



The Sierra Echo

Volume 60 ▲ Number 4 ▲ October-December 2016

Approaching Mt. Conness

August 27, 2016

Photo by Chris Alonso

Story Page 14



*Also in this issue: Muir Hut,
Tunemah, Finger & Reinstein,
Kern Point & Picket Guard,
Mount Izaak Walton,
In High Places: The Alps*



Echoes from the Chair

By Tina Bowman

As the Sierra season winds down for most of us, I hope

everyone has had some fine and safe climbs this summer.

There is still no progress in naming a southern Sierra peak for Andy Smatko. The wheels are grinding along very slowly indeed! The California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names (CACGN) is waiting for a recommendation from the Forest Service. Unfortunately for us, the regional geographic names coordinator for the Forest Service retired last year and only recently has someone been found to take over. My contact at the U. S. Board of Geographic Names (BGN) says the new regional coordinator has put out “feelers” to the forest supervisor but had no reply in time for the July meeting of the CACGN, which doesn’t meet again until January. They’ve promised to decide at the January meeting. If we get a thumbs up, then the decision rests with the BGN. So the bottom line at this point is that the proposal hasn’t been shot down.

The June 19th management committee meeting was held at my home with a potluck following. The food was great, the company superb. Attending were Ron Bartell, Ty Bowman (no relation), Jim and John Fleming, Paul Garry, Pat and Gerry Holleman, Harry Langenbacher, Gary Schenk and Mary Jo Dungfelder, Barbara and Dave Sholle, Alexander Smirnoff, and I. Ty is a member of the Long Beach Group and came to check us out, though he’s more interested in photography than climbing peaks. He’s also the web master for Cerritos College and was kind enough to look over our website and make some observations and suggestions.

The SPS Safety Policy is awaiting approval from the chapter’s Safety Committee, so with luck that project is near an end. Other news we’re excited about is that Joe Wankum, a long-time SPS member who now lives in Arkansas, has offered to convert the SPS website to one back under the Sierra Club server and be its webmaster. We’ll still have the current website for the foreseeable future, probably with links back and forth between the two. We’re very thankful that Kathy Rich has served as webmaster for a number of years for us and hope she’ll continue a little longer while the conversion is being made.

Happy trails,
Tina

Tina Bowman, tina@bowmanchange.com

Call for Nominations!

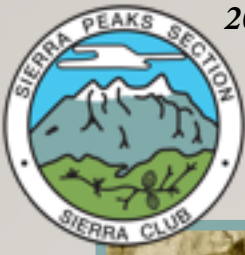
It’s that time of year when we’re looking for members to run for the SPS management committee. Are you interested? Know someone who might be willing to serve? Please contact Mary McMannes, chair of the nominating committee, to make suggestions. Her email is marymuir@earthlink.net

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2017 Sierra Peaks Section

Annual

BANQUET

Dedicated to the memory of Glen Dawson (1912-2016)



Glen Dawson-A Life Relived

Angeles Chapter historian and SPS emblem holder Bob Cates will present the life of Glen Dawson (1912-2016). An extraordinary climber and one of the earliest mountaineers in the United States to use roped climbing, Glen was a member of the first party to climb the east face of Mount Whitney, one of two honorary members of the SPS, bookman, and so much more in his rich, varied, and long life.

Sunday, January 29, 2017

**Almanson Court
700 S. Almanson St.
Alhambra 91810
626-570-4600
5:00 Social Hour,
6:30 Dinner**



Name _____ E-Mail _____ Phone _____

Number of tickets:

=

TOTAL DUE

Entree choice:

(Please indicate total number of each)

Fish

Vegetarian

Beef

@ \$45 / each if postmarked by January 19.
Ticket price increases to \$50 each thereafter.

Make checks payable to "Sierra Peaks Section"

To order tickets by mail,
send this form
and payment to:

Alexander Smirnoff
1701 Paloma St.
Pasadena, CA 91104

— OR — You may order tickets electronically.

Log on to:

<http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2629154>

[A \$2.57 service fee applies]



Welcome new members!



Jim Morehouse

Although he backpacked and rock climbed in the late 60s, Jim went into bicycle road racing in 1973 and continued with cycling for over forty years. In 2012 he retired from competition and went back to the mountains. He is now well into a second list finish of the DPS list and has been turning his attention to the Sierra Crest, so it's only natural he'd want to join the SPS. He's already met several fine people in this group and looks forward to many more trips to the Sierra with them.

Jim Ramaker

Jim has been climbing with the PCS for about twenty-five years and has climbed about two hundred Sierra peaks, including all of the Fourteeners. He has suffered through and/or enjoyed about a dozen week-long climbing trips into the Sierra backcountry over the years. He has also enjoyed climbing with and learning from many experienced SPS climbers and looks forward to doing more of the same in the future.



Kim La

Kim started hiking and backpacking in 2007 with a local community hiking group in the San Gabriel Valley. She has bonded with the great outdoors since then, doing mostly local hikes with friends and HPS on the weekends. Hiking through the forest and the high Sierra to admire the beauty of nature (the majestic mountains, trees, and the serenity of the splendid lakes) rejuvenates her body and mind.



Jessica Lebovits

Jessica has been backpacking most of her life. Recently, she completed WTC in West LA and bagged eight Sierra Peaks this summer with plans for a few more. She's excited to continue exploring the Sierra's and meet new climbing buddies in SPS.



Welcome new members!



Malia Latin

Malia is an instructor with WTC (WLA G3, Suck it, Naismith!) and AMP and has been backpacking in the Sierra for four years. She is a soon-to-be I-rated leader and a member of the SCMA. Additionally, she is a purveyor of many terrible jokes and occasional delicious snacks. She is looking forward to bagging some peaks with y'all!



Chris Wahl

Chris has been curious about mountaineering for a long time, and luckily six years ago a friend told him about the PCS [Loma Prieta Chapter's Peak Climbing Section]. Since then, he has been climbing occasionally with the group and also on his own, but he is hoping to have more trip opportunities now with the SPS. You would think that a California native would have spent a fair amount of time in the Sierra, but he really hadn't until recently. He is excited to experience the Sierra with the SPS.

We sincerely apologize for mixing up the photos of Eric Abbot and Rick Abbot in the previous issue! While we corrected the digital version, we realized our mistake too late to correct the print edition.

Congratulations!

Bob Pickering

Seen below on Mt. Kaweah, Bob Pickering has earned both his Emblem and the Smatko Emblem.



New Leaders!



Jack Keifer

Congratulations to Jack Kiefer, above, who has achieved his full E rating!

Thanks for leading for the SPS!

Happy Birthday Gordon!

Gordon MacLeod turned ninety-two this summer, shown here with Mary MacMannes on the left, Erick and Ellen Shumacher in the back and Barbara Lilley on the right. Unfortunately, he celebrated while recovering from a broken hip and leg. He'd love to hear from you, so please write him at P. O. Box 1079, Simi Valley, CA 93062 (Photo courtesy of Mary MacMannes).



Call for Award Nominations

It's that time of year for members to nominate SPS leaders for the SPS Leadership Award. Established and first given in 1997, the award has been described thus: "Created by the SPS Membership to give recognition to those individuals who have shown outstanding leadership and service to the SPS over the years and who have fostered new leaders."

Please send your nomination and list of qualifications to the chair, Tina Bowman, at tina@bowmanchange.com For more information, here's what the Policies and Procedures say about the award:

From time to time the Management Committee may choose to honor a leader for extraordinary service to the SPS. The award shall be given at the annual banquet with an article in the banquet issue of *The Sierra Echo*, to honor the leader. The award may be given posthumously. By submitting a letter to the Management Committee indicating why the leader should be so honored, members may nominate possible recipients. Management Committee members may also nominate recipients and should draw up a list of qualifications to be mentioned in an *Echo* article published each year in a mid-year issue along with a solicitation for nominees. Factors that may contribute to the selection of recipients should include leadership on numerous trips over a period of at least ten years, fostering

new members and leaders, achievement of at least an "M" leadership rating, and setting the example of well-planned and safe trips. The Management Committee shall vote whether each nominee is to receive the award. More than one person may receive the award each year, but it need not be given every year.

Past recipients are

Dave Dykeman and Bill T. Russell (posthumously), 1997
Doug Mantle and Duane McRuer, 1998
Dan Richter, 1999
Larry Tidball, 2000
Barbee Tidball, 2002
Tina Bowman (Stough), 2015
Neal Robbins, 2016

The SPS now has a Lifetime Achievement Award, first given this year to Barbara Lilley and Gordon MacLeod. Please contact the chair if you would like to nominate someone. Here's the description of the award from the Policies and Procedures:

From time to time the Management Committee may choose to honor a member for outstanding service to the SPS over many years. Such service may include leading copious outings, serving in various elected or appointed positions on the Management Committee, contributing to the *Echo*, and inspiring others by their mountaineering accomplishments. Members may nominate a possible recipient by writing to the Management Committee and indicating why the person should be so honored. The Management Committee shall vote whether each nominee is to receive the award. More than one person may receive the award each year, but the award need not be given every year.

Celebrating the National Park Service Centennial in California at the Muir Hut

By Vicky Hoover

August 25th is the one hundredth anniversary of the actual day in 1916 that President Woodrow Wilson signed the act establishing the National Park Service as an agency within the Department of the Interior. On August 25th this year a Sierra Club contingent assembled on Muir Pass within designated wilderness in Kings Canyon National Park for a special ceremony. Why Muir Pass?

On top of 11,955' Muir Pass, roughly half way along the length of the John Muir trail, is the Muir Hut or Muir Memorial Shelter, a 1930 stone building constructed by the Sierra Club both to honor our founder John Muir and to offer an emergency shelter for hikers caught out in a storm.

The August 25th ceremony marked and celebrated the official placement—at long last—of the Muir Memorial Shelter on the National Register of Historic Places.

Buildings are not placed on the National Historic Register lightly, or



easily. About three years ago, Sierra Club volunteer and historic-properties architect by profession Doug Harnsberger was backpacking with his family on the Muir trail and reached Muir Pass for the first time. Immediately he was struck by the unique style of the octagonal stone structure there and learned a bit about the structure in chatting with a Park Service ranger doing routine maintenance on the hut. Shocked that the structure was not already on the historic register, Harnsberger determined to get it recognized as historic.

So began a nearly three-year crusade for Harnsberger. With intense research he learned that Sierra Club leader Will Colby had the idea for a memorial hut on Muir Pass and was inspired by a 1926 *National Geographic* article featuring Italian mountain “Trullo Huts” to have the building designed along Trullo lines. Harnsberger worked on the detailed, complex nomination form with NPS historical building experts with enthusiastic support from Kings Canyon/Sequoia Superintendent Woody Smeck. Finally, this summer the nomination was approved by state and national authorities.

Harnsberger elected the NPS anniversary day to have a celebration ceremony on Muir Pass, working with Sierra Club director Chuck Frank, Outings Director



Top: Gathering for the dedication ceremony at Muir Hut (photo by Beth Martin). At left: Bronze plaque to be placed in the hut (Photo by Doug Harnsberger) Above: Mules carrying plaque (photo by Homer Tom).



Stacy Bare, and wilderness advocate Vicky Hoover to recruit a Club contingent.

Dave Roberts of Sierra Club National Outings volunteered to be the official leader of the Sierra Club group heading up to Muir Pass from Florence Lake. Group size within the wilderness is limited to fifteen, but three separate Sierra Club Groups heading to the pass from different trailheads planned to meet at the Memorial Shelter for a unique ceremony in which both Sierra Club and NPS participants shared. The NPS granted us a "Special Use Permit" to assemble briefly as more than fifteen persons. Harnsberger had worked with a designer to prepare a new plaque for the Hut, and an NPS mule team brought the 110-pound bronze plaque up to Muir Pass, in the midst of so many fine Sierra peaks, just in time for the August 25th gathering.

During the rededication ceremony for the Muir Memorial Shelter, Harnsberger outlined the history of the shelter—how Will Colby's inspiration to honor John Muir via a stone structure midpoint on the Sierra trail that bore his name led him to work with prominent Bay Area architect Henry Gutterson—a student of Bernard Maybeck—to design a sturdy building based on a

traditional steep-roofed Italian mountain hut.

Then, no less a personage than John Muir himself—the ceremonial "Ghost of Honor"—in the person of Tehipite Chapter activist and long-time Muir impersonator Frank Helling—described Club history related to the Sierra Nevada; "Muir" was followed by Sierra Club deputy executive director Bruce Hamilton, who highlighted

more recent Sierra Club history in connection with our national parks and how we are emphasizing parks during this centennial year of the National Park Service.

The company, augmented by several passing backpackers who delighted in joining this once-in-a-lifetime celebratory event, then finished the ceremony with two songs, a Scottish ballad once sung by John Muir himself and Woody Guthrie's "This Land is Your Land."



Frank Helling as John Muir at dedication (photo by Donn Furman). Beth Martin's videos are posted here:

<http://youtu.be/VqVXOTRHens>

<http://youtu.be/T2DAOTolqxs>

Death March, Anyone? Reinstein, Tunemah, and Finger

July 29-August 2, 2016

By Tina Bowman

In 1992 Larry Tidball wrote about his trip to climb Reinstein, Finger, and Tunemah: "When I do a *Death March* I don't want anyone around to share in the gore." Noble and sensible. Then in the January-March issue of *The Echo* this year, Nile Sorenson shared his similar trip to these peaks (and Three Sisters) going in on the Woodchuck Trail as Larry had. I know Doug Mantle has gone to Portal Lake via the trail from



Hiking on the plateau before Crown Pass on day one (Photo by Tina Bowman).

Courtright Reservoir. Wanting to go on a trail new to me, I too decided to try the Woodchuck trail and Portal Lake. Fortunately, Paul Garry also needed these remote peaks, so we decided to lead them as an official SPS trip. Maybe we're neither noble nor sensible.

Then I lied in the trip announcement and trip sheet about the trail mileage. Not



paying sufficient attention to both Larry's and Nile's mileage estimates, I relied on RJ's trail descriptions and miles. Rather than the promised fourteen miles and 4000' gain on trail the first day, we went more like eighteen or nineteen miles with 4350' gain. The Tom Harrison maps

Top: Reinstein from the south.

Center: On the summit of Reinstein. Paul Garry at left, Amin Faraday right.

Bottom: Mt. Goddard seen from Reinstein (Photos by Tina Bowman).



indicated about 19.6 miles, but that last segment from Half Moon Lake to the junction with the trail from Courtright on the North Fork of the Kings River seemed more like three or three and a half miles than 4.1. I spent a lot of time apologizing. The Harrison map also seemed to overestimate the distance to the last junction, which we didn't see coming or going, before Portal Lake as also 4.1. Again 3.5 seemed more like it, maybe a little less. My



Above: Tunemah.

Center: on Tunemah's summit, left to right Paul Garry, John Cheslick, Amin Faraday and Bart O'Brien (Photos by Tina Bowman).

Below: Tina Bowman on Tunemah's summit (Photo by Bart O'Brien).

guesses for the climbs were probably closer to what we really hiked.

From the trailhead (bear boxes, outhouse) a short distance beyond the Wishon dam, the trail goes south, then north, and finally east. Starting our trip on Friday, we saw three fellows hiking out and then two rangers, who were in for a few days of work, and then one fellow who had started in the



previous evening about 5:00, shortly after I arrived. We passed various junctions, two of them for a trail that loops to Woodchuck Lake. After hiking on a fine plateau and having lunch at the trail high point (10,400'), we dropped to Crown Pass, on to Half Moon Lake, and then to the aforementioned junction for a nice camp near the river with great spots for rinsing off the trail dust. We arrived about 5:00, having started just after 6:00 that morning.

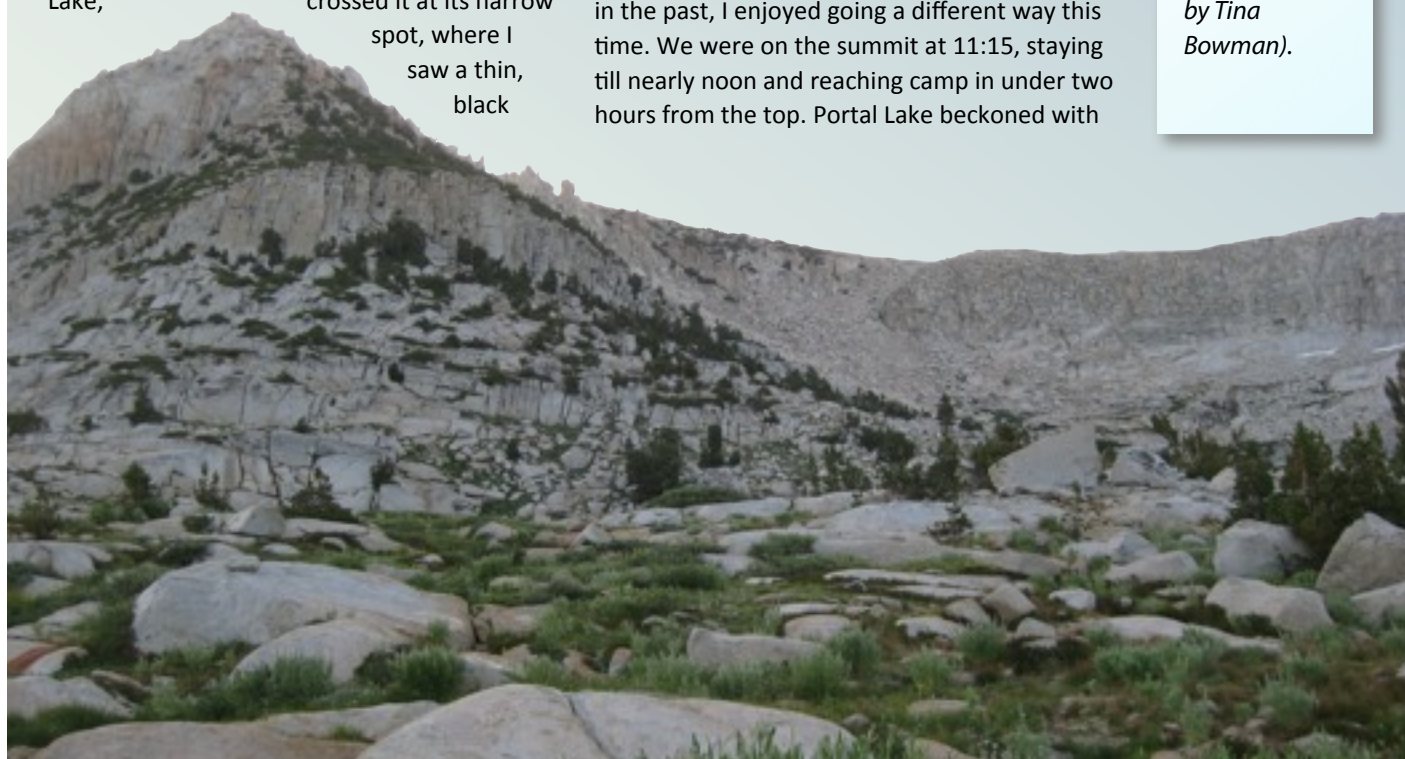


Saturday morning we were on the trail at 6:05, reaching Portal Lake about 8:00. At 8:30, the three of us who needed Reinstein—Paul, Amin Faraday, and I—took off north for that peak. We picked up some use trail to Pearl Lake,

crossed it at its narrow spot, where I saw a thin, black

snake with yellow stripes swimming by the rocks we used as stepping stones (a California Striped Racer, I think). Up we went to Regiment Lake and eventually to Reinstein, Paul leading all the way as he had the day before. Because I had climbed the peak from Martha Lake to the north in the past, I enjoyed going a different way this time. We were on the summit at 11:15, staying till nearly noon and reaching camp in under two hours from the top. Portal Lake beckoned with

Above: Finger Peak from the south. Below: Col on Kettle Ridge (Photos by Tina Bowman).





Finger Peak from the west (Photo by Tina Bowman).

relatively warm water, and we enjoyed a relaxing afternoon and evening. About 10.5 miles and 3500' gain for Saturday.

Sunday was the big day—Tunemah! At 5:53 we started our long up-and-down trek to this remote peak. Using Larry's and Nile's reports, we went into the Crown Basin drainage via a very low rise at the south end of Portal Lake and up to Kettle Ridge very near its northern end, then dropped down to the upper part of Blue Canyon, then up again over what RJ calls Dykeman Pass (near the small pyramid right of the higher ridge) and down, across, and finally up to Tunemah, reaching the summit at 12:07. Whew! This was the one peak on the trip that John Cheslick and Bart O'Brien needed, and we were all happy climbers there on the summit. With a bag of Mint Milano cookies to help in the celebration, we looked around us at so many

peaks on the list. Unfortunately, smoke from a fire near Prather made the views hazy. Taking over the lead again for the journey back to camp, Paul led us down, up, down, up, and down back to camp. We left the top at 12:40 and were back in camp at 6:30, coming back from Kettle Ridge via Midway Lake and big blocks and cliffs to Portal Lake. John packed up and started the hike out while the rest of us cleaned up and had another nice evening at the lake. I guessed about 11.5 miles, and the Avocet registered about 5700' gain.

Monday morning, Paul, Amin, and I again headed to Kettle Ridge and to Finger Peak this time. Bart was going to start his trek out while we were climbing, so we said goodbye to him. We looked at the northwest ridge and southwest face of Finger but couldn't be sure of a third-class route, so we opted to drop down and around the south ridge and up the southeast face to the summit, getting there via this class-two route about 10:00. After scouting a little, I led the start of the northwest ridge route back to Kettle Ridge at 10:25. A few ducks guided us and soon petered out. As we scouted options for the route, Paul ended up taking over the lead again. Close to where we crossed Kettle Ridge (by the "R" in "Ridge" on the topo as Larry noted) we went up a little point where Kettle Ridge ends at the northwest ridge of Finger Peak. We had a good view of Lake Catherine below us on the north side and the north side of this ridge of Finger, quite impressive.

Back in camp about 1:00, we were on our way back down to trail before 2:00, arriving at Half Moon Lake about 5:30. Another party was camped a little ways away. Stats were about eight miles for our loop on Finger and seven miles of trail with 3400' gain.

Back on the trail before 6:00 on Tuesday, we made our way to Crown Pass and the plateau, retracing the route from Friday. On the section of trail going south on the return, there was a lot of uphill for a trail going down. We went about 15.5 miles and 1300' for the day, giving us a total of perhaps seventy-one miles and 18,250' gain. We did take a day longer than either Larry or Nile, but with a group, the extra day seemed sensible, perhaps not noble. Thanks to Paul for leading most of the time. We had a strong group, and we all met our objectives!

Mt. Izaak Walton, July 22-24, 2016

By Beth Epstein

On Friday July 22, David Hymes, Kim La and Tina Bowman joined leaders Anne Mullins and me at the Vermilion Valley Resort for the Lake Edison water taxi loaded with JMT'ers. Fun to mess around in boats and hike into beautiful Mott Lake! Saturday we walked along lovely meadows and streams, past Bighorn Lake, and climbed Izaak Walton via the surprisingly solid granite of the NE face and the saddle on the SE ridge, looping back on the east slopes. Great views and fun company made a perfect Sierra weekend.



Above: Descending from the summit (Photo by Kim La). Below: At the JMT landing, left to right: Anne Mullins, Kim La, Beth Epstein, Tina Bowman, David Hymes. Bottom: Lining up at the JMT landing (Photo by Kim La).



Below: Packs on the boat (Photo by Beth Epstein). Above: Heading toward the saddle (Photo Kim La).



Mt. Conness and North Peak *By Beth Epstein*

On Friday, August 26, it was starting to look like fall when Aimee Shocket, Catalina Cuellar, Chris Alonso, Dave Scobie, Debbie Chavez, Josie Matute, Sridhar Gullapalli, and I followed Mat Kelliher up Lundy Canyon. At the canyon's end, we climbed a thousand feet of red shale alongside a waterfall, and arrived in Tuolumne. The geologic contrast is astounding. Saturday we climbed Conness mostly via the east ridge, and on Sunday North Peak via the east face and hiked out. It was a fun weekend with a great group.



[Top, left to right: Sridhar Gullapalli, Beth Epstein, Mat Kelliher and Chris Alonso on the summit of North Peak. Above: Ascending the east ridge of Conness. We hewed to the ridge and its clean third class until an obstacle forced us onto the slopes at 11,800' (Both images by Mat Kelliher). Below: Heading to Conness from our camp at Shamrock Lake in the morning, North Peak is seen across Steelhead Lake in the foreground and Conness in the distance (Photo by Catalina Cuellar). At left: Mill Creek tumbles down many falls in Lundy Canyon, the queen cascades a thousand feet alongside a steep slope of shale from Lake Helen above (Photo by Aimee Shocket).



A Long Way to Kern Point and Picket Guard

By Tina Bowman

Gary Schenk and I led a trip to two remote peaks, Kern Point and Picket Guard, August 20-24th, though we had planned originally for an extra day. Because three people who had signed up had to work, we had only two participants: Corinne Livingston and Tom Sakowych. We were all surprised by the number of cars at the Shepherd Pass trailhead, overflowing down the road. Some of them belonged to trail workers, others to dayhikers and trail runners, and then the others for backpackers.

Off we started just after 6:00 a.m., enjoying the improved stream crossings. My M.O. these days is “slow and steady.” We took a short break at the last stream crossing so that Tom could get water, but then ground our way up the fifty-four switchbacks to the saddle, where

we took a longer break. We stopped at the stream crossing below Mahogany Flat to cool off and made our way to Anvil Camp for lunch, enjoying the work of the trail crew that repaired the washout from several years ago. The new trail goes higher than the last crossing and then drops back down a little to rejoin the trail.

On we went to Shepherd Pass, resting there, before the gentle descent to the John Muir trail at Tyndall Creek where we camped the first night (bear box there for what didn't fit in our bear canisters). Per the Tom Harrison map, we went 14.4 miles and had about 6400' gain for the day, nothing to sneeze at.

We were on our way the next morning at 6:30, following the JMT to Bighorn Plateau and down to the



Picket Guard midground with the Kaweahs behind (Photo by Tina Bowman).

junction with the High Sierra Trail, where we turned right, following the HST down to Junction Meadow on the Kern River. After a nice break at the river, we began the climb on the Colby Pass Trail to a nice camp on the Kern-Kaweah River between the two peaks, three to three and a half miles from the HST junction. We arrived before 2:00 and set up camp with time to wash off and square ourselves away before the clouds built up and brought us a little rain and a lot of distant thunder and lightning with more rain towards Colby Pass to the west. The stats for today were about twelve miles and 2250' gain.

Monday morning we were on our way a little after 6:00, going up the trail to where a rib comes down from Kern Point. We went up the gentle rib, through some low aspens and a bit of talus, but most of it was easy going. We took some slabs farther up as well. We took a break about every hour and thousand feet of gain, which



worked out nicely. Close to the summit ridge I saw a buck outlined against the morning sun. He watched me take his picture and come closer, where I took another. Corinne saw him, but he decided two humans meant time for him to go.

We reached the summit at 9:20 and enjoyed the view. The Kern River canyon had some smoke from the Cedar

Above: On the summit of Kern Point, left to right: Gary Schenk, Corinne Livingston, and Tom Sakowych. Below: Buck on Kern Point (Photos by Tina Bowman).





fire, presumably. Having found my sign-in from August 2005 (2 x 226), I saw I was a bit off this time around with 3 x 225. I guess I tend to put these peaks off, though in the past I've come in for long trips that included other Great Western Divide peaks. Just north of the peak I saw a golden eagle soaring and landing behind a small rib just to the west and a little down from the summit. When the eagle took off again, Gary and Tom saw it as well. What a treat! The clouds were building with rain falling over Kaweah Basin, so down we went after a little more than half an hour, Gary often in the lead.

We had some hail and a little rain. We stayed farther west on our descent, something I'd done before, and got into bigger aspens for a while as we came down on the east side of a buttress. We avoided a lot of aspens and talus but did have a bit of thrashing about—better to descend this than ascend it. We were back on trail before 12:30 and in camp in another twenty minutes, not long before the rain started again. Having thought of climbing both peaks this day, we scrubbed that plan because of the weather. We had rain several times that afternoon in camp. This day we went about five miles with 3200' gain.

Tuesday saw us going up the trail again, starting just before 6:00. I had scouted a good crossing the previous

Above: Picket Guard viewed from Kern Point, the Kaweahs behind (Photo by Tina Bowman).

day and looked at a good way to the ramp leading to the east- ridge route on Picket Guard that Corinne had pointed out. I thought I had smelled campfire smoke briefly the previous evening, and we saw a tent once we had made the easy crossing of the small river. The campfire ring looked as though it had had recent use. After going up river a little ways on the south side, we started up talus and slabs to arrive at a large, reddish boulder where the ramp angling up to the left (east) started. We followed that up, avoiding steep slabs, and turned onto the east ridge. After about an hour and a thousand feet of gain, we took a break and another once we were looking right at the summit ridge. Easy sand, slabs, and talus took us to the summit block with its third class move or two. On top before 9:10, we were a bit crowded with all four up there, so we came down for snacks and more enjoyment of the views. With clouds building again, we started down about 9:35, Gary often leading again. We were back in camp about 12:30, packing up to head out or up the Kern river.

Corinne and Tom signed out to go up the river, and Gary and I started to retrace our steps to the trailhead at about 1:20. We had rain for a while but then sun as we climbed from Junction Meadow to where the High Sierra



Above: East ridge leading to the summit of Picket Guard, which is just behind the visible high point (Photo by Tina Bowman).

Trail turns east, leaving the Kern River trail. Reaching the junction with the JMT at 5:30, we decided to camp here. We'd had some rain and cold wind on the HST. Of course it sprinkled as we set up tents and for a bit more. The climb of Picket Guard was a bout five miles long round trip with another 7.5-8 miles on trail to reach camp with 5400' gain for the day.

As we headed north on the JMT and then east over Shepherd Pass, we wondered whether Corinne and Tom had made it the day before to the lake on the Kern where the cut-off trail from the JMT to the Kern River trail meets the Kern River the day before and whether they were climbing Junction Peak via Forester Pass. We saw two bucks on the west side of Shepherd Pass and a doe with two fawns still with their spots close to Anvil Camp. We arrived at Anvil Camp a little before noon and had a long lunch while drying our tents. Since we were there so early, we decided to head out to the trailhead. We spoke

to three of the trail crew, thanking them for their work, and to the three people we met at the stream below Mahogany Flat, one of them Signe Swensen, heading in a day early to meet the private group Corinne and Tom were meeting but planning to stay in for more days. Took a break at the saddle that divides the drainages before going down the switchbacks. After the second stream crossing a fellow dressed as a Ninja passed us, black hoodie pulled over his head, dark sunglasses, black buff pulled up over his nose, long sleeves, long black pants with a backpack and waist belt with a water bottle banging about. He didn't say anything as he hurried by.

We reached the trailhead about 5:10, not bad for 18.8 miles, 2700' gain, generous breaks, and a comfortable pace. The lot had some empty spots, and the only cars parked on the road belonged to our group. So ended another fine trip with Gary as co-leader and two more remote peaks checked off the list.



In High Places: The Alps, 1980

By Burt Falk

In mid-July 1980, my two sons—Bret, twenty-two, and Steve, nineteen—my oldest and best friend, Jim Scott, and I arrived in Geneva to join a group of nine climber/clients for a twenty-one day "Scrambles in the Alps" trip, organized by Mountain Travel.

Elated after bagging the Mexican volcanoes earlier that year, Jim and I signed on for the Alps trip because we wanted more of the same. And as a proud dad, I was eager to share the excitement of international climbing with Bret and Steve, both of whom were veteran climbers with at least a hundred local and Sierra summits to their credit. We were also graduates of the bygone Sierra Club Rock Climbing Section classes and had spent many happy hours rock climbing in Joshua Tree, Lily Rock, and elsewhere.

The leaders of the "scrambles" were John Cleare, forty-three, noted British mountain author/photographer, and Bill O'Connor, thirty-two, also a Brit, a former lecturer in Sports

Science at Loughborough University, and a Fellow of the Royal Geographic Society.

Our drive to Arolla in the Peninne Alps that first afternoon was magical. In my journal I noted, "Lake Geneva was dreamlike in splendor—verdant orchard and vineyard-covered hills tumbling down from the north and east. Snow-capped Alps to the south, the placid lake smattered with sailboats."

At Arolla (6,500') that evening, John and Bill, taking pity on their jet-lagged clients, opted to put us up in the Mont Collon Hotel, rather than having us face the task of erecting tents and preparing dinner in the dark. The alpine aura was bolstered further by a meal consisting of a local delicacy—small, whole boiled red potatoes covered with melted cheese and embellished with small pickles and pickled onions.

Day 2 We pitched our tents in a local campground in the morning, after which we hiked to the snout of the nearby Mt. Collon Glacier, where we spent the rainy afternoon reviewing glacier, snow, and ice climbing techniques. Due to the continuing rain, we dined again at the hotel that evening, where several of us left our wet boots to dry in the

Above: Climbing to Bertol Hut, Day 9 (Burt Falk collection).



itches, a double-rope rappel, and four single-rope rappels. It was 9:30 p.m. and pitch dark by the time the last of us reached the deep snow at the bottom of the south side of the peak. We descended the final snowy slopes, mostly by glissading on our feet—the snow being too wet to sit—until we reached the valley road below about 1 a.m. Thankfully, because we met a party of British Commandos who were about ready to set out looking for us, we were able to ride, rather than hike, back to the campground. Following a hasty hot meal, we fell into our bags sometime around 2 a.m.

in the hotel's basement furnace room. After a post-dinner beer or two, we glumly retired to our soggy tents and damp sleeping bags.

Day 3 Arose at 5:15 a.m., gathered our boots at the hotel, and walked down the road some two miles to the base of 10,445' Petite Dent du Veisivi, the first of our scheduled climbs. Our plan was to gain the summit by means of scrambling up a scree slope, hiking through a forest, and summiting via a rock climb. As the morning progressed, John, mountain photographer extraordinaire, offered tips on how to make our mountain shots more interesting. The accompanying photo of Bret and Steve silhouetted against the alpine sky was his idea (photo above).

With our first belay station set up at 1 p.m., our progress slowed dramatically. Employing three, three-man ropes and one two-man rope, it soon became apparent that several in the group were inexperienced in belaying techniques. Our ascent dragged on so long that the last of our party didn't reach the summit until 6 p.m.

And then we slowed even further. Our down climb involved two roped-up

Day 4 Because it continued to rain this morning and the weather report was even gloomier, rather than climbing we spent most of the day further reviewing alpine climbing techniques, including the crossing of a stream via a Tyrolean traverse (photo below). So many fellow climbers were also stranded in the valley by bad weather that we attracted a crowd of spectators on a nearby bridge for our crossings.

Day 5 At last the clouds lifted. We spent the morning sorting out food and equipment, and at 1:30 p.m. began a 4,000' climb to the commodious Vignette Hut (10,300'), located between Mt. Collon and Pigne D'Arolla. Because it was the first clear day in several, however, when we arrived at the hut at 6 p.m., we found it was already packed. Furthermore, the hut manager explained that we would have to wait our turn to use the kitchen area. By the time we



Above, day 3: Bret and Steve pose in silhouette, per John Cleare's suggestion (collection of Burt Falk).

At left: Steve Falk practicing the Tyrolean traverse on rainy day 4 (Burt Falk Collection).



Left: crossing the Glacier Du Mont Mine, Day 10 (photo Burt Falk Collection).

Below: on climb of Dufourspitze, Gorner Glacier in the background. (Photo Burt Falk collection).

prepared our dinner—pasta with tomato paste squeezed out of a toothpaste-like tube—I was so overwhelmed with fatigue that I couldn't eat. That night we slept in a dormitory room on a long, common bed shared with several other climbers.

Day 6 The hut manager awakened us at 3:17 a.m., and by 4:30 a.m. we were crossing the Glacier du M. Collon, on our way to climb 12,190' L'Eveque. I noted in my journal, "The early morning light gave a magical aura to the scene; lenticular clouds were changing colors with each passing moment. I was so intent on the climb, however, that I didn't enjoy the splendor as much as I should have."

Perhaps the most interesting event of the day occurred when Jim accidentally dropped his pack from the top of L'Eveque, falling some 1,300' before it was lost to sight. Although we managed to find it on our descent, someone else had discovered it first and removed a few items, including Jim's

altimeter.

That night, once again at the Vignette Hut, our dinner consisted of split pea soup, pasta left over from the day before, mashed potatoes (what the Brits referred to as

"mash"), and fresh tomatoes and peaches.

Day 7 Today we climbed Pigne D'Arolla (12,454'), arriving on the summit a little after 7 a.m., to find a traffic jam of climbers and a tangle of ropes. That afternoon, after returning to our campsite in Arolla, several of us walked down to the hotel to take baths and again leave our boots to dry in the furnace room.

Day 8 Rest day. During the afternoon some of us practiced climbing on a nearby rock until it began to rain



once more. By the time we got back to camp, it was pouring, and pools were forming on the floor of our kitchen tent.

Day 9 Although it was still raining in the morning, John and Bill decided that, since the weather report called for afternoon clearing and because we were behind schedule, we should begin packing up for a two-day traverse to Zermatt by way of the Bertol Hut (10,683') and an ascent of Tete Blanche.

Setting off at 1:30 p.m. from the trailhead near the base of the Mt. Collon Glacier, we began our 4,000' climb with me, somehow, in the lead. In my journal I noted, "It was almost impossible to tell which way I was going, as the clouds were thick and it was snowing. Maybe Maui would have been a better place to spend my summer vacation, I thought. Later, as it began to clear, we could observe only one fresh pair of boot tracks in the new snow. We entertained visions of having the Bertol Hut to ourselves."

To avoid being swept away by avalanches, the Bertol Hut sits on the top of a rocky crag and is thus approached by means of cables and a ladder. Arriving there at 5:15 p.m., "to our disappointment we find that the hut is already crowded (mostly by German-speaking climbers) and that a large group of teenagers who made prior reservations would be arriving shortly. This means we have to prepare dinner, dine rapidly, and then clear out of the dining area. It also means that our group of twelve will have to sleep in area normally used to sleep eight."

To compound my discomfort, I managed to spring a hemorrhoid on today's climb, and "I make maximum efforts to spend the evening on my stomach."

Day 10 Wake up call at 3 a.m. After a hurried breakfast of bread and jam, we bundle up, descend the ladder to the saddle below, and strap on our crampons. The morning's problem is immediately apparent—too much fresh snow and no icy crust.

I wrote, "Bill O'Conner takes the first lead, heading east across the Glacier Du Mont Miné. Beautiful early dawn snow scenes come and go with alarming rapidity as we press upward in three rope teams of four. Soon Bill is exhausted, so John Cleare takes over. John, who is forty-three, is amazingly strong, and the pace he sets across the pristine snow makes me pant.

"About 10:30 we make the top of Tete Blanche (12,172'), a small peak situated on the Swiss-Italian Border. Although unimposing, it possesses an awe-inspiring view of the west side of the Matterhorn."

Continuing down a glacier heading toward the resort city of Zermatt (5,200'), the temperature warms and the snow softens. About 1:30 p.m. we reach the Schonbiel Hut (8,800'), awash both with day hikers from Zermatt and sheep, where we remove our underclothing and gaiters, hoist a beer, and take short snoozes in the alpine sun.

In mid-afternoon we arrive in Zermatt, a busy resort town where autos are verboten and where, after pillaging

not one but two gelato shops, we check into the ultra-inexpensive Bahnhof Hotel, Zermatt's answer to Motel 6. We roll out our sleeping bags in the hotel's commodious attic, take much needed showers, and because we are on our own for dinner tonight, we make the most of it by dining at the nearby Ristorante Seilerhaus, where we order pasta with meat sauce instead of tomato paste—good old Spaghetti Bolognese.

Days 11-13 were spent climbing Switzerland's highest, the 15,203' Dufourspitze (see write up in previous *Sierra Echo*, vol. 38, issue 3, May-June 1994).

To be continued in the next issue.



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SPS TEES
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Back: FULL SPS LIST
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(\$4 shipping when ordering 2 or more shirts). Send your order to:
Patty Kline, 20362 Callon Drive
Topanga, CA 90290
Make check payable to SPS
CST 2087766-40

Our jointly sponsored CalTech talks begin October 3. See full schedule on page 28.

Oct 5 | Wed LTC, SPS, DPS, WTC

M/E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program (AMP14): 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 Ldr: Dan Richter. Asst: Patrick McKusky.

Oct 8 | Sat LTC, SPS, DPS, WTC

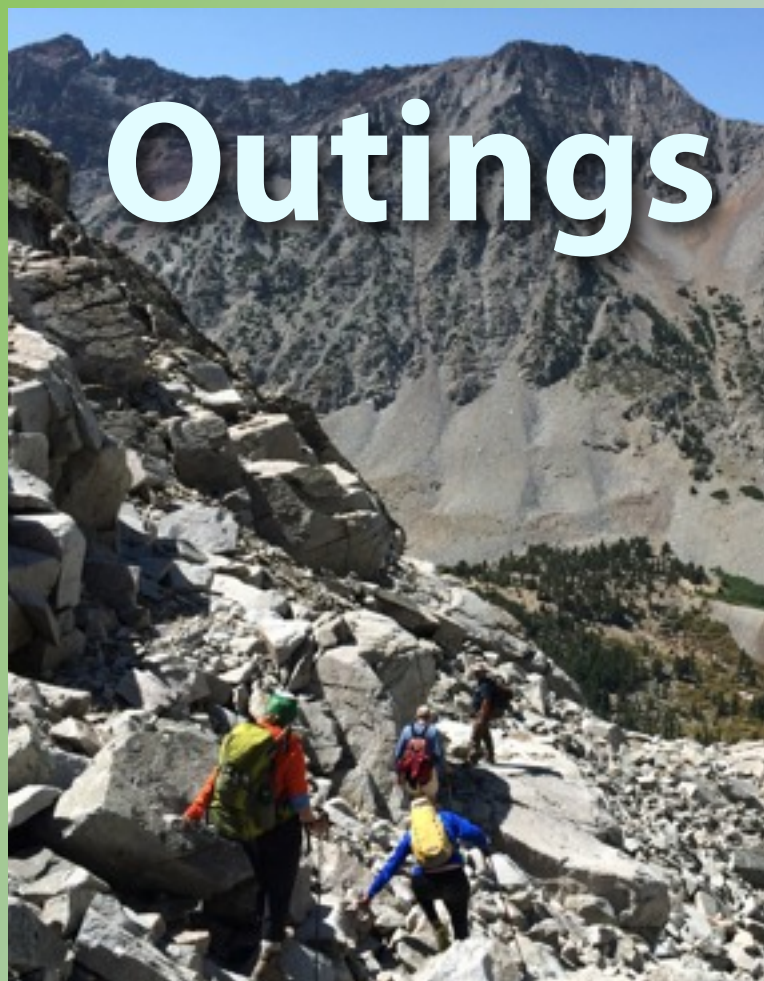
M/E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program (AMP14): Belaying: Second of four climbing workshops open to Sierra Club members with prior roped climbing experience. Today, at Stoney Point in Chatsworth, focus is on belaying and principles of anchor building. As space is limited, priority will be given to participants who commit to all four workshops. Send email or sase, phones, resume to Ldr: Dan Richter. Asst: Patrick McKusky.

Oct 8 | Sat LTC, WTC, HPS

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 Ldr: Diane Dunbar. Co-Ldr: Richard Boardman.

Oct 15 | Sat LTC, SPS, DPS, WTC

M/E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program (AMP14): 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



Descending Warren on August 30, 2015 (Photo by Beth Epstein).

We've chosen the photo above showing Mat Kelliher leading a group down Mt. Warren to represent the outings section. Do you have a photo you would like to see here? If so, please send your submission as an email attachment to tina@bowmanchange.com or via USPS to Tina Bowman.

rappelling. As space is limited, priority will be given to participants who commit to all four workshops. Send email or sase, phones, resume to Ldr: Dan Richter. Asst: Patrick McKusky.

Oct 22-23 | Sat-Sun LTC, SPS, DPS, WTC

M/E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program (AMP14): Rock climbing techniques and anchors: Fourth of four climbing workshops open to Sierra Club members with prior roped climbing experience. This weekend

Visit the SPS website for an even more up-to-date listing of upcoming trips at www.sierrapeaks.org

Also, please check at summitregister.org whether a peak needs a register book or pencil before you go on a climb.

OUTINGS

Leaders in this issue's schedule:

Richard Boardman - 310-374-4371
Diane Dunbar 818-248-0455 dianedunbar@charter.net
Jack Kieffer 714-522-1376 jockorock42@yahoo.com
Patrick McKusky 626-794-7321 pamckusky@att.net
Robert Myers 310-829-3177 rmmymers@ix.netcom.com
Dan Richter 818-970-6737 dan@danrichter.com
Ann Shields 818-637-2542 apedreschi@sbcglobal.net

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 Ldr: Dan Richter. Asst: Patrick McKusky.

Oct 28-30 | Fri-Sun

LTC

C: Wilderness First Aid Course at Harwood Lodge: The course runs from 7:30 am Friday to 5:00 pm Sunday. Fee includes instruction, lodging, and meals. Proof of CPR within previous 4 yrs required to enroll. Fee \$250 (full refund until 9/23/16). For sign-up, see instructions and application at www.wildernessfirstaidcourse.org

Oct 29-30 | Sat-Sun

LTC

M/E-R: Rock: Indian Cove/Sheep Pass Checkout, Joshua Tree National Park: M- and E-level rock practice and checkout for LTC leadership candidates. Practice Saturday, checkout Sunday. Restricted to Sierra Club members with technical rock climbing experience. Climbing helmets and harnesses required. Email climbing resume to Leader: Patrick McKusky. Asst: Dan Richter.

Come One, Come All to Caltech!

The SPS and SCMA (Southern California Mountaineering Association) are the co-sponsors for this year's series of talks presented by the Caltech Alpine Club on the Caltech campus in the Beckman Institute Auditorium. All talks run from 7:00 to 7:45 with pizza and beer (21+ only) being served afterwards. This year's presentations have a wide variety of topics. For more information on the topic of the talks, please go to http://alpine.ugcs.caltech.edu/index.php?title=Member_Talks Here's the line up:

Mon, Oct 3 Edmond Stevens (CAC), "Climbing Attempt of the North Col Northeast Ridge Route on Mount Everest"

Thurs, Oct 13 Vito Rubino (CAC), "Against the Odds: Our Mountain Biking Adventure from Canada to Mexico"

Mon, Oct 17 Kelvin Nguyen (SCMA), "ArtDoors--Artwork of the OutDoors"

Tues, Oct 25 Marja Seidel (CAC), "Cielo y Terra"

Tues, Nov 8 Jeremy Broiullet (CAC), "Trekking to Everest South Col Southeast Ridge Base Camp"

Tues, Nov 15 Thomas McHenry (CAC), "Climbing All the California 14ers"

Mon, Nov 21 Carly Robison (CAC), "Hiking in Sierra's Most Crowded Places"

Tues, Nov 29 Beth Epstein and Kim Gimenez (SPS), "The Gore-Tex Transalpine Run"

Mon, Dec 5 Cody Finke (CAC), "Spring and Summer Ski Mountaineering in the Cascade Range"

Thurs, Dec 8 Reel Rock 11 Film Festival

OUTINGS

Nov 19 | Sat

LTC, WTC

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#, cl 3 experience, conditioning, contact info to Ldr: Robert Myers. Co-Ldr: Jack Kieffer.

Nov 19-20 | Sat-Sun

LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS

I: Navigation: Indian Cove Navigation Noodle:

Navigation noodle at Joshua Tree National Park to satisfy the basic (I/M). Sat for practice, skills

Call for Outings!

By Gary Schenk, Outings Chair

Leaders, it's never too early to begin planning outings for next spring, summer, and early fall. Getting people into the outdoors is the most important thing we do. Truly, mountaineering is the heart of the Sierra Club. We had a good list of trips last year; let's have an even better one for the 2017 season!

Leaders, please, if you are planning a restricted "M" or "E" trip, give extra lead time for the Mountaineering Oversight Committee approval process.

Provisional leaders, please make sure that the Provisional Lead Committee has approved your trip before submitting your trip for publication.

If you have any questions of concerns, do not hesitate to contact me at gary@hbfun.org.

Wilderness Permit Info

In addition to the permit information described below, most reservations for the Inyo National Forest and the Desolation Wilderness up to 48 hours in advance of entry can be handled at: <http://recreation.gov>

INYO NATIONAL FOREST

Web site: www.r5.fs.fed.us/inyo
Pick up permit closest to departure trailhead.

Eastern Sierra InterAgency Visitor Center, Lone Pine, CA
(760) 876-6200

White Mountain Ranger Station, Bishop, CA 93514
(760) 873-2500

Mammoth Lakes Visitor Center, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546
(760) 924-5500

Mono Basin Scenic Area Visitor Center, Lee Vining, CA 93541
(760) 647-304

KERN PLATEAU

Web site: www.r5.fs.fed.us/sequoia

Cannell Meadow Ranger District
105 Whitney Road
P.O. Box 9
Kernville, CA 93238
Phone: 760/376-3781 fax:
760/376-3795

Tule River Ranger District
32588 Highway 190
Springville, CA 93265
Phone: (559) 539-2607

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Web site: www.nps.gov/yose
Reservation requests for summer trips (mid-May through September) are accepted from 2 weeks to 24 weeks in advance on-line or by writing to
Yosemite Association
PO Box 545
Yosemite, CA 95389

By phone: reservations for summer trips are accepted by calling (209) 372-0740.

Obtain your free permit from the Wilderness Permit Station nearest your departure trailhead. Call (209) 372-0200 for permit station locations.

If entering park from Cherry Lake in the Stanislaus National Forest to

Kibbie Lake and Lake Eleanor in Yosemite, you must get your permit from the Stanislaus National Forest Ranger Station on Highway 120 in Groveland. Call (209) 962-7825. If entering the park from Chiquito Pass in Sierra National Forest, permits for the whole trip must be obtained from the forest Service in North Fork. Call (559) 877-2218

SEQUOIA AND KINGS CANYON NP

Web site: www.nps.gov/seki
47050 Generals Highway
Three Rivers, CA. 93271-9599
Phone (559) 565-3766 for permit & trail info. Fax (559) 565-4239

SIERRA NATIONAL FOREST (WESTSIDE) ENTRY

Web site: www.fs.fed.us/r5/sierra
Ansel Adams Wilderness--North Bass Lake Ranger District
57003 Road 225
North Fork, CA 93643
Phone: (559) 887-2218

Ansel Adams Wilderness--South John Muir, Kaiser and Dinkey Lakes Wildernesses
Pineridge/Kings River Ranger District
29688 Auberry Road
Prather, CA 93651
Phone: (559) 855-5355

OUTINGS

SPS outings can always be viewed online on the electronic Angeles Chapter Schedule of Activities:

<http://angeles2.sierraclub.org/activities>
<http://angeles.sierraclub.org/sps/outingsAwesome.asp>

refresher, altimeter, homework, campfire. Sun checkout.
Send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training,
any WTC, leader rating, rideshare to Ldr: Robert Myers. Asst:

Ann Shields. Note: Early (at least two weeks prior to the event) sign-up for all navigation checkoffs and practices is recommended. These outings require substantial pre-outing preparation work, including completion of both a comprehensive written exam and a route planning assignment that will be mailed to you prior to the checkoff. See Chapter 6 of the *Leader's Reference Book* for more information. Send contact information (including mailing address) and your qualifications to the leader as soon as possible.

SPS Management Committee Meeting, Sunday, June 19, 2016, 4:30 p.m. at the Home of Tina Bowman

1. Call to order. Present: Tina Bowman, chair; Jim Fleming, vice-chair; Paul Garry, secretary; Alexander Smirnoff, treasurer; Gary Schenk, outings; Harry Langenbacher, mountain records.
 2. Standard business and reports
 - a. Approval of minutes—Done via email
 - b. Chair
 - i. Smatko Peak—Board of Geographic Names still reviewing and collecting input from local sources.
 - c. Vice Chair - Banquet review
 - i. Update—Speaker (Bob Cates confirmed to speak about the life of Glen Dawson), date, venue are all set. We received contract. Price increase of \$2.00 per meal. Event will be in Palm Court.
 - ii. Awards—Leadership and Lifetime Achievement—discussion of possible nominees.
 - d. Outings—All ok. Lots of trips. Jim to lead intro hike in the fall.
 - e. Treasurer's report—Current balance of \$9,006.44
 - f. Emblem Committee Report—No report.
 - g. Outreach—No report.
 - h. Archivist—No report.
 - i. *Echo*
 - i. August 25th deadline for next issue
 - ii. Really old issues need to be scanned and downloaded to the website. Paul and Alexander volunteered to scan. Tina will check with Dan regarding access to the archives at UCLA.
 - j. Mountain Records—Harry is submitting some bills for expenses incurred for ammo boxes. Harry's contact working on modifications to Glen Dawson register for Thunderbolt.
 - k. IT—No report.
 - l. Website
 - i. Restoring old links—Old *Echoes* and really old trip reports under "About Us" and "First Year of Official SPS Trips"—still no progress.
 - ii. Hybrid website (see email from Joe Wankum)—No decision made.
 - m. Conservation—We need a conservation chair!
 - n. Safety Chair—No report.
3. Old Business
 - a. SPS Safety Policy—Tina drafted policy based on Chapter Safety Policy. Ready to send to Safety Committee for review.
 - b. SPS welcome/conditioning hike (local) - Meet Up?—Maybe Mt. Wilson in winter, cosponsored with HPS?
 3. New business
 - a. Next meeting date: Tuesday, August 16, 7:00 p.m., at Alexander's house.

OUTINGS

Dec 11 | Sat

LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS

(including mailing address) and your qualifications to the leader as soon as possible.

I: Navigation: Warren Point Navigation Noodle: Navigation noodle at Joshua Tree National Park for either checkoff or practice to satisfy the basic (I/M) level or Advanced (E) level navigation requirements. To participate, send email with contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare to Ldr: Robert Myers. Asst: Ann Shields. Note: Early (at least two weeks prior to the event) sign-up for all navigation checkoffs and practices is recommended. These outings require substantial pre-outing preparation work, including completion of both a comprehensive written exam and a route planning assignment that will be mailed to you prior to the checkoff. See Chapter 6 of the [Leader's Reference Book](#) for more information. Send contact information

REGARDING DISTRIBUTION OF THE ECHO

Please contact this email address newsletter@sierrapeaks.org for any problems with distribution of hardcopy or email versions.



SPS Income Statement 08-30-2016

	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD	Final	Final	Final	Final
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023		2012	2013	2014	2015
INCOME													
Echo Subscriptions	1,610	760	420	220	90	50	30	10		1,835	1,360	1,560	1,560
Banquet Income	3,760	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		2,800	2,940	4,610	4,110
Donations	723	350	150	105	40	15	15	0		340	440	575	651
	151	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		39	27	276	395
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0
Total Income	6,244	1,110	570	325	130	65	45	10		5,014	4,767	7,021	6,716
EXPENSES													
Postage	345	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		609	(4)	14	938
Printing	270	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		578	898	640	706
Merchandise	130	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	196	234
Raffle	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	250	0
Banquet Expenses	4,710	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		3,216	4,206	5,640	4,772
Bank Fees	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		18	2	10	5
Website	84	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			0	268	36
Charitable contributions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		400	0	0	200
Outreach	254	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	899
Membership meetings/activities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	1,257
Register Related	57	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0
Total Expenses	5,863	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		4,821	5,103	7,019	9,048
OVERALL TOTAL	381	1,110	570	325	130	65	45	10		193	(336)	2	(2,332)

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 **Tina Bowman, Editor, *The Sierra Echo***, preferably via email at tina@bowmanchange.org. Refer to the SPS Roster for mailing address. The *Echo* will also be available as a PDF download at the SPS website and via a link sent to all SPS members opting for this method.



SPS Management Committee Meeting, Tuesday, August 16, 2016, 7:00 p.m. at the Home of Alexander Smirnoff

1. Call to order. Present: Tina Bowman, chair; Alexander Smirnoff, treasurer; Paul Garry, secretary; Jeremy Netka, outreach.
 2. Standard business and reports
 - a. Approval of minutes—none to approve.
 - b. Chair
 - i. Smatko Peak proposal to name a peak for Andy Smatko still grinding through the system.
 - c. Vice Chair absent, banquet is well set for January.
 - d. Outings—No report.
 - e. Treasurer's report—to be emailed, current balance \$8,518. Three new members.
 - f. Emblem Committee Report—Bob Pickering Explorer Emblem pending review.
 - g. Outreach—Tina to contact Beth Epstein again about giving a slideshow for the Caltech Alpine Club speaker series the SPS is cohosting. We will look into sponsoring Reel Rock Film Festival.
 - h. Archivist—No report.
 - i. *Echo*
 - i. August 25th deadline for next issue
 - ii. Really old issues need to be scanned and downloaded to the website (Bob Ayers has offered to send 1970s-80s issues, which Paul and Alexander have volunteered to scan).
 - j. Mountain Records—nothing new from SEKI about registers or from guys making containers.
 - k. IT—No report.
 - l. Website—The committee discussed and accepted Joe Wankum's offer to build a Drupal website for the SPS, which will bring the website under the Sierra Club and Angeles Chapter umbrella. Tina to ask him whether he might rework the current site.
 - m. Conservation —We need a conservation chair!
 - n. Safety Chair —No report.
3. Old Business
 - a. SPS Safety Policy—Revised Safety Policy is in hands of the Safety Committee, awaiting review and approval.
 - b. SPS welcome/conditioning hike (local)—Meet Up?—still nothing planned.
 4. New business
 - a. Jonathon Bourne—SPS member who has pled guilty to felony charges of removing archeological resources. Tina will contact Jane Simpson/national about rescinding his membership.
 - b. Getting new SPS members through the Caltech Alpine Club speaker series—we'll have membership application forms, brochures, etc. at the speakers series.
 - c. Next meeting date set for Tuesday, October 18th, 7:00, either at Alexander's or by a teleconference.

A Way across the Mountains: Joseph Walker's 1833 Trans-Sierran Passage and the Myth of Yosemite's Discovery
By Scott Stine (2015)

Reviewed by Burton A. Falk

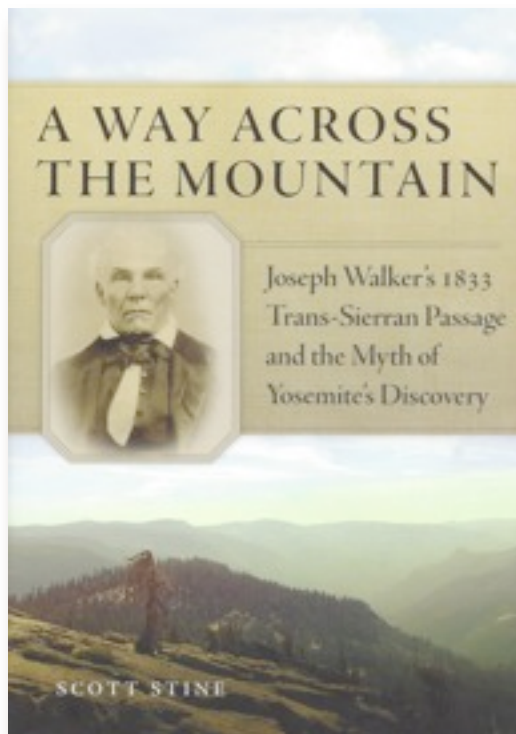
One of the better stories entrenched in the lore of the U.S. West concerns the trans-Sierra Nevada journey of Joseph Walker and his band of trappers who, during the fall of 1833, made their way from the Rocky Mountains to the hopefully bountiful streams and rivers of California.

Based on an obituary of Joseph Walker written by a newspaper man who interviewed the aged explorer shortly before his death in Concord, California, on October 27, 1876, it has become widely believed that Walker and his men, while on their harrowing, twenty-nine day traverse of the Sierra Nevada, became the first non-natives to view the wonders of Yosemite Valley.

This reviewer, too, bought into the Yosemite sighting story. In a recent review, published in the Desert Peak Section's *Desert Sage*, I wrote,

On October 20 (1833), based on a journal kept by Zenas Leonard, one of Walker's men, the group came to the brink of the Yosemite Valley, thus becoming the first non-natives to view the natural wonder. Unable to descend the steep valley walls, they eventually found a route into the San Joaquin Valley via the ridge somewhere between Yosemite Valley and the equally impressive Tuolumne Canyon.

Two weeks after that review was published, I received a copy of a brand-spanking new volume, *A Way across the Mountain: Joseph Walker's 1833 Trans-Sierran Passage and the Myth of Yosemite's Discovery* (2015), by Scott Stine. The friend who sent me the volume, Bryan Wilson, a Palo Alto attorney, became acquainted with Stine while both were active in the successful "Save Mono Lake" Campaign—Wilson providing pro-bono legal work; Stine, a Professor in the Department of Anthropology, Geography and Environmental



Studies at California State University, East Bay, providing valuable background information. Knowing I was interested in desert history, Bryan thoughtfully sent me a copy. After binge reading the 317-page volume, I came away with clashing reactions—appreciation for the time and effort Stine spent researching and publishing this masterpiece; chagrin in realizing that only two weeks after my review was published it was out-of-date.

In his introduction, Stine explains that as "an avid hiker with a love of maps and several trans-Sierran treks behind me," he had formed doubts about Walker's route as proposed by Francis Farquhar in his 1965

volume, *History of the Sierra Nevada*. Indeed, Farquhar, a former president of the Sierra Club, contended that, based on Walker's obituary and a description of the area by Leonard, the trappers had "a glimpse of one of the wonders of the world." "Search the whole Sierra," he continued, "and you can find but one spot that would inspire this description—the northern brink of Yosemite Valley."

Stine was puzzled as to why Walker, a veteran mountain man, would forego "the relatively low front of the northern Sierra (where he first encountered the range), proceed south along the base of the progressively higher and more rugged mountain block, then scale the imposing range face east of Yosemite."

Deciding to investigate further, during the summer of 1999 Stine laid out plans to determine Walker's route accurately, including a close examination of the timelines as noted in Leonard's 1839 journal's-based book, *Narrative of the Adventures of Zenas Leonard, a Native of Clearfield County Pa., Who Spent Five Years Trapping for Furs, Trading with the Indians, Etc., Etc., of the Rocky Mountains: Written by Himself*; a determination of the upper limits of the trappers' average daily mileage; and a careful examination of topographic maps and aerial photos of the area.

By the autumn of 2000, in confirmation of his suspicions, Stine had concluded that Walker and his brigade could not have come anywhere close to Yosemite.

So what route did Walker and his men take? Well, during the following decade—always in his spare time—Stine not only scoured documentary sources, but also hiked more than three hundred miles studying the topography, vistas, and vegetation, until, at last, in concurrence with Leonard's vague descriptions, he settled on a route which he considered the "sole solution."

Stine determined that Walker and his men ascended the West Carson River, turned south into Charity Valley, and then followed the present day route of State Highway 5 (Blue Lakes Road)—east of The Nipple and west of Markleeville Peak—to where it now crosses the Pacific Crest Trail. From there—with **Round Top** and **Mokelumne Peak**, the nearest SPS peaks not far to the north—they zigzagged down the western slope of the Sierra, passed over Deadwood Highland, descended the north side of the Stanislaus River Canyon, proceeded through the North Calaveras Grove of Sequoia trees—where they became the first Euro-Americans to record *Sequoiadendron*—and finally exited the Sierra in the foothills near present-day Angels Camp.

Voila, the men were in California, where, after checking in with the Mexican authorities in Monterey, they spent the winter of 1833-34 in a camp most likely located on the eastern edge of the Diablo Mountains near present day Los Banos.

Although the book could have ended at this point, Stine continues, first dismissing an alternate route proposed by Joseph Meek, a member of Walker's 1833 crossing, and then considering how the notion got started that Walker and his men became the first non-natives to view the Yosemite Valley. The story became so well ingrained, in fact, that even Walker's tombstone claimed he "Camped at Yosemite, November 13, 1833."

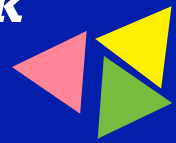
Stine also includes Appendix A, "Leonard's Account of the Journey to and across the Sierra Nevada," the portion of Leonard's *Narrative* that recounts Walker and his men's journey between Great Salt Lake and the California coast. Because Leonard had no established place names to refer to and because he was often in error on his dates, the author has interjected, in bold face type, his own comments amending and correcting the original text.

In "Appendix B, The Path Back," Stine, again using Leonard's *Narrative* as a guide, follows Walker and his brigade as, during the spring of 1834, they plied their even more hazardous journey while returning to Great Salt Lake area.

There is no argument that on that trek Walker and his men became the first non-natives to cross the Sierra Nevada via present-day Walker Pass. The brigade then continued through the Owens Valley, passed present-day Indian Wells and Lone Pine, and arrived at Keough Hot Springs on or about April 25. Continuing, the group passed through present-day Bishop, Round Valley, Chalfant Valley, and Benton Valley, and then turned east to enter present day Nevada by way of Montgomery Pass.

Once over the Pass and in the Columbus Salt Marsh area, Walker, according to Leonard, decided that the group should

Mystery Peak Challenge Answer



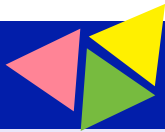
The photo in last issue's mystery peak challenge was taken at the Interagency Visitor Center at the south end of Lone Pine.

To the left of the flagpole is Lone Pine Peak; to the right, Mt. Whitney. Moving left from Lone Pine Peak, one can also see LeConte and Corcoran; to the right of Whitney are Russell and Carrilon.

Congratulations to Bill Oliver, the first to answer correctly!

strike out "in a north-eastern direction, which would shorten our route considerably, if we could only be so successful as to surmount the difficulties of travelling through loose sand, without water, (as the streams descending from the mountain into the plain all sink.)"

Well, Walker's plan was almost fatal. After two days without water (May 16 and 17), and being subjected to sand stinging their eyes and scouring their animals,



Mystery Peak Challenge

This occasional just-for-fun puzzle is for you to figure out which Sierra peak or peaks are featured in the image. If you have a fine mystery peak puzzle to challenge *Echo* readers, please send it to tina@bowmanchange.com. We welcome any mountain images, including those from popular culture—imagery used and abused in film and print!



The political season is upon us. Check out the background in this image of Paul Simon singing at the Democratic National Convention submitted by Shane Smith. What Sierra Peak is featured? Good luck!

Check out the SPS website if you have not visited in a while—the puzzle also appears there!

www.sierrapeaks.org

crippling many, Walker's men demanded they backtrack to the mountains. Reluctant at first, Walker finally relented, and on their May 18 and 19 return, "dehydration killed sixty-four horses, ten cattle, and fifteen dogs." Leonard reported that blood was sucked from their fallen horses to stay slaked.

To compound their problems, while traveling at night, the brigade became lost, and if it weren't for their remaining horses pulling them in the direction of "a beautiful stream of fresh water," the party may not have survived.

Analyzing Leonard's sparse description of those grim days, along with information obtained from other sources, Stein proposes the "beautiful stream" that saved the

brigade was a watercourse running into the Columbia Salt Marsh from the slopes of 8,729' Miller Mountain.

Continuing, the brigade's route, "conjectural at best," probably headed northwesterly through Rhodes Salt Marsh, Soda Springs Valley, along the east side of Walker Lake, past Soda Lake, until it finally reached the Humboldt Sink, where they joined their previous autumn's trail.

From there, on June 8, 1834, Walker and his men began retracing their path back to the Great Salt Lake area.

A Way across the Mountain is a gem. If you have an appreciation for western history and for a mountaineer who, with an inquiring mind and elegance, turned his obsession into a significant historic correction, this is the book for you.



The Sierra Echo

Volume 60 ▲ Number 4 ▲ October-December 2016

The Sierra Echo is published quarterly by the Sierra Peaks Section (SPS) of the Sierra Club, Angeles Chapter.

Publication dates are Mar 15, Jun 15, Sept 15, and Dec 15. All text submissions for publication, including trip reports, articles, etc., can be submitted in electronic format such as MS Word (preferred), 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 Tina Bowman or emailed to tina@bowmanchange.com**

Deadline for all submissions is three (3) weeks prior to the publication date, i.e., Feb 22, May 25, Aug 25, and Nov 24.

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