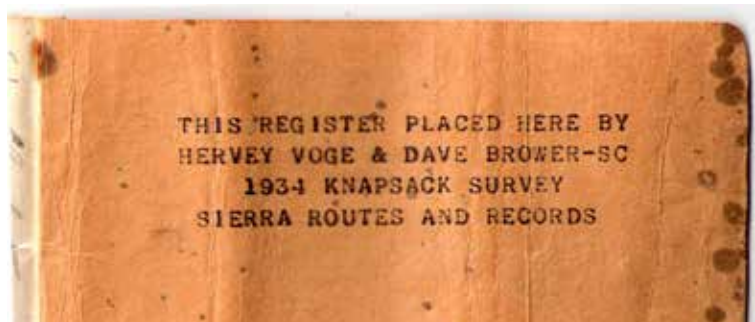
Thanks to Angeles Chapter Historian Bob Cates, news of Art's passing has reached the SPS. Art was an active climbing leader in the 1970s and served as SPS vice chair in 1973. After retiring in 1992 as an assistant attorney general for the State of California, he relocated to Poway in San Diego County.

HISTORIC SIERRA PEAK REGISTERS

These are photos of very old registers found at San Jose State which will be sent up to the Bancroft Library Sierra Register Collection in Berkeley. Enjoy.

This edition - Mt. Dade 1911-1962

Courtesy of Dan Richter



Notice Barbara Lilley's name lower right





Leadership Training Committee

2013 Schedule of Activities

The LTC web site also has a calendar of events and some information about training not offered by the Sierra Club: <http://angeles.sierraclub.org/ltc/> Please check this site for more information about the listed events and for added events.

Leadership Training Program Seminar

Apr 13, 2013 LTC Seminar
Oct 5, 2013 LTC Seminar

Steve Botan
Steve Botan



Wilderness First Aid

Apr 26-28, 2013 <http://wildernessfirstaidcourse.org>
Wilderness First Aid Course

Steve Schuster

Navigation Practices and Checkouts

Jan 5-6, 2013	I/M Indian Cove Navigation Clinic	Bob Myers
Jan 27, 2013	I Snow Navigation - Practice	Bob Myers
Apr 20-21, 2013	I/M Indian Cove Navigation Clinic	Bob Myers
May 4, 2013	I Beginning Navigation Clinic	Diane Dunbar
June 1, 2013	I/M/E Heart Bar/Practice	Bob Myers
June 2, 2013	I/M/E Grinnel Ridge Navigation Checkoff/Practice	Bob Myers
Aug 4, 2013	I/M/E Mt. Pinos Navigation Checkoff/Practice	Bob Myers
Sept 22, 2013	I/M/E Grinnel Ridge Navigation Checkoff/Practice	Bob Myers
Nov 16, 2013	M/R Navigation Workshop on 3rd Class Terrain	Bob Myers
Nov 16-17, 2013	I/M Indian Cove Navigation Clinic	Bob Myers
Dec 8, 2013	I/M Warren Point Navigation Checkoff/Practice	Bob Myers

Rock Practices and Checkouts

Apr 24, 2013	Advanced Mountaineering Program - Safety	Dan Richter
Apr 27, 2013	Advanced Mountaineering Program - Belaying	Dan Richter
May 4, 2013	Advanced Mountaineering Program - Rappelling	Dan Richter
May 11, 2013	Advanced Mountaineering Program - Anchors	Dan Richter

Various Dates - M/E P Vertical Adventures (This is not a Sierra Club activity, but can prepare candidates for rock checkoffs.) <http://www.verticaladventures.com/>

Snow Practices and Checkouts

Feb 2 2013	M/E/R Advanced Snow Travel Workshop	Nile Sorenson
Feb 9, 2013	M/E/R Local Snow Practice	Nile Sorenson
May 4-5, 2013	M/E/R Sierra Snow Practice and Checkout	Nile Sorenson
May 18-19, 2013	M/E/R Sierra Snow Practice and Checkout	Tina Bowman

Snow travel, avalanche, & related training - Kurt Wedberg's Sierra Mountaineering Int'l (Not a SC activity, but can prepare candidates for snow checkoffs.) <http://sierramountaineering.com>

Environmental Awareness

Look at the Natural Science Section's web site (<http://www.angeles.sierraclub.org/nss/outings.htm>) for the Nature Knowledge Workshop and other outings that satisfy the environmental awareness prerequisite. Other ways to fulfill this requirement are possible; check with the LTC Chair.

Will the Real Mt. Whitney Please Stand Up 14,491', 14,494', 14,496', 14,497.61', 14,500', 14,505':

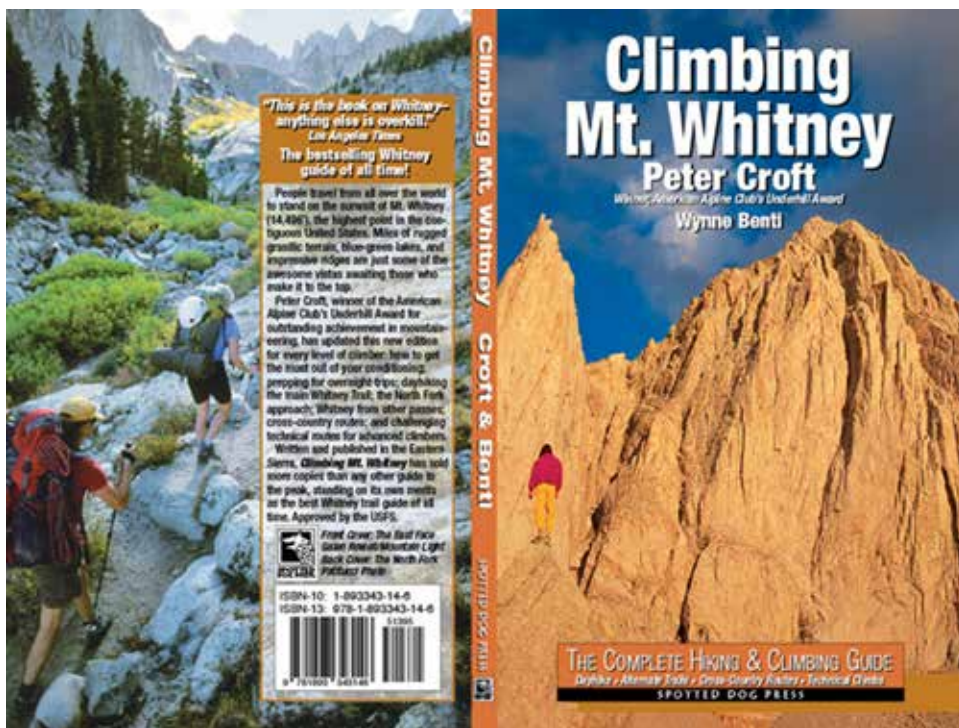
First climbed in 1873, Mt. Whitney's elevation has been readjusted more than once since....

by Wynne Benti

Since our book *Climbing Mt. Whitney* (Spotted Dog Press) was first published over a half-century ago, Mt. Whitney's elevation has been readjusted at least three times by "the powers-that-be." A quick web search on Google using "Mt. Whitney + Elevation" produces a published elevation of 14,505 ft. Being a complete layman when it comes to surveying, I do at least understand that the mountain is not necessarily growing a couple of feet every year. Many of the readjustments have occurred because more up-to-date methods of numerical interpretation have been developed since the peak was first officially surveyed by the Wheeler Survey more than 125 years ago.

In August, I called the United States Geological Survey (USGS) to confirm the correct elevation and was put in touch with Dale Benson, a cartographer in the USGS National Geospatial Technical Operations Center in Denver who provided a wealth of information about the history of Mt. Whitney's surveys and elevation.

The first recorded climb of Mt. Whitney occurred in 1873 when three fishermen, Charles Begole, Albert Johnson and John Lucas, reached the summit from the town of Lone Pine. Shortly thereafter, Whitney Survey party member, Clarence King, who initially climbed Mt. Langley thinking it was higher, also reached the top of Whitney. Over the years, various survey parties have gone to great lengths to measure the elevation of Mt. Whitney, each placing a marker noting their calculations on the summit. The earliest was most likely a station mark, consisting of rock cairn placed by the Wheeler Survey.



In March 2005, John Sellars, Cartographic Technician at the USGS Rocky Mountain Mapping Center in Denver compiled an excellent history of surveys and establishment of elevations on Mt. Whitney of which there are many. Sellars wrote that in 1905, the USGS ran a level line to the summit of Mt. Whitney, to the highest point, setting a tablet labeled "14502" for the elevation 14501.976. The elevation was readjusted in the notes of the level man, R.A. Farmer to 14500.695 ft. A "special tablet" was described in USGS Bulletin 342 and 766. The USGS Survey Bulletin 310, Results of Primary Triangulation and Primary Traverse, Fiscal Year 1905-06, noted the station mark as a "triangulation tablet cemented in rock under an 8-foot high cairn at an elevation of 14499 ft. above mean sea level."

Additional level lines were run by the U.S. Coast & Geodetic Survey (abbreviated C&GS; later renamed the National Geodetic Survey) in 1925 and 1928, establishing a new elevation on top of the 1905 USGS tablet, as well setting two additional marks on the top of the mountain—BM U43 1925 and BM K72 1928.

The National Park Service placed the following plaque:
MOUNT WHITNEY ELEVATION 14,496.811
FT. JOHN MUIR TRAIL SEPTEMBER 5, 1930.

Six other marks were in place prior to the 1950 C&GS tablet being set. Sellars noted that the National Geodetic Survey (NGS) triangulation station "WHITNEY 1950" was the mark recognized by the USGS with the highest degree of horizontal accuracy. Because of this, the elevation shown on the 7.5' quad published in 1994 was 14,491 ft. That is the NGVD29 (National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929) elevation for the NGS 1950 station. The USGS benchmark has an NGVD29 elevation of 14,494 ft., but the depiction of this was superseded by the NGS mark having a better horizontal position.

Sellars concluded that the elevation for Mt. Whitney using the North American Vertical Datum of 1988 (NAVD88) should be 14500.24 ft. using the NGS program VERTCON to convert the elevation of 14494.12 ft (NGVD29) derived from the elevation differences of the "14502" and "WHITNEY 1950" marks as described in the 1950 and 1962 C&GS descriptions of WHITNEY 1950.

In 2005, an article by Guy Rocha, Archivist for the State of Nevada, entitled, Height of a Mountain Tale, was published in the Nevada Observer. Rocha introduces us to Nevada Surveyor Robert Nielsen, who in 1996, as student at California State University Fresno led a survey party to determine whether or not White Mountain Peak was taller than Mount Whitney.

Rocha writes: "As a student in the Surveying Engineering Program, Nielsen and his colleagues organized four summit crews to climb the four highest peaks in California: Mt. Whitney, Mt. Williamson, White Mountain, and North Palisade. 'Our goal,' wrote Nielsen, 'was to take simultaneous GPS observations from the tops of four, 14,000'-plus mountains, my high elevation test base'."

They determined that Mt. Whitney at 14,500 ft. was the highest mountain in the contiguous United States

followed by Mt. Williamson, 14,382.3 ft.; North Palisade, 14,255.9 ft.; and White Mountain, 14,243.2 ft., now the 22nd highest peak in the contiguous U.S. Rocha concludes: "With further GPS surveys of mountain summits in the Rocky Mountains, White Mountain's rank may change again." (Rocha's article was recently republished online in the Reno Gazette Journal but originally appeared in The Nevada Observer).

Perhaps this description by Dale Benson best explains the findings that justify 14,500 ft. elevation: "14505 is the published NAVD88 elevation for the National Geodetic Survey trig station at the top. That elevation is a VERTCON conversion of the old Vertical Angle elevation (14498 ft.) from the C&GS occupation in 1950 (PID GT1811). When USGS was up there in 1956 they transferred an elevation from the NGS BM U43. Also, the 1950 and 1962 descriptions of WHITNEY give differences of elevations to several other stations on the top that indicate they are higher than the National Geodetic Survey trig station.

"Using the transferred elevation to the National Geodetic Survey station WHITNEY, and applying the differences listed in the description would indicate the highest point is the USGS mark 14502 or the USGS 'special tablet' which appeared to have been set over it and later destroyed. In either case, the rounded NAVD88 elevation for the highest point would be 14500.3 ft., or 14,500 ft. for ease of communication."

In other words, based on the data available to date, the elevation of Mt. Whitney is actually 14,500 ft., not 14,505 ft.

What does this mean for Mt. Whitney? As technology improves, we'll no doubt be seeing more elevation readjustments possibly on Mt. Whitney and on other mountains. As one hiker, who summited the peak several years ago, said when learning of the most recent elevation change, "I have a coffee mug that states 14,497.61' and a T-Shirt that states "I Climbed (big letters) out of my car to take a picture of (tiny letters) Mt. Whitney, CA (Big), plus 14,497'. I stand by my coffee mug and T-Shirt as the defining elevation!"

Wynne Benti owns Spotted Dog Press in Bishop, CA and is publisher of the book, Climbing Mt. Whitney.
©2012 Wynne Benti

Outings

Check out the SPS website if you have not been there in awhile.

<http://angeles.sierraclub.org/sps/default.htm>

Jan 5-6 | Sat-Sun LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS

I/M: Navigation: Indian Cove Noodle: Navigation noodle at Joshua Tree National Park to satisfy the Basic (I/M) level navigation requirements. Sat for practice, skills refresher, altimeter, homework, campfire. Sun checkout. Send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare to Leader: ROBERT MYERS. Assistant: PHIL WHEELER

Jan 27 | Sun LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS

I: Navigation: Mt. Pinos Navigation Practice on Snowshoes: Ever wonder what it is like to navigate in snow? Find out on this navigation practice as we take a cross-country route to Mount Pinos (8831'). Four miles round trip, 700 feet gain. Snowshoes required. Send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare to Leader: ROBERT MYERS. Co-Ldrs: ANN SHIELDS, ADRIENNE BENEDICT, JANE SIMPSON

Feb 2 | Sat LTC, DPS, SPS

M/E-R: Snow: Advanced Snow Travel: This is an advanced snow travel course which will take place at or around Manker Flats on Mt. Baldy. The workshop is for applicants who are already proficient in the basics of snow travel. It will cover both unprotected and protected rope travel in couloirs and chutes, as well as glacier travel including the use of the Z-pulley. Ldrs: NILE SORENSON and DAN RICHTER. E-mail Dan with SC#, resume, and phones.

Feb 9 | Sat LTC, DPS, SPS

M/E-R: Snow: Local Baldy Snow Practice: Come review snow climbing, rope travel, ice axe, and snow anchors. Practice your skills or brush up on new techniques. Especially for aspiring M & E leader

candidates. Restricted to SC members with prior experience with the ice axe. Lack of snow may cancel. Email SC#, climbing resume, email address, phone # to Ldr: NILE SORENSON co-ldr: DOUG MANTLE

March 30 | Sat LTC

Deadline for Leadership Training Seminar: Last day for receipt of application and payment by LTC Registrar for April 13 seminar to be held at Eaton Canyon Nature Center, Pasadena. See LTC website (<http://angeles.sierraclub.org/ltc/>) for registration information. Next seminar: October 5, 2013. Contact STEVEN BOTAN

Apr 13 | Sat LTC

Leadership Training Seminar: Become a qualified Sierra Club leader. Seminar at Eaton Canyon Nature Center, Pasadena. For information, see the LTC website (<http://angeles.sierraclub.org/ltc/>). Deadline for receipt of application is March 30. No registration after this date or at the door. Contact STEVEN BOTAN.

Apr 20-21 | Sat-Sun LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS

I/M: Navigation: Warren Point Noodle: Navigation noodle at Joshua Tree National Park to satisfy the basic (I/M) level navigation requirements. Saturday for practice, skills refresher, altimeter, homework, campfire. Sunday checkout. Send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare to Leader: ROBERT MYERS. Assistant: PHIL WHEELER

Apr 21 | Sun LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS

I/M: Navigation: Warren Point Noodle: Navigation noodle at Joshua Tree National Park to satisfy the basic (I/M) level navigation requirements.

Saturday for practice, skills refresher, altimeter, homework, campfire. Sunday checkout. Send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare to Leader: ROBERT MYERS. Assistant: PHIL WHEELER

Apr 24 | Wed **LTC, SPS, DPS, WTC**
M/E-R: AMP (Advanced Mountaineering Program): Basic Safety System: First of four climbing workshops open to Sierra Club members with prior roped climbing experience. Today's indoor evening workshop of four hours reviewing ropes, harnesses, helmets and basic climbing gear will take place in Pasadena. As space is limited, priority will be given to participants who commit to all four workshops. Send email or sase, phones, Sierra Club number, resume to Leader: DAN RICHTER. Assistant: PATRICK McKUSKY

Apr 27 | Sat **LTC, SPS, DPS, WTC**
M/E-R: AMP (Advanced Mountaineering Program): Belaying: Second of four climbing workshops open to Sierra Club members with prior roped climbing experience. Today, at Stoney Point in Chatsworth, focus is on belaying and principles of anchor building. As space is limited, priority will be given to participants who commit to all four workshops. Send email or sase, phones, resume to Leader: DAN RICHTER. Assistant: PATRICK McKUSKY

May 4-5 | Sat-Sun **LTC, DPS, SPS**
M/E R: Snow: Sierra Snow Checkoff/Practice: For M & E candidates wanting to check off leadership ratings or others who wish to practice new techniques. Restricted to SC members with some prior basic training with the ice axe. Send SC#, climbing resume, email, H&W phones to Ldr: NILE SORENSON Co-ldr: DOUG MANTLE.

May 4 | Sun **LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS**
I: Navigation: Beginning Clinic: Spend the day one-on-one with an instructor, learning/practicing map and compass in our local mountains. Beginners to rusty old-timers welcome and practice is available at all skill levels. Not a checkout, but it will help

you prepare. Many expert leaders will attend; many I-rated leaders started here in the past. 4 mi, 500' gain. Send sase, phones, rideshare info, \$25 deposit, refunded at trailhead (Sierra Club) to Leader: DIANE DUNBAR. Co-Ldr: RICHARD BOARDMAN

May 4 | Sat **LTC, SPS, DPS, WTC**
M/E-R: AMP (Advanced Mountaineering Program): Rappelling: Third of four climbing workshops open to Sierra Club members with prior roped climbing experience. Today, at Stoney Point in Chatsworth, focus is on rappelling. As space is limited priority will be given to participants who commit to all four workshops. Send email or sase, phones, Sierra Club number, resume to Leader: DAN RICHTER. Assistant: PATRICK McKUSKY

May 11-12 | Sat-Sun **LTC, SPS, DPS, WTC**
M/E-R: AMP (Advanced Mountaineering Program): Rock climbing techniques and anchors: Fourth of four climbing workshops open to Sierra Club members with prior roped climbing experience. This weekend completes the series of AMP workshops at Joshua Tree National Park and focuses on climbing and anchors. As space is limited priority will be given to participants who commit to all four workshops. Send email or sase, phones, Sierra Club number, resume to Leader: DAN RICHTER. Assistant: PATRICK McKUSKY

May 18-19 | Sat-Sun **LTC, DPS, SPS**
M/E R: Snow: Sierra Snow Checkoff/Practice: For M & E candidates wanting to check off leadership ratings or others who wish to practice new techniques. Restricted to SC members with some prior basic training with the ice axe. Send SC#, climbing resume, email, H&W&Cell phones to Ldr: TINA BOWMAN Co-ldr: TOM MCDONNELL.

Jun 1 | Sat **LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS**
I/M: Navigation: Heart Bar Peak (8332'): Practice navigation for Sunday's checkoff on this 7 mile round trip, 1400' gain hike. We will take a cross-country route to Heart Bar Pk and practice micro-navigation skills along the way. Send

email (preferred) or sase, with contact info & recent conditioning to Leader: ROBERT MYERS. Co-Leaders: JANE SIMPSON, ADRIENNE BENEDICT, ANN PEDRESCHI SHIELDS

Jun 2 | Sun **LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS**
I/M/E: Navigation: Grinnell Ridge Noodle: Navigation Noodle in San Bernardino National Forest for either checkout or practice to satisfy Basic (I/M) or Advanced (E) level navigation requirements. Send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare, to Leader: ROBERT MYERS. Assistant: PHIL WHEELER

Aug 4 | Sat **LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS**
I/M/E: Navigation: Mt. Pinos Noodle: Navigation noodle in Los Padres National Forest for either checkout or practice to satisfy Basic (I/M) or Advanced (E) level navigation requirements. Send email or sase, navigation experience/training, rideshare info, contact info, any WTC, leader rating to Leader: ROBERT MYERS, Asst: PHIL WHEELER.

Sept 21 | Sat **LTC**
Deadline for Leadership Training Seminar: Last day for receipt of application and payment by LTC. Register for October 5 seminar to be held in Costa Mesa. See LTC website (<http://angeles.sierraclub.org/ltc/>) for registration information. No registration after this date or at the door. Next seminar: Spring 2014. Contact STEVEN BOTAN.

Sept 22 | Sun **LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS**
I/M/E: Navigation: Grinnell Ridge Noodle: Navigation Noodle in San Bernardino National Forest for either checkout or practice to satisfy Basic (I/M) or Advanced (E) level navigation requirements. Send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare, to Leader: ROBERT MYERS. Assistant: PHIL WHEELER

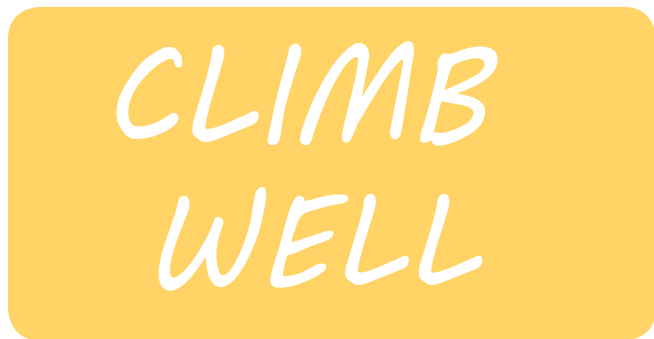
Oct 5 | Sat **LTC**
Leadership Training Seminar: Become a qualified Sierra Club leader. Seminar at the Costa Mesa Community Center. For information, see the LTC website (<http://angeles.sierraclub.org/ltc/>). Deadline for re-

ceipt of application is September 21. No registration after this date or at the door. Next seminar: Spring 2014. Contact STEVEN BOTAN.

Nov 16 | Sat **LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS**
M-R: Navigation: Workshop on 3rd Class Terrain: This navigation workshop is limited to individuals participating in the Indian Cove Navigation Noodle and is intended to explore special navigation issues that arise on 3rd class terrain. Class 3 rock travel experience required. Restricted to Sierra Club members. Helmets and medical forms required/group size limited. Send email/sase, SC#, class 3 experience, conditioning, contact info to Leader: ROBERT MYERS. Co-Leader: JACK KIEFFER.

Nov 16-17 | Sat-Sun **LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS**
I/M: Navigation: Indian Cove Noodle: Navigation noodle at Joshua Tree National Park to satisfy the basic (I/M) level navigation requirements. Saturday for practice, skills refresher, altimeter, homework, campfire. Sunday checkout. Send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare to Leader: ROBERT MYERS. Assistant: PHIL WHEELER

Dec 8 | Sun **LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS**
I/M: Navigation: Warren Point Noodle: Navigation noodle at Joshua Tree National Park to satisfy the basic (I/M) level navigation requirements. Saturday for practice, skills refresher, altimeter, homework, campfire. Sunday checkout. Send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare to Leader: ROBERT MYERS. Assistant: PHIL WHEELER



Mt Humphreys - East Arête

Sept. 22-23, 2012

by Daryn Dodge

Participants: Samantha Olson, Louie Kroll, Kathy Rich, Keith Christensen, Daryn Dodge

My co-worker, Samantha Olson, had wanted to climb this route on Mt. Humphreys for some time. With sustained class 3-4 and a few low class 5 pitches on the ridge, it has been called one of the “100 Classic Climbs of the High Sierra”. We finally put a group together to give it a go in late summer 2012.

We turned off Hwy 168 around 7-8 miles out of Bishop onto Buttermilk Rd. At the turnoff, Keith parked his passenger car and jumped into my 4WD Jeep Cherokee. We used Secor’s “High Sierra” guidebook and Peter Croft’s book “The Good, the Great and the Awesome” to get to the McGee Creek trailhead. The drive route description in Secor’s book worked pretty well with a few small exceptions. Not mentioned in Secor’s book is a short detour around a short, but very rocky, section of dirt road about 7 miles in and just before crossing McGee Creek. There’s a junction here where you can go right to avoid the rocky section. After a hundred feet or so, turn left at another unmarked junction and go back to the main road. Secor’s description says the last section is 0.6 miles after a junction to the trailhead. There was no specific trailhead after 0.6 miles, but this is about where a steep section starts. It was helpful to have 4WD for this, although Louie got his 2WD SUV to the trailhead without too much trouble. The actual trailhead seems to be a little over a half-mile beyond what Secor describes as the trailhead, where the road ends at a turn-around area. Overall, the dirt road portion of the drive was a little over 10 miles long and took something like 1 hr.

We parked on the side of the turn-around, near where an obvious trail starts. This unsigned trail appears to go to the small Langley reservoir. We followed this trail for a few hundred yards, then struck out cross-country to the SW over low sagebrush. We hiked over a low rising ridge then contoured down into a valley on an animal trail. This valley leads up, steeply at times, into the valley that contains a pocket glacier just below Mt. Humphreys to the SE. Our goal was to hike in 3 miles and camp somewhere below the glacier. We passed one flat area for camping at a 10,750 ft, but continued up to a flat sandy area amid large moraine boulders at an elevation of 11,200 ft. This turned out to be the last good spot for a flat campsite in this basin. Since it was a very dry year, water was a little scarce, but we managed to find enough by hiking up towards the waterfall coming over the lip of the moraine.



Keith in his tent at our campsite. The colorful rock wall in the background is 0.5 mile SE of Mt. Humphreys (Photo by Kathy Rich)

The route we chose to attain the East Arête is the main one discussed in Secor’s guidebook, but is labeled an alternate descent route in Peter Croft’s book. Another way to start the East Arête is to hike into the basin

about a half mile to the north of where we camped, where there is a small unnamed lake. One would then begin the climb from an obvious notch in the East Arête. This is considered the long route, and involves some serious downclimbing. Due to lack of time, we decided to forgo this longer route, as we'd heard that many parties don't finish the climb until well after dark.

From our campsite, we started up towards the pocket glacier at 7 am. Some 800 ft of climbing led up to the glacier over a bouldery moraine. Passing just to the right of the glacier, we continued up towards a notch in the East Arête of Mt. Humphreys. The upper part of this chute was a bit tedious with loose sand and rock. Roughly 100 feet below the obvious notch, we turned left and headed up onto a low ridge and dropped into smaller chute on the other side that was hidden from our view. This is the correct chute that leads to a notch where the East Arête route begins. The chute that drops from this notch leads almost straight down onto the pocket glacier far below.



Samantha starting the lead of the first 5th class pitch. (Photo by Kathy Rich)

The East Arête begins with a few hundred feet of excellent class 3 climbing. The first class 5 pitch begins where the ridge hits a big wall. Samantha led this pitch around the corner to the left on some small exposed ledges. Just around the corner is a long vertical crack that leads up to an anchor station

just short of the ridge top. We had two 60 m ropes, so the first climber up after Samantha tied in to the middle of the rope. Once up, the third climber tied into the end of the 60 m rope and dragged the end of the second rope behind. In this way we got all five of us up without having to try and toss the rope down around a corner.



Keith on the East Arête just above the first 4th class section (Photo by Kathy Rich)

Just after this pitch, we encountered a small alcove and dropped into it a few feet. From here, an easy class 4 vertical crack leads up about 15 feet to the top of the ridge. More class 3 climbing followed until we were briefly stymied at another gendarme. Keith and I investigated the right side and found only exposed rotten granite with no easy way up. Louie checked the left side where there was an awkward class 4 ledge with no obvious hand-holds. It's awkward because the rock bulges out above the barely visible ledge making for an uneasy traverse around the corner. We all managed to get around this obstacle without needing the rope. Above this, more class 3 climbing leads to a short section of excellent knife edge just wide enough to feel somewhat secure. The climbing difficulties then eased off and we arrived at a sandy slope with a use trail. Although we really enjoyed the climbing thus far, it was nice to get on to some firmer ground.

continued next page



Kathy on an easier section of the East Arête (Photo by Daryn Dodge)



Daryn leading the final 5th class pitch under the summit. (Photo by Kathy Rich)

The use trail switch backed a few times and ended at a small ledge. We now had a clear view of the last difficult section a few hundred feet away, the class 5.4 pitch just below the summit. A brief side-hilling traverse over talus got us to “Married Men’s Point”, just below the beginning of this pitch. I took the lead here and climbed up the vertical fractured rock, which only seemed difficult for the first 20 feet. I could then traverse left over class 3-4 cracks and ledges to a suitable rock anchor to belay the others up. This 5.4 pitch actually felt a little easier than the 5.2 pitch back down the ridge that Samantha led.

rope. Louie was very helpful here spotting each of us as we descended the class 4 sections. Surprisingly, we were back in camp at 5 pm taking less than 3 hours to descend.

We spent about an hour packing, then hiked out getting back to the cars around 7:30 pm. It was dark by then, but we had no trouble driving out on the dirt road. The East Arête of Mt. Humphreys is said to be one of the best climbs in the Sierras. After climbing the route, I now count it as one of my favorite Sierra climbs too.

In the meantime Kathy set up a rappel on another anchor with the other rope while I belayed the last of the climbers up. This saved us some time on the descent. Once everyone was up, we climbed the last few minutes to the summit. It was a beautiful day with partly cloudy skies. We arrived at 2 pm, but only stayed 15 minutes because we still planned to hike out later in the day. We rappelled down the two class 5 pitches fairly efficiently, and were able to downclimb the two class 4 sections without pulling out the



The group on the summit. L to R, Samantha, Keith, Kathy and Louie (Photo by Daryn Dodge).

MY MOUNTAIN YEARS Following John Muir Mt. Ritter

by Hal Browder



John Muir climbed a number of Sierra Peaks, some were unclimbed and thus he is credited with first ascents. Cathedral Peak in Yosemite, one of his first ascents, about which he simply describes as “a temple displaying nature’s best masonry and sermons in stone.” He fails to describe the exposure that confronts one in the last vertical pitch that leads to its exposed summit block. His notes on climbing the difficult Mt. Clark, only mentions “a glorious sunset.” This was typical of Muir’s log on his climbing experiences. One mountain that he did go into detail about his climbing experience was Mt. Ritter.

In the year of 1872, Muir had just returned to Yosemite Valley from a trip to Mt. Lyell and the Lyell Glacier where he had climbed the mountain and studied the glacier’s movement. On returning to the Valley he was met by three artists, one was the Scotsman, William Keith. The two Scots immediately hit it off. Keith explained to Muir what he wanted to sketch and Muir stated “that he knew just the place”.

Two days later the four men, all Scots were off to see the wild groupings of peaks that make up the Ritter Range. They traveled up the upper reaches of the Tuolumne River to its headwaters. They probably passed over Donohue Pass where the dominant peaks of the Ritter group came into view.



Having traversed the pass, Muir reined in his horse and waited to observe the expressions on his friend’s faces. Keith was excited and “dashed forward, shouting and gesticulating and waving his arms like a madman.” Here they made camp.

From their camp the next morning Muir left the artists merrily sketching the alpine scene. Muir departed, on foot, to explore the unclimbed Mt. Ritter. That night he camped in a glacial valley that was dominated by the dark precipitous crags of Mt. Ritter.

The next day from his Spartan camp, he climbed toward the mountain ascending the glacier as the terrain became ever steeper. Extreme caution was required to search out foot and hand holds as he climbed up the precipitous north face. Halfway up the north face he was brought to a dead halt as the rock became bare of holds and he was frozen in his tracks. He relates, “Suddenly my danger broke upon

me. Faith and hope failed, suffered eclipse. Cold and sweat broke out. My senses filled as with smoke. I was alone, cut off from all affinity. Would I fall to the glacier below? Well no matter”...

His rescue is described, “Then as if my body, finding the ordinary dominion of mind insufficient, pushed it aside, I became possessed of a new sense. My quivering nerves, taken over by my other self, instinct, or guardian angel call it what you will, became inflexible. My eyes became clear, and every rift, flaw, niche, and tablet in the cliff ahead, were seen as through a microscope. At any rate the danger was safely passed, I scarce know how, and shortly before noon I leaped with freedom, into the sunlight upon the highest crag of the summit. Had I been borne aloft upon wings, my deliverance could not have been more complete.”

He had climbed the 13,157 ft. Mt. Ritter! By this time the sun was setting in the west and he scrambled down the east side. Having not even burdened himself with a coat, he hurried down to his previous night’s camp. The next day he “sauntered” back to his worried friends.

September 2nd, 1966 with my climbing friends Doug and Len we backpacked into the Ritter Range and camped at Lake Ediza at an elevation of 9,300ft. There were many parties camped around the shoreline but a suitable campsite was finally found. Doug and I scouted out the best route to approach the peak the next day. We decided that an early start would be desirable tomorrow so that we would not be following a number of parties on the ascent route.

We were up at 5 am. A leader [Bob Van Allen, SPS] of a 15 member climbing party came thru our camp looking for some of his group, so we quickly got our gear together and headed out for the peak at 6am. The morning was cold and clear with the temperature 40F. We soon came upon a group of seven hikers, which we quickly passed. They had indicated their intent to climb Mt. Ritter but that was the last we saw of them this day so we assumed that they did not make the summit.

We had decided to do Muir’s route up the chutes on the north face of Ritter. We climbed up a glacial formed valley and ascended the steep snow and ice slope to the Ritter-Banner Saddle at 12,070 ft. From this point we ascended a tongue of snow and ice that led to a steep chute on the north face. The use of ice axes helped on this portion of snow and ice. We decided to leave our axes at this point where we reached the bare rock in the chute. A screeching little pika or cony protested our trespass. We marveled as to how these little mountaineers survived at this altitude.

We carefully picked our way up the chute keeping close together so as not to risk kicking off a rock on each other. About halfway up this chute we crossed over an arête to the next chute to the left, which was ascended to a blank headwall that blocked our progress. Visions of Muir’s encounter came to mind.

Above and to the left, we noticed that a narrow snow dusted ledge angled up to the summit ridge. At this point we broke out the climbing rope and belayed each other up the ledge. This was the crux of the climb and soon we were resting on the summit rocks signing the peak register and enjoying the magnificent view. Soon a party of twelve climbers arrived at the summit having ascended by the Southeast Glacier Route. We remembered that their leader had passed thru our camp that morning. Theirs was the route that Muir used when he descended the mountain after making the first ascent.

After soaking in the view and eating a snack, we coiled the rope and bid the crowded summit goodbye. We carefully descended the same route that we came up and on reaching the saddle. Banner Peak loomed above which was climbed. Meeting up at the saddle, we retrieved our ice axes and began the long trek back to camp at Lake Ediza. We quickly packed up our gear and headed down to the trailhead and our car. On the long drive home we talked about the experience of doing the John Muir Route on Mt. Ritter. It’s a worthy mountain and a very satisfying route.

Sill, Polemonium, Gayley, Temple Crag

TRIP REPORTS

August 24-26, 2012

by Jim Ramaker and Daryn Dodge



After rounding the corner, we climbed up and left on solid class-3 boulders to the summit, where we arrived at 10 a.m. Left to right: Greg Gerlach, Bob Wyka, Kathy Rich, Corrine Livingston, Lisa Barboza, Sandra Hao, Shane Smith, and Jim Ramaker (photo by Daryn Dodge)

Nine of us participated in this late-August trip to the central Palisades, with four peaks on the agenda and everyone free to focus only on those peaks they “needed.” Participants came from both the PCS and SPS, and included Lisa Barboza (trip leader), Daryn Dodge, Greg Gerlach, Sandra Hao, Corrine Livingston, Kathy Rich, Shane Smith, Bob Wyka, and myself (Jim Ramaker).

We met Friday morning at the Glacier Lodge trailhead for the short hike up to Willow Lake, followed by a brushy cross-country battle up the creek that runs due west. We were aiming for Lake 12,250 southeast of Mt. Gayley, but found a nice camp short of there in a split-level meadow, with a sandy upper meadow for camping, and a lush lower meadow with a creek for water. Late-afternoon happy hour was impressive, with brie, cheddar, and goat cheeses, assorted crackers, heirloom tomatoes from Lisa’s garden, mozzarella with fresh basil leaves, and of course a choice of wine.

On Saturday we were up at 5 and rolling at 6, heading southwest up the talus and moraine basin toward Mt. Sill (14,160). A broken cliff rings this basin about halfway up, and we climbed it via a rubble-filled class-3 slot that was a bit dodgy for a group of nine at 7 a.m. Above that the scenery was amazing, with the Palisade giants of Norman Clyde, Pal Crest, Jepson, Sill, Gayley, and Temple Crag stretching from left to right in a vast semicircle.

Our route up Sill was the L-Shaped Glacier (LSG), which we hoped to climb via class-2 boulders on its right, avoiding the downsloping class-3 slabs on the left. But getting to the class-2 rocks required crossing the lower arm of the L, and after much pre-trip discussion about conditions in this low snow year, we had decided not to bring ice axes and crampons. Lisa and I clawed our way halfway across the icy lower arm of the glacier using ski pole tips (her) and a sharp rock (me), then realized that the entire group would not be into this and so gave up and went over to the left-side route.



Here is the team approaching Mt. Sill (14,160). Our route went up the rocks on the left side of the snow to the prominent notch, then around to the left and up to the summit (photo by Kathy Rich)

Some care was required on the left-side slabs, as a fall would send you sliding down onto the glacier, but it wasn't really hard or unsafe. The LSG is a shadow of its former self, with the upper arm of the L now just a few feet wide. A few more years of global warming and the upper arm will probably disappear completely in the summer.



Above the LSG, we found the class-4 section above the saddle with Apex Peak to be overrated -- we thought it was all class-3 with maybe a couple of class-4 moves near the end (photo by Bob Burd from www.snow-burd.com/bob)

Back down at the Apex saddle, five members of the team headed for Polemonium (14,080).

Here is Daryn's report:

Greg, Sandra, Kathy, Shane, and I crossed the ridge between Sill and Polemonium with no difficulty until the last 100' or so, where a chasm separated us from the peak. We could not down-climb it, so we dropped a little off to the left (south) and found a narrow chute. We descended the chute for about 20', where we were able to climb out of the chute towards the peak via a tight class-3 chimney. Ducks marked the top of the chimney. From there we climbed to the base of the summit pinnacle, and about 15' of class 3-4 climbing got us onto the narrow ridge below the steep, short knife-edge leading to the top. Good anchors were hard to come by at the beginning of the class 4, but Kathy managed to find three good-to-marginal anchors that together made for good protection for the lead climber. Kathy then put

me on belay I climbed a short pitch of exposed class 4 rock, going left around a small gendarme and on up to the summit. We then set a fixed line for the others. One 60 meter rope was sufficient for the climb. An aluminum register box placed in 1991 was bolted to the summit rocks, but nothing was inside it. The traverse from the Apex saddle to Polemonium and back took about 3.5 hours.

After Daryn's party headed for Polemonium, Bob, Corrine, Lisa, and I descended the LSG and headed for the nearby "Yellow Brick Road" route on Mt. Gayley (13,510). On the way down, we chatted with a group of five young weight-lifter types storming upwards in tank tops. Bob didn't "need" Gayley, so he napped on the slabs at Glacier Notch, while Corrine, Lisa, and I headed up. We stayed well to the right of the ridge until we were about 3/4 of the way up, then eased onto the ridge crest to finish up -- a very short and pleasant climb on solid class-3 rock.

At the summit, we had one of those Sierra mountaineering moments -- we could clearly see our five friends a mile away on the summit of Polemonium, while the muscle-man team waved to us from the summit of Sill. We could also see climbers on the crest of the U-Notch, and a solo climber ascending the Palisade Glacier. After a long rest on the summit, Lisa, Corrine, and I started down about 1:30. We made a rookie mistake on the way down, staying on the ridge crest because it had nice rock, but failing to lose any significant elevation. We soon got cliffed out and had to reascend about 100', drop down to the left (looking down), and get back on the correct route. After picking up Bob Wyka, we meandered our way back to camp enjoying the scenery, then washed up and took naps. Kathy returned around 6 p.m., and the remainder of the Polemonium team wandered in about an hour later, with Daryn having climbed Gayley on the way back to make it a three-peak day for him.

On Sunday, Lisa, Sandra, Bob, and I needed Temple Crag (12,976), and we again got up at 5 and got moving by 6, while the others slept in. The east-facing gully mentioned in Secor does not seem to exist, so we climbed an obvious short gully with a chockstone near the southeast base of the peak. From the top of this gully, we crossed a second gully, then crossed a class-3 rib into a third gully, where there was a cliff just below us. We climbed up this gully for 100' of class-3 until it steepened, crossed yet another rib, and

finally arrived on the broad low-angle scree slope on the upper east side of Temple Crag.

We walked up this slope to the apparent high point, where we suddenly encountered some really big air, with the summit 40' away along a narrow, exposed ridge. Some parties have roped up here, but the rock seemed solid, so we proceeded. Halfway across, I looked down about 50' and the ridge seemed to be no more 10' wide at that point, and dropping away into oblivion below. While the holds are good in this section, I would not call it class-3 -- if you slip or if a hold breaks off, you're done for.

We topped out at 8 a.m., called down to our friends in camp, and then reversed our route. Hiking out to Willow Lake, we decided to stay on the south side of the creek as much as possible, which turned out to be a mistake. At times we found a good use trail, but it always ended quickly and gave way to nasty brush, often combined with big boulders and/or steep slopes. I think the deal here is just to stay on the large talus blocks on the north side of the creek. Strenuous, but at least you can see where you're going, plan a route, and for the most part, avoid the dreaded brush. At 2 p.m. we stumbled onto the South Fork trail with great relief, and by 3:30 we were at the cars.



The mysterious scorched-earth campaign against Sierra summit registers has now reached Mt. Sill -- not only were all of the register booklets gone, but so was the classic aluminum register box, placed by the Sierra Club in 1935 (photo by Bob Burd in 2003 from www.snwburd.com/bob)

Western Sierra Redux

September 14-16, 2012

by Jerry Keating

On the last weekend of summer, 19 persons were on hand to participate in the 8th annual SPS old-timers series that seeks out unlisted summits that have both convenient access and fine panoramas. Add to that extended campfire time to renew long-time acquaintances. This year's trip was based at the Stony Creek Campground on the Generals Highway between Kings Canyon and Sequoia National Parks, and the weather was perfect.

Climbed Saturday by 12 persons in the group were Big Baldy (8,035'), a roundtrip of 4.4 miles with about 1,000 feet of gross gain, and Buck Rock Lookout (8,502'), only 0.2 mile of hiking but 172 steps up airy staircases to the top. Buck Rock's panorama, which extended from the Sierra crest to the Coast Range, was superior.

Sunday's separate climbs were of Little Baldy (8,048'), a 3.4-roundtrip with more than 700 feet of gain, and Buena Vista Peak (7,605'), a 2-mile roundtrip with about 500 feet of gain. Six persons participated, and five reached both summits. During their time in the Sierra, other participants opted to join a Canyon Explorers Club-led exploration in Converse Basin to view the Boole Tree or independently to climb such attractions as Alta Peak, Little Baldy, Sunset Rock and Moro Rock; to view other features in the area; to climb the Goat Mtn. above Bass Lake; and to search for the Burro Creek Sequoia Grove in the Tule River watershed.

The most notable part of the trip was the participation of the family of the late SPS list finisher Rich Gnagy: wife Janice, sons Matt and John and daughter Susanne. They were on hand for Friday and Saturday night's campfires as well as Saturday's two climbs. The Gnagys brought champagne with them for a group toast to Rich, who joined the SPS in 1956 while living in the Los Angeles area, who moved to the Sacramento area in the 1960s and who never let driving distance diminish his affection for the Sierra and the SPS. He was a regular in the old-timers series, having made his last SPS climbs in September 2011.

TRIP REPORTS



The Gnagys atop Big Baldy. (L to R) Susanne, Janice, Matt and John.



The airy stairways to Buck Rock LO.

Beside regular gasoline costing more than \$5 per gallon for all the drivers, a unfortunate part of the trip was the breakdown of Asher Waxman's car Saturday morning along the General's Highway. The breakdown resulted in a tow down to Clovis for repairs and the absence of Asher and passenger Murray Aronson for the rest of the weekend.

Besides them and the Gnagy family, others on the trip included Dick Drosendahl, Eugenia Hathaway, Vicky Hoover, Bill Karasick, Nancy Keating, Gordon MacLeod, Mary Sue Miller, Ret Moore, Ron Schrantz, Bruce Trotter and Ralph Wright. Leaders were Jerry Keating and Barbara Lilley.

Mt. Warren the Easiest Way

July 28th, 2012



Photo 1: Talus field encountered soon into my hike. The peak is in the background.

by **Darrick Danta**

Since severely injuring my ankle over five years ago, I have been limiting my climbing to peaks that can be reached in a relatively short distance, and that do not include too much rough terrain. Mt. Warren (12,327), along with the likes of Cirque, Gould, and its neighbor to the south Dana, is a relatively high, though easily accessible and climbed, peak that presents many rewards.

Mt. Warren can be climbed from the south, west, and north, but surely the easiest is from the east: assuming you have a 4 wheel drive vehicle to get you there! My suggested route involves first driving up the dirt Log Cabin Mine Road, which begins just across from the

Lee Vining Ranger Station 1.2 miles west of 395 on the Tioga Pass road. The road turns sharply left, then splits after .6 miles: both sides end up at the same place, but the left branch is easier and a prettier drive. After passing an old cabin and ascending along a forested valley for 4.5 miles of not too difficult road, you pop out onto a relatively flat area affording larger vistas at 9,500'. Continue another .5 mile to a junction and turn left toward the Log Cabin Wilderness Camp; unfortunately, the road going straight to the Log Cabin Mine is closed, but is only a short walk and worth the effort to explore this once thriving gold mine (a good movie on the subject can be seen at the Mono Lake Visitor's Center). After passing the Camp, the road

again rises and turns south, then north; the road also deteriorates, becoming impassable to all but 4 wheel drive vehicles with good clearance. After traveling about a mile, we decided to camp at the 9,900' level, although I later discovered that continuing another 2 miles would have put me in a better position to climb the mountain (see map for locations of camp site and suggested camp site).

My plan of attack was to hike WNW straight toward the peak, but soon discovered that the grey area that shows up on Google Earth (visible in the map) was a rather large talus field; see Photo 1. Two functioning ankles could have traversed this with little trouble, but I had to detour around much of it before resuming the climb. Once past this bit, the hike is quite pleasant, meandering above tree line over alpine fields with some large patches of snow lingering into late July; see Photo 2. After a bit of traversing and an easy stretch up a moderately steep, rocky slope, I was at the top!



Photo 2: Snow field along the flanks of the mountain.

All the way up I could see a structure at the summit, and was curious to discover what it was. Turned out to be a weather station, with accompanying solar panels (see Photo 3; more on the weather aspect a bit later). After enjoying the views and some lunch, I searched for the register, and finally found it tucked under the station. I got a surprise to find that one register had been placed in 2002 by Patty Rambert (Photo 4) who had climbed Warren from the Tioga Pass road with none other than RJ Secor.

As is typical of climbs, I was able to see the route I



Photo 3: At the summit next to the weather station.

should have taken from on top; yes, Hegel, the owl of Minerva flies at dusk. Photo 5 shows my descent route, also indicated on the map; once swinging around to the right and down the slope, there is clear sailing down the valley, over the rise, through another valley, then through easy forest until you hit the road. At this point you'd be back to your car if you'd have camped at the "suggested camp site" in the map; as it was, I still had a 2 mile hike back to our camp. All in all, though, a very enjoyable Sierra peak climb!

Back to the weather station; and yes, I am a weather geek. I did some digging, and discovered it was established by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Climate Data Center (NCDC), with site maintenance by the Western Regional Climate Center (WRCC) in conjunction with the Desert Research Institute (DRI). The station was installed during July 2006 (with the help of a NFS helicopter) and operated until October 2010. Data for most months are available on the web at: www.wrcc.dri.edu/weather/warr.html; click Historical Weather Data to see availability by month; then Monthly Summary to select month/year for daily observations.

Data from the site—one of a select few available for this altitude in the Sierra—reveal some interesting patterns. Yearly temperatures at Mt. Warren reach maximums in August reaching the upper 60's; maximum recorded was 70. Minimums are experienced in February with temperatures usually

below zero; the extreme was -21 (temps in degrees F). Wind data, however, are more interesting: Mt Warren experienced wind gusts of over 100 mph fairly regularly from October until well into spring each year recorded, with gusts of over 150 mph on several occasions. There were some readings of over 300 mph, but further checking with the folks who maintain the data confirmed that these were spurious. They also wanted to know when I was going back up to replace the anemometer, which had spun off its shaft!



Photo 4 (right): Mt Warren register.



Photo 5: Looking due east toward Mono Lake. This is the easy route to climb Warren!

continued next page

To many hard-core SPS peak baggers, Mt. Warren would seem quite trivial, hardly worth the effort. However, the landscape surrounding the peak, the views of so many prominent nearby peaks, not to mention of Mono Lake, and the delightful hike itself makes this a worthy destination. If you have the vehicle, I heartily recommend a trip up to the high country just west of Lee Vining. An added bonus is the bird life at hand: Clark's Nutcrackers provide an all-day serenade; while the more secretive Stellar Jays punctuate the evenings. Primitive camping opportunities abound, making this an ideal site for humans and dogs alike.



Map Caption: Google Earth view of Mt. Warren looking due west; Lee Vining Peak is located SW of the Campsite. The dotted line on the left indicates my route of ascent from the camp site; the one on the right my route of descent to where we should have camped. Near-by is the Log Cabin Mine, which operated from 1910 until WWII. While it may appear that the road goes from the mine to our camp, in fact it curves out of view to the left (south) and winds around to the west before reaching the campsite. Map prepared by David Deis, Department of Geography, CSUN.



The Sierra Sampler

Listed below, by region, are the 100 peaks that comprise the Sierra Sampler. While no mountain in the Sierra can be climbed without time, effort, and risk, these peaks represent a sub-set of the full SPS List that are relatively easy to get to, pose less danger than others on the List, are fun to climb and/or hold other qualities, and are drawn from the main areas of the range. The Sampler, which has been approved by the SPS Management Committee, thus provides a good introduction to the Sierra for climbers of varying degrees of experience and ability. Enjoy!

1. SOUTHERN SIERRA-5

Owens Peak
Lamont Peak
Sawtooth Peak (S)
Rockhouse Peak
Sirretta Peak

5. WHITNEY TO WILLIAMSON-4

Mount Young
Mount Hale
Mount Carillon
**MT WILLIAMSON

9. KEARSARGE PASS VICINITY-6

*University Peak
Independence Peak
Mount Gould
Mount Rixford
Mount Bago
Mount Cotter

13. MT GODDARD VICINITY-2

Giraud Peak
**MOUNT GODDARD

17. BEAR CREEK SPIRE AREA-3

Royce Peak
Mount Julius Caesar
Recess Peak

21. MT LYELL AND NORTH-4

Vogelsang Peak
**MOUNT LYELL
Koip Peak
Mount Dana

2. MINERAL KING AND KERN RIVER-4

Kern Peak
Vandever Mountain
Florence Peak
Sawtooth Peak (N)

6. KAWEAHS AND WEST-5

Alta Peak
Mount Silliman
Eagle Scout Peak
Mount Stewart
**MOUNT KAWEAH

10. BAXTER PASS TO TABOOSE PASS-3

Colosseum Mountain
Striped Mountain
Cardinal Mountain

14. NORTH PALIADES-3

Mount Agassiz
Mount Goode
Clouddripper

18. MONO CREEK TO MAMMOTH-5

Silver Peak
*Red Slate Mountain
Mount Stanford (N)
Mount Baldwin
*Mount Morrison

22. TIOGA PASS TO BOND PASS-6

Mount Conness
North Peak
Excelsior Mountain
Dunderberg Peak
**MATTERHORN PK
*Tower Peak

3. OLANCHA TO LANGLEY & WEST-4

** OLANCHA PEAK
Muah Mountain
Cirque Peak
Mount Langley

7. GREAT WESTERN DIVIDE-2

South Guard
** MOUNT BREWER

11. WESTERN MID-SIERRA-5

*Mount Ruskin
Kennedy Mountain
Mount Harrington
*Tehipite Dome
Three Sisters

15. EVOLUTION AREA-3

Mount Thompson
Point Powell
Mount Lamarck

19. RITTER RANGE AND VICINITY-3

**MOUNT RITTER
Banner Peak
San Joaquin Mountain

23. BOND PASS TO LAKE TAHOE-7

Leavitt Peak
Stanislaus Peak
Highland Peak
Round Top
Freel Peak
Pyramid Peak (N)
Mount Tallac

4. CORCORAN TO WHITNEY-5

Mount Mallory
Mount Irvine
**MOUNT WHITNEY
Thor Peak
Lone Pine Peak

8. KINGS KERN DIVIDE-2

*Mount Ericsson
Center Peak

12. SOUTH PALI SADES-4

**SPLIT MOUNTAIN
Birch Mountain
The Thumb
*Middle Palisade

16. HUMPHREYS BASIN AND WEST-4

Four Gables
Mount Tom
*Seven Gables
Mount Senger

20. CLARK RANGE AND VICINITY-4

Merced Peak
Red Peak
Half Dome
Clouds Rest

24. NORTHERN SIERRA-7

Granite Chief
Tinker Knob
Castle Peak
Mount Rose
Mount Lola
Sierra Buttes
Mount Elwell

The Sierra Echo

VOLUME 57 | NUMBER I | JANUARY - MARCH 2013

The Sierra Echo is published quarterly by the Sierra Peaks Section (SPS) of the Sierra Club, Angeles Chapter; this issue edited by Sara Danta

Publication dates are Jun 15, Sept 15, Dec 15 and Mar 15. All text submissions for publication, including trip reports, articles, etc., can be submitted in electronic format such as MS Word, WordPerfect, email (electronic format is preferable), or through regular U.S. mail. Photos may be submitted as electronic files (jpeg, tiff or Photoshop in a resolution high enough for print media) or submitted as prints or slides. If submissions are to be returned to you please include a return envelope with sufficient postage. **All submissions should be sent to Sara Danta or emailed to s_wyrens@yahoo.com.**

Deadline for all submissions is three (3) weeks prior to the publication date.

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