



The Sierra Echo

Volume 66 ▲ Number 1 ▲ January-March 2022

Greg Gerlach rappelling
off the waterfall pitch on
Starlight Peak

(Photo by Ben Rademacher).

Also in This Issue

Paul Garry List Finish, Kaweah and
Empire, West Vidette, Emblem
Journey, Passage of Nile Sorenson

Echoes from the Chair

By Tina Bowman



(Photo Courtesy Tina Bowman)

Greetings, all!

Because this is my last column as chair, I first wish to write that it has been a great pleasure and privilege to serve on the management committee on this run since 2015. The SPS is blessed with people willing to serve who do an excellent job in their positions, whether elected or appointed. Thank you to all of the members of the management committee and other appointed volunteers, who make the section run from month to month and year to year.

When you receive this, the annual SPS election will be in progress, or will soon. Not only do I encourage you to vote, but please consider running yourself next time or serving in one of the appointed positions or volunteering to take on a task or project. We've been meeting by Zoom at a mutually convenient time for about an hour, often less, every two months. We welcome other members, not just the management committee, to participate or simply see what goes on.

At this time, it looks like outings in the next Sierra season will require a medical form from each participant and leader, and leaders need to fill out a safety management plan for each outing. Those who have gone on restricted M- or E-level outings are used to filling out a medical form. Now a similar form but with added COVID-19 questions is required on each "backcountry" outing. We're hoping that this might change at least somewhat, so keep your fingers crossed. The form does have very useful information in case someone becomes ill or has an accident. Fortunately, the same completed form can be used on multiple outings—leaders are encouraged

to return them to participants at the end of outings. Much of the required safety management plan is already entered by virtue of a leader's posting an outing in Campfire, and we're hoping to prepare a template or give leaders a link about the nearest hospital and such for the various areas in which we climb. I filled out such a plan form last summer for the trip to Kaweah, and it was pretty straightforward. Stay tuned for more information!

Enjoy our wonderful Sierra safely and responsibly. I look forward to seeing you in the mountains!

Happy trails, good and safe climbing, and farewell,
Tina

In this issue:

Chair's Column	2
Banquet	3
Member News	4-5
Paul Garry List Finish	6
Around the Web	7
North Palisade & Starlight	8-10
Mt. Kaweah, Empire Peak	11-14
West Vidette	15-18
A Quest for Emblem Peaks	19-23
Rodenticides	24
Outings	25-27
Wilderness Permits	26
Minutes	28
Passages: Nile Sorenson	29-33
Mystery Peak Challenge	34-35

2022 Sierra Peaks Section Virtual Annual

BANQUET

Sunday, January 23rd, via Zoom



Vitaliy Musiyenko presents

A Sierra Crest Odyssey

The Goliath Traverse

A first ascent of a massive traverse link-up on the Sierra Crest, which required complex logistical planning, a cool head, the physical preparation of an ultrarunner, the lightest gear on the market, and a high threshold of pain. A true Goliath.

7:00 Social hour with breakout rooms for visiting. Program begins at 8:00.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://uso6web.zoom.us/j/8172626379?pwd=Sk56SytUV29VR29NWIB5dTbQVERjQT09>

Meeting ID: 817 262 6379 Passcode: 092093



Photos by Vitaliy Musiyenko

Welcome New Members!

Jon Seaton

Jon grew up in Los Angeles and spent his childhood summers visiting the Eastern Sierra, fishing and hiking with his family. He started backpacking at twenty-years old and can never get enough of the High Sierra. Over the years his ambition to explore the mountains has grown, seeking longer days scrambling off trail to more remote destinations. In 2019 he hiked Roper's Sierra High Route and recently set his sights on more summit adventures. At home he is an artist and fabricator, constantly dreaming of being outdoors in the range of light where he finds his biggest inspiration. Being at 10,000 feet in the Sierra is his paradise. He's looking forward to meeting more good people outdoors!



The SPS also welcomes Lawrence Lee!

Congratulations!

John Hooper earned his Andy Smatko Explorer Award (#26) on Hiram Peak, June 27, 2021. Congrats!



Ron Bartell earned his second Andy Smatko Explorer Award (#5) on Chittenden Peak on September 1, 2021.

Christine Bartell earned her Andy Smatko Explorer Award (#27) on Markleeville Peak on October 10, 2021. Christine and Ron are seen together above on Mt. Patterson (*Photo by Mary McMannes*).

Congratulations!

Seen here on North Palisade, Greg Gerlach earned the Andy Smatko Explorer Award (#25) on Starlight Peak, August 2, 2021. See his story of the climb on page 8.



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2021 Sierra Peaks Section Management Committee



Elected

Tina Bowman	Chair tina@bowmanchange.com
Paul Garry	Vice-chair/banquet vicechair@sierrapeaks.org
Laura Newman	Treasurer treasurer@sierrapeaks.org
Jim Fleming	Secretary secretary@sierrapeaks.org
Alexander Smirnoff	Fifth officer officer@sierrapeaks.org

Appointed

Archives	Dan Richter dan@danrichter.com
Conservation Chair	Sharon Moore justslm@earthlink.net
Echo editors	Tina Bowman tina@bowmanchange.com , Beth Epstein
Echo mailer	Tina Bowman
Emblem Committee	Jim Fleming, Kathy Rich, Daryn Dodge, Ron Bartell, Bob Pickering
IT Support	Greg Mason admin@sierrapeaks.org , Harry Lagenbacher admin2@sierrapeaks.org
Keeper of the List	Tina Bowman
Merchandise	Patty Kline patriciakline@aol.com
Mountain Records	Harry Langenbacher register@langenbacher.org
Outings	Phil Bates philipabates@gmail.com
Outreach	Jason Seieroe jasonseieroe@gmail.com
Safety Chair	Doug Mantle
Webmaster	Joe Wankum jbwankum@aol.com
Asst. Webmasters	Harry Lagenbacher register@summitregister.org , Tina Bowman tina@bowmanchange.com

Regional Representatives

San Diego	Joe White
Central California	Daryn Dodge
Northern California	Lisa Barboza

Time to Renew!

Subscriptions to the Echo expire on December 31st. If you haven't renewed, please do so! You can download the renewal form from the SPS web site here: <https://www.sierraclub.org/angeles/sierra-peaks/membership>.



Congratulations!

Congratulations to Paul Garry who finished the SPS list (#80) on October 9, 2021, on Granite Chief!



Top left: ascending Granite Chief (Photo by Anne Mullins). Above: Paul Garry finishes the list (Photo by Kathy Rich).

At the summit: Front row, L to R: Diana and Jorge Estrada, Louise Wholey, Greg Gerlach, Kathy Rich, Anne Mullins, Rory Abbott. In the back L to R are Christine Mitchell/Bartell, Keith Christensen, Ron Bartell, Tohru Onuki, Corrine Livingston, Paul Garry, Kate Widmann, Lenny Rehkop (Photo by Tina Bowman). Right: Celebrating, L to R: Lenny Rehkop, Anne Mullins, Greg Gerlach, Tina Bowman, Keith Christensen, Ron Bartell, Paul Garry (Photo by Kathy Rich).





around-the-web/ *By Dave Sholle*

Editors' note: Dave Sholle is our correspondent for this column, sharing web links that SPS members may find interesting. If you see something you think would interest other members, please send it to Dave at dsholle@verizon.net.

From Beth Epstein, an NPR article about the first all-black team hoping to summit Everest: <https://www.npr.org/2021/10/09/1042720428/mount-everest-first-all-black-climbing-team>.

From Pat and Gerry Holleman, a story about Alex Honnold's mother climbing El Cap: <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-10-28/dierdre-honnold-wolownick-rock-climbing-mom>. (Dierdre Wolownick's recent book, *The Sharp End of Life: A Mother's Story* is a good read.) The Hollemans also sent a link to a *New York Times* story about whether the Piolet d'Or award "honors or encourages risk": <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/29/sports/piolet-dor-climbing.html>.

From *The Guardian*, a recently-found camera documents last images before an avalanche and death in New Zealand in 1997: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/sep/02/photos-from-beyond-the-grave-camera-discovery-reveals-climbers-last-images-before-fatal-avalanche>.

Netflix has a film about climbing all fourteen 8,000m peaks in an absurdly short period of time, *14 Peaks, Nothing Is Impossible*: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/29/sports/piolet-dor-climbing.html>. Netflix has also added *The Alpinist* film: <https://www.netflix.com/watch/81500204>.

Two YouTube interviews with noted Sierra climber and ski mountaineer (and past SPS banquet speaker) Doug Robinson. The interviewer could be a little better informed, but Doug does most of the talking—Part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b45OXWG3kzQ> and Part 2: <https://youtu.be/o4LywkHdDUM>.

Yosemite climbing museum in Mariposa: <https://www.latimes.com/travel/story/2021-09-20/new-museum-shows-off-yosemite-climbing-greats-gear>.

Video story about Lucy Walker's ascent of the Matterhorn (the one in Europe, not in the Sierra or Disneyland) 150 years ago: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=shjGDAjKJLI>.

An *L.A. Times* story by Mary Forgione about a man who conquered paralysis and then Mount Whitney: https://edition.pagesuite.com/popovers/dynamic_article_popover.aspx?guid=98ea03c1-ce8d-4569-a5af-e0d5593ade1b&v=sdk. You can watch an inspiring movie about the hike on YouTube here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aLgo20ZAbKk>.

Intoxicated man missing in the woods joins his own search party: <https://www.adventure-journal.com/2021/10/drunk-dude-missing-in-woods-mistakenly-joins-his-own-search-party/>.

Story about mountaineer Miriam O'Brien Underhill: <https://www.adventure-journal.com/2021/10/men-mountaineer-miriam-obrien-underhill-dont-need-no-stinkin-men/>.

Africa's glaciers likely to vanish in twenty years: https://edition.pagesuite.com/popovers/dynamic_article_popover.aspx?guid=423a0886-9549-4108-a579-7f94209e9de6&v=sdk.

Have you ever ignored a phone call from a number you didn't recognize?: <https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/colorado-lost-hiker-phone-trnd/index.html>.

Teddy bear lost in Glacier National Park returned to six year old girl: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-59268071>.

Planning a thru-hike or numerous days in the wilderness? You might want to consider freeze drying your own food: <https://backpackinglight.com/harvest-right-home-freeze-dryer-review/>.

The film "Torn" shown at Banff this year (but not streamed outside of Canada) received a standing ovation and won the Banff Best Feature Film award. Here is a review of the film from *Gripped*. Warning, major spoiler alerts in the review: <https://gripped.com/profiles/torn-is-powerful-new-film-about-climbing-legend-alex-lowie-by-his-son-max-lowie/>.

North Palisade (14,242') and Starlight Peak (14,200'), August 1-3, 2021

By Greg Gerlach

Laura Newman asked me last spring if I was interested in hiring a guide to climb peaks in the Palisades. I told her yes, as long as we included Starlight Peak. I had already climbed all of the SPS listed Palisades Peaks, most in the 1980's and 1990's, but I told Laura that I didn't mind repeating some of them. Laura set the trip up with Sierra Mountaineering International, a guide service, for July 29–August 1. Two weeks before the trip, Laura tore her ACL and MCL in one of her knees and had to cancel—bummer, for sure! As the trip dates got closer, heavy, monsoonal moisture was forecast for the first three days of the climb. I wanted good weather for the backpack into camp as well as for the climb of my primary objective, Starlight Peak; the guide service allowed me to change the dates of the trip to August 1-3 when the weather was forecast to be much, much better, although I had to pay for two additional days. I was very happy with this outcome and felt that SMI was more than fair.



I met my guide Ben Rademacher in Bishop at the Great Basin Bakery for breakfast. Afterwards, we caravanned up to the trailhead at South Lake, taking the last two parking spots on this Sunday morning. We packed up our gear, then backpacked from South Lake up the trail to Bishop Pass, then went cross country over and up to Thunderbolt Pass, then dropped down to a tarn located at about 11,960' in elevation, where we set up camp.

Ben's plan: climb North Pal first via The Le Conte Route, then traverse over to Starlight Peak along the ridge that connects the two peaks, then return to camp via the chute that leads down to the northwest chute of North Pal and then follow the northwest chute back down to camp. Even though I was only interested in Starlight, Ben felt that this route was far easier than a direct ascent of Starlight Peak via the NW chute route.

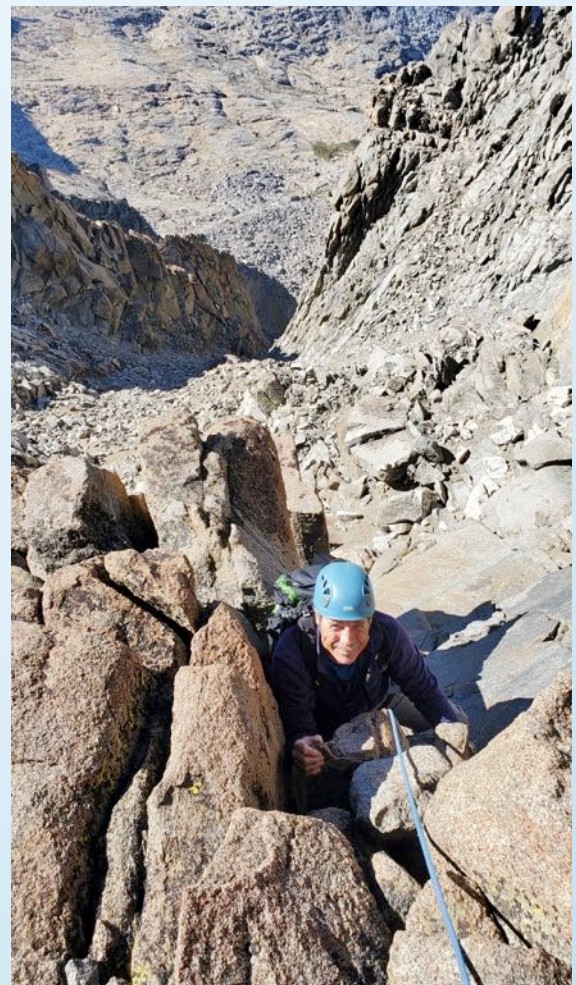
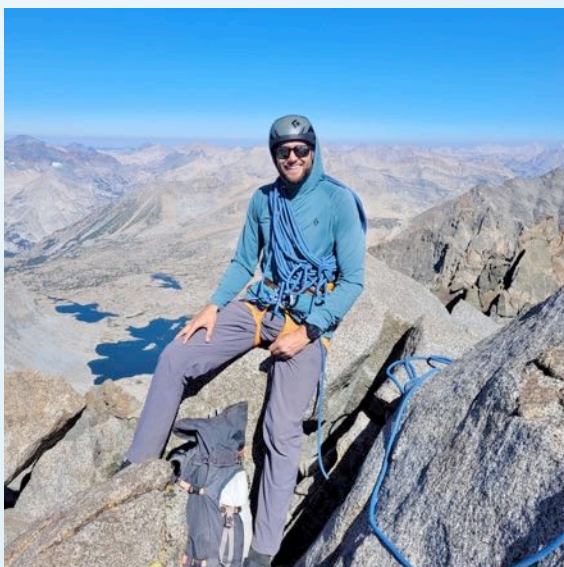
On day two, Ben and I were up at 4 a.m. and hiking at 5 a.m. towards North Pal's Le Conte Route. We made our

Above: Starlight summit register box with North Palisade in the background. Left: Camp near Thunderbolt Pass (Photos by Greg Gerlach).



Clockwise from left: Greg crossing the LeConte ledges on the way up to North Palisade. Below: Greg on the way up North Palisade (Photos by Ben Rademacher). Ben Rademacher on North Palisade (Photo by Greg Gerlach).

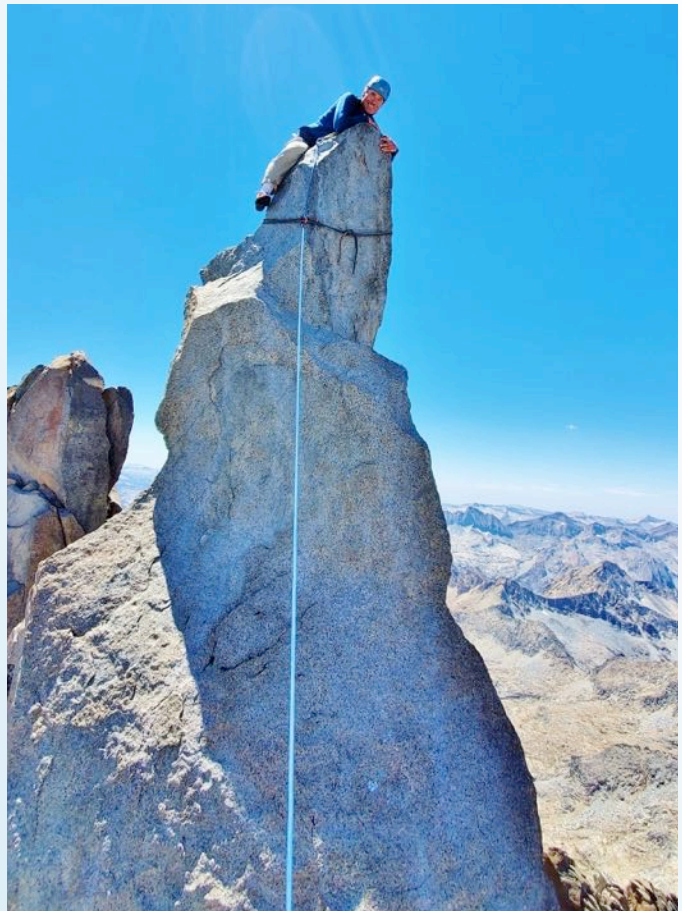
way over to and about half way up the chute that leads to the U Notch. Ben put me on a short rope, then we traversed left on ledges (The Le Conte Ledges), which slope downward and outward and in my estimation are class 3, to a second chute. Next, we followed the chute up to two chockstones, both of which we bypassed on their left sides by climbing up class 4 faces. Once past the chockstones, Ben and I continued up the chute to its top and into a bowl, then we made our way up to the peak's southeast ridge, turned left and navigated up the class 3 ridge around and over big boulders to the summit. It took us about 4.5 hours to climb the peak from camp. Also, I climbed North Pal back in 1984 when I was twenty-eight years old and remember the technical part of the climb up the Le Conte Route being pretty easy, only requiring the use of the rope once on the descent; this time, at sixty-five years old, I had a hard time making some of the moves and was glad to have a top rope and a capable guide. After signing the summit register and some photos, we traversed over to Starlight Peak across class 3, 4, and 5 terrain, making two rappels along the way. It took Ben and me about 2.5 hours to make the traverse to just



below the summit block. Also, Ben did a really good job navigating the convoluted route between the two peaks, in addition to safely climbing the route. Ben easily climbed Starlight's class 5.4 rated summit block, then he ran the rope through the rappel ring that is attached to the two slings that are wrapped around the uppermost part of the summit block, clipped into the rope, then I lowered him down to the ground. It was now my turn, but I was unable to even make the first move to start the climb. After several attempts, I told Ben that I wanted to use the rope to aid my climb, so with both of us pulling on the belay leg of the rope I was soon on top—whew! Afterwards, Ben lowered me down to the ground, and we both signed the summit register located at the base of the summit block. Next, we down-climbed the chute that leads to the NW chute of North Pal, then made our way down the NW chute back to camp. The descent was steep and loose, required four rappels to get past class 4 sections of the route, and took about five hours.

On day three, Ben and I backpacked over Thunderbolt Pass and then Bishop Pass, then down the trail to South Lake.

I started working on the Andy Smatko Explorer Emblem back in 2012, only counting peaks that were at least 11,000' in elevation, and now with my ascent of Starlight Peak have met the requirements for the emblem.



Above: Greg Gerlach on the summit of Starlight Peak (Photo by Ben Rademacher).

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Mt Kaweah (13,802'), Empire Mountain (11,550') September 8-11, 2021

By Sandy Lara

Tina planned this trip to help Jim Fleming get his emblem, but Jim fell ill, and I was called upon to substitute as co-leader. After quickly getting my OLT101 up-to-date and making sure my Wilderness First Aid was current, I was ready to assist.

Our permit was for eight people. Jim was out and so was another participant who was iffy to begin with. Chuck Schillings, a new SPS member, and his wife were on the team, but she also fell ill, and Chuck showed up alone. A new person was on the team but showed up at the last minute and ended up leaving an open bag of chips under the seat of her car, which she remembered 1.2 miles up the trail, so she left us for the trailhead, not to return. My husband, Peter, started up with us but had hernia symptoms after a short distance and went home. Fortunately, Tina and I both live in Long Beach, so she could give me a ride home.

So, our mighty team was reduced to three, but we were solid and efficient. Tina, Chuck, and I left the trail at the 1.2 mile point to take an old use trail, perhaps partly an old miners' trail, up to Glacier Pass. It was rocky and

brushy, sometimes disappearing, then reappearing, but it did the job. The alternative is to follow the maintained trail to Lower Monarch Lake then the labyrinth of use trails to Sawtooth Pass, then traverse north to Glacier Pass, but that is much longer. Tina led us on the more direct route, and we arrived at Glacier Pass with views all around. We met a solo backpacker, Bruce, at this point who followed us down to Spring Lake, where he decided he would spend two nights, then go the direction we were headed. More on him later.

From Glacier Pass, we could look across to the next main ridge to the east and see the long switchbacks going up to Black Rock Pass. That looked tedious, but as the weather was good and we were a solid team we decided we should go for it that first day rather than camping at Spring Lake. We could shorten the trip by a day if we made it over Black Rock Pass and down into Little Five Lakes, so

View from end of switchback going up Black Rock Pass, bottom to top: Spring Lake, Cyclamen Lake, Columbine Lake, Sawtooth Peak (Photo by Sandy Lara).

after eating lunch at Spring Lake and getting more water, that's what we did. Day 1: ~11mi, 4850' gain with full packs for a five-day backpack with significant xc terrain.

We camped at the middle of the Little Five Lakes, which is where there is a bear box, a lot of campsites in the trees, and proximity to water. The next morning, we packed the 2.9 miles down to Big Arroyo, where there are plentiful campsites and a very old patrol cabin with a padlock on it. We quickly set up camp in a nice spot being vacated by some young men not far from the trail junction. The forecast had been for 30% thunderstorms that day, so we wanted our gear to be protected. We left what we didn't need in our tents and bear canisters and headed off to climb Kaweah.

From Big Arroyo, we took the High Sierra Trail about three miles to elevation 10,600', where there is a tarn. This is the point where this trail starts to go down after a gradual ascent from Big Arroyo. We took a break at the dry tarn, and then Tina started leading us up some larger talus and brush until the terrain opened up to a lovely sand climb. Yes, that's sarcastic. From the tarn to the top is 3200' and my guess is over 2700' of it is sand that doesn't hold under your feet as you try to ascend. Initially, we stayed together, but then we each found our own lines and separately made our ways to the summit. Of course, the



summit is always farther than you think. I cut up to the right to get off the sand, and after climbing solid larger talus for a while thought I must be reaching the summit. No, it wasn't the top. I could see two more bumps ahead on the ridge. I continued and, of course, there were more bumps beyond that. We all arrived within minutes of each other. It was cold and windy, so we put on jackets, signed in, started eating, and took photos, but not for too long. Big heavy gray clouds were coming in, and we needed to get off of there.

Tina took us down off the upper talus and got us onto the sand before the storm started. It alternated with some scattered rain and hail and sun. We plunge-stepped, shuffled, and even ran down parts of the sand. The storm stopped, started, stopped, started, then continued. The thunder seemed to pop between the clouds rather than down to the ground. By the time we got down to the elevation of the talus above the tarn, the rocks would have been wet and slippery, so Tina led us further east so we could continue down the sand to the HST. We hit the trail at about 10,400' so had to climb 200' back up on the trail to get to the tarn before heading back down to our camp at Big Arroyo. It was worth

Above: Sandy Lara looking down at Spring Lake (Photo by Chuck Schilling). Below: Along the trail heading down to Big Arroyo (fourth of the Little Five Lakes) (Photo by Sandy Lara).





Clockwise from above: Tina Bowman and Chuck Schilling ascending talus toward Kaweah after leaving the tarn (Photo by Sandy Lara). Sandy Lara and Tina Bowman on Kaweah (Photo by Chuck Schilling). Tina Bowman on Kaweah's slopes (Photo by Sandy Lara). Tina and Sandy descending Kaweah (Photo by Chuck Schilling).



it, though, since the descent on sand was much easier, faster, and safer than on wet talus. And before we hit the HST, the rain had become constant.

Back at Big Arroyo we found our tents to be muddy from rain/hail hitting the ground so hard that it splashed on and under our flies. The rain continued for hours, then stopped for a few hours and restarted at 2am, so we each hunkered down in our tents through the night. Day 2: ~15 miles, 4600' gain, 5400' loss (from Little Five Lakes).

The next morning was cloudy but not rainy. We packed up wet and started heading up the trail to Little Five Lakes. We could stay there or, if the weather permitted, we could climb all the way over Black Rock Pass and traverse to Spring Lake. The weather forecast had been another 20% chance of thunderstorms. I was hoping that this particular 20% forecast was for the storm that started at 2am and that now it would clear. That's what happened. We felt good enough after reaching our previous campsite at Little Five Lakes to continue up over Black Rock Pass. It looked like rain might threaten, but this did not materialize. As we were climbing toward the pass, I remembered that we should meet Bruce, the solo backpacker we met on Glacier Pass two days before, coming toward us. We



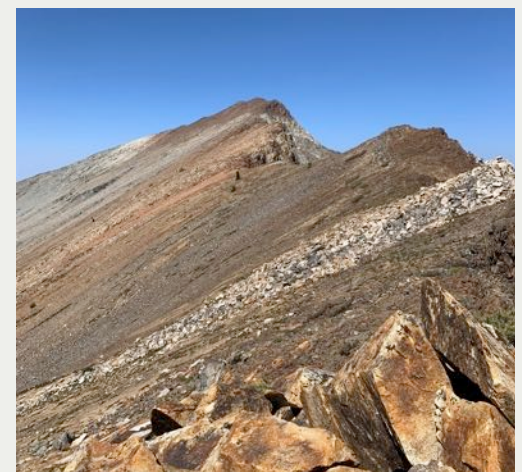
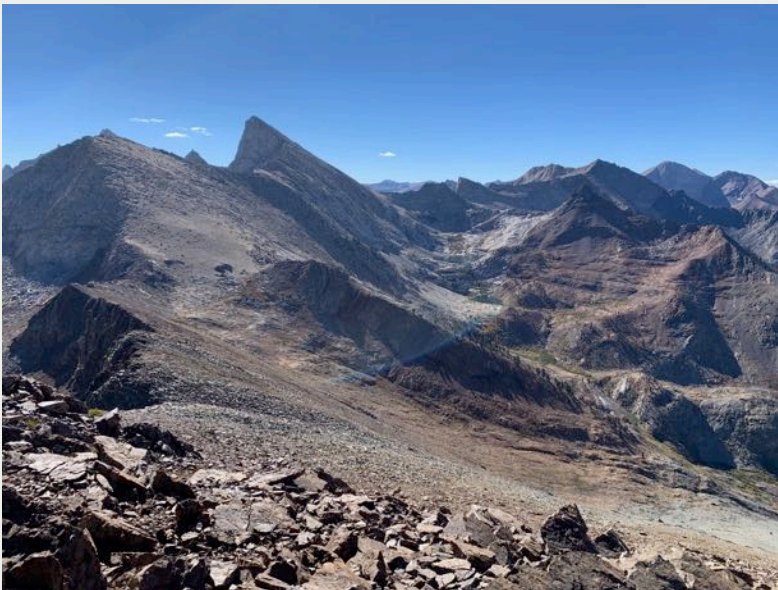
didn't see him, but then when we were looking for a campsite at Spring Lake, there he was! He invited us to share his beautiful large site in the trees by the

lake and many interesting conversations followed. Although it was cool and cloudy, we were able to dry our gear before nightfall. Day 3: ~8mi, 2500' gain, 2100' loss.

Tina is working on her second Andy Smatko Emblem so wanted to climb Empire Mountain (11,550') on this trip. It's a mile round trip along a talus ridge north of Glacier Pass. We were all feeling well enough to do it together. After dropping most of our weight near the pass, we made the traverse to what turned out to be a peak with excellent views! We could see much of the area we had covered on our trip, the Kaweahs, Black Rock Pass, Spring Lake, many areas within the Mineral King valley, and north into Sequoia. After returning to the pass and picking up our gear, we headed down the use trail we had ascended three days before. While it is usually easier to find use trails on the descent, we lost this one several times. It's very steep and rocky. We took a lunch break at the point where the use trail hits the maintained trail to Monarch Lakes, looking up at what we had just descended. Yes, very steep indeed. Or maybe I was just tired. The remaining 1.2 miles of trail to the Sawtooth Pass Trailhead was at least smoother on my bony feet. We said our goodbyes to Chuck and headed home. Day 4: ~6mi, 1450' gain, 3600' loss. Total for the trip: ~40mi, 13,400'.

Just prior to this trip all the National Forests in California were closed due to the strain on resources as the Tahoe area fires and others were so demanding. Our trip was entirely within Sequoia National Park, so our permit was still valid. There were many hikers and backpackers who diverted to the National Parks when the Forests were closed, so we saw a lot of people on trail. We had clear skies, if sometimes stormy, over our four-day trip, with no smoke from the

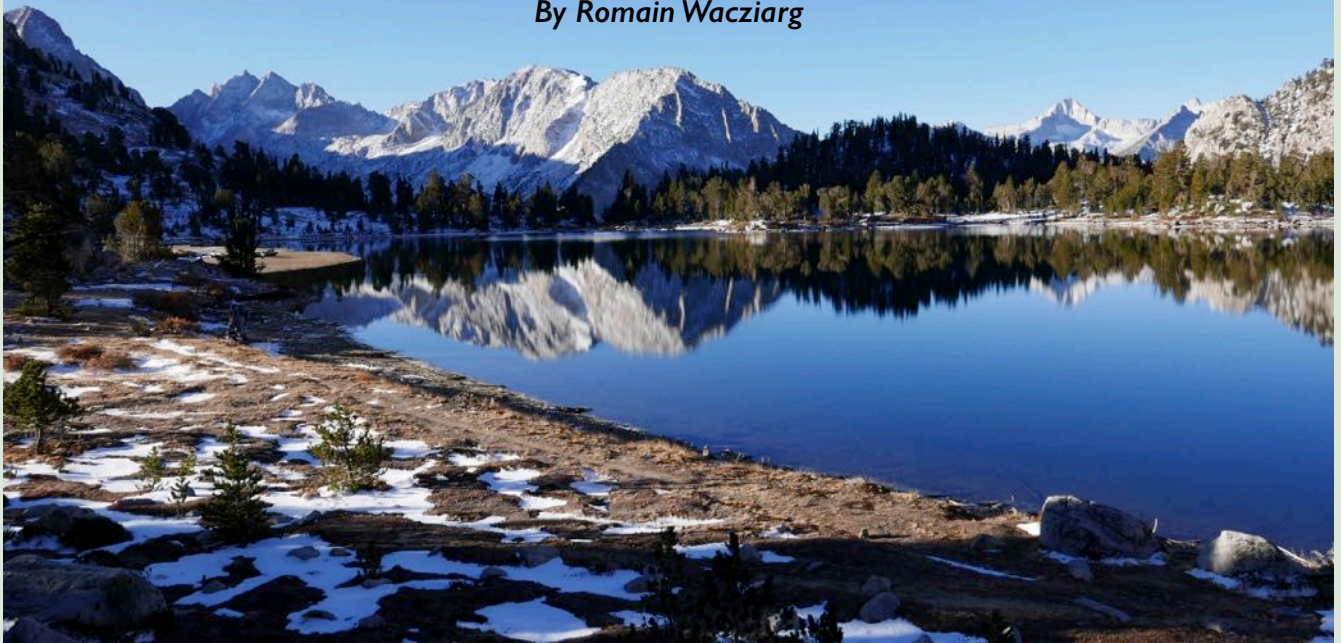
Walkers Fire to the south that we had been concerned about. Now, though, as we left Mineral King, we discovered that "our" thunderstorm from our summit day had ignited multiple fires in Sequoia which were later named the KNP Complex Fire. We watched these newly developing Sequoia fires and the air assault on them on our way out. Mandatory evacuation of Mineral King began less than two days later. On our way home we were diverted from Interstate 5 in Gorman over to Hwy 14 because of the Route Fire that was on both sides of I-5, lengthening our drive by a couple of hours. We realize we were fortunate to have had a small window of opportunity between numerous uncontrollable events for this trip.



Clockwise from above: Sawtooth Peak and Monarch Lakes . Tina Bowman and Chuck Schilling with Glacier Pass behind. View from Glacier Pass to Empire (Photos by Sandy Lara).

Ascent of West Vidette (Northeast Chute, class 2), October 19, 2021

By Romain Wacziarg



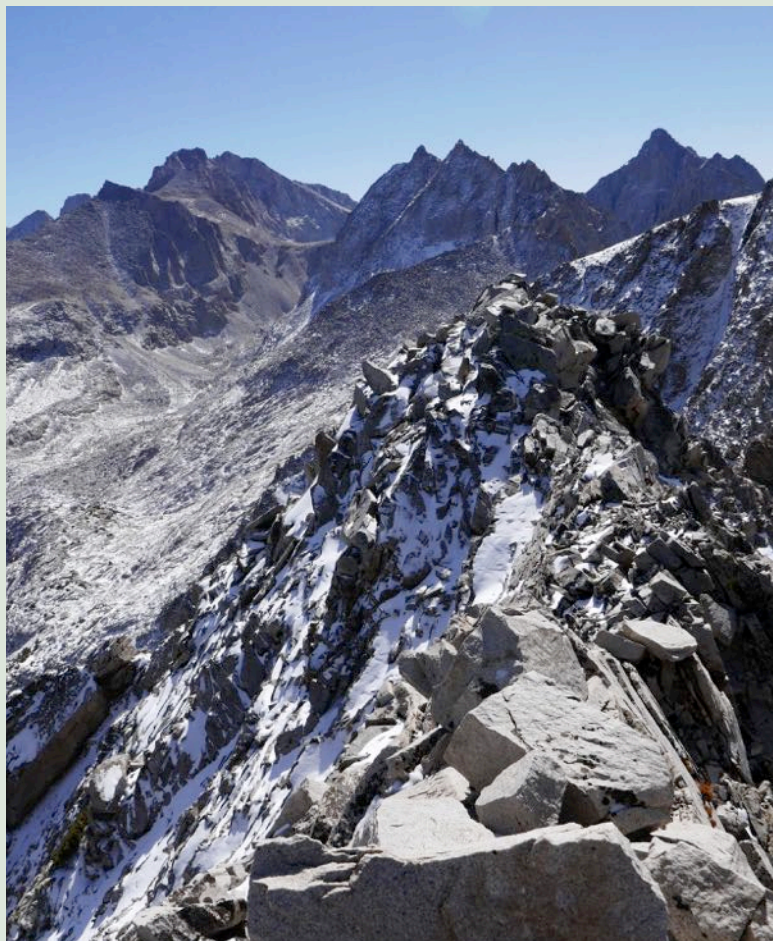
October 18, 2021. Due to unsettled weather, my plans for this trip kept changing. I had initially planned a dayhike of Silver Peak from Mammoth, which would have been a very long day indeed. I decided to defer this trip due to snow in the Mammoth area. I rerouted to more southern climes, hoping for more modest snow accumulations. The plan included dayhikes of West Vidette and Mount Bradley from Onion Valley, the last two SPS peaks I wanted to climb in this general area. I left Mammoth after dinner and settled for a very cold night in my 4Runner at the trailhead.

October 19, 2021. A West Vidette dayhike from Onion Valley involves about twenty-three miles and 8,000 feet of elevation gain, and October days are short, so I would need to manage time carefully. The alarm went off at 4:30 and I started hiking by headlamp at 5:28, after breakfast. It was bitterly cold, and I wore two layers of fleece plus a down



Top: Deerhorn, West Vidette and Mount Brewer from Bullfrog Lake. Left: Lowest of the Vidette Lakes, Mt. Rixford, Peak 3912m, and Kearsarge Pinnacles (Photos by Romain Wacziarg).

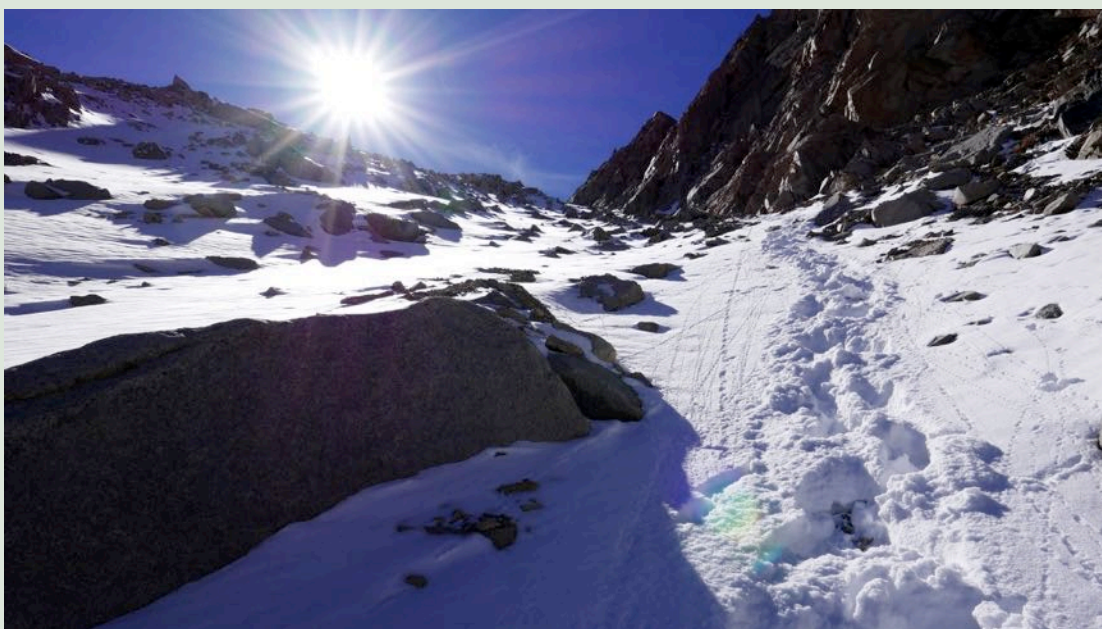
jacket all the way to Kearsarge Pass. It took exactly two hours to reach the pass, the trail covered with intermittent snow and ice. I was greeted to spectacular early morning views to the west as I peered down the Kearsarge Lakes drainage. There was more snow on that side of the crest. I reached Vidette Meadow shortly before 9:00. There were no issues crossing Bubbs Creek, and I started up the snowy slopes to the Vidette Lakes drainage. I put on the microspikes I had brought just in case, which helped a lot with uphill traction. Miraculously, I found the use trail despite the snow cover. Following it and a generous line of cairns, I made my way to the lowest of the Vidette Lakes. I was still uncertain about whether I would climb the Northeast Chute or the East Slopes / South Ridge. At the base of the snow-filled chute, I made up my mind to pick the quickest route up. There were only a few inches of powder on the ground, but it concealed the sand and scree that I knew made up the chute. It was quite steep, and a bit of a trudge to climb, but I made my way to the North Ridge of West Vidette eventually. From there, the highpoint was a short hike away. I reached the summit at 12:15, almost seven hours from the trailhead.



West Vidette does not have a spectacular summit, but its position in the middle of the range gives great views in all directions—west toward the Brewer Group; south to Mount Stanford, Deerhorn Mountain, and

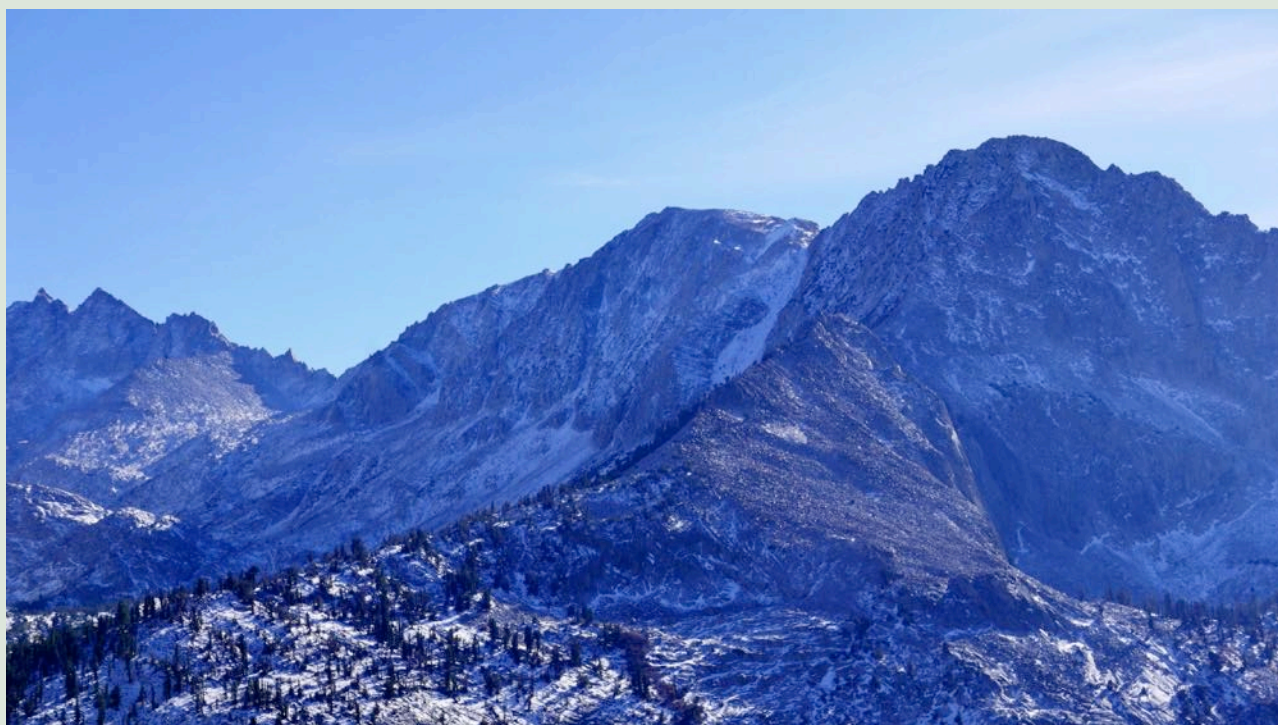
Top: View south from the north ridge of West Vidette to Mount Stanford, Deerhorn Mountain, Mount Ericsson. At left: Descending the Northeast Chute (Photos by Romain Wacziarg).





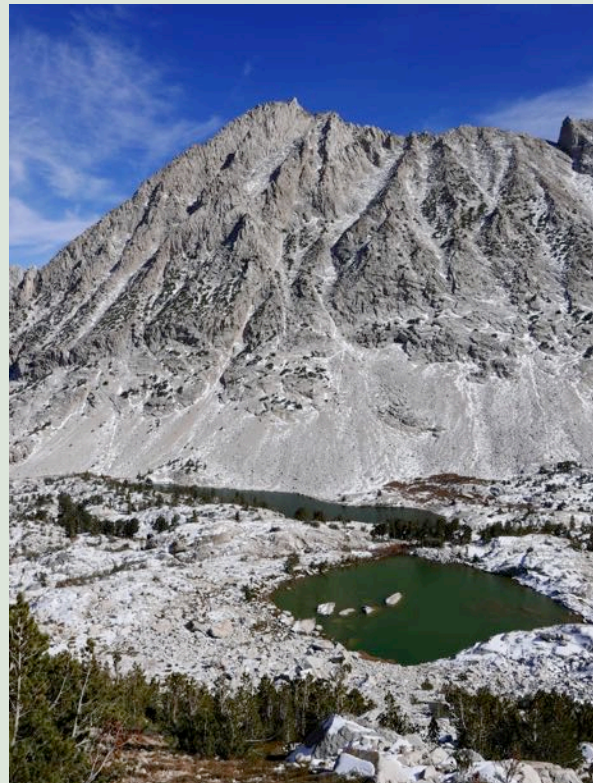
Mount Ericsson; and east toward East Vidette, University Peak, Mount Bradley, and Mount Keith. I was satisfied. I ate half of my sandwich on the summit, signed the register, and, mindful of time, started to retrace my steps at 12:38. The descent down the Northeast Chute went quickly; I was back at the lowest Vidette Lake at 2:05 and took another break there to eat the rest of my lunch. There were only 4.5 hours of daylight left, so I would have to hurry. I retraced my steps almost exactly to Vidette Meadow (still not finding [Shorty Lovelace's cabin](#)), and then up

Above: Looking back up the Northeast Chute. Below: West Vidette and its Northeast Chute (Photos by Romain Wacziarg).



to Bullfrog Lake. I took a short break there to replenish my water supply and continued on to Kearsarge Pass. By then I was pretty spent, and the last uphill steps to the pass were slow. It was 5:35 when I reached the pass, glad to be facing only downhill travel. I tried to keep solid pace, but the snow had thawed and frozen during the day, and that slowed down my descent. After about an hour, I took out my headlamp to discover the battery was drained—whether because of the cold or because I had not turned it off properly that morning. Thankfully, at the last minute I had thrown a spare headlamp in my daypack. It was not the most powerful thing, but it did the trick. The last hour of hiking featured a bright moonrise that had the most spectacular effect on the surrounding scenery. I reached the trailhead at 7:27, famished and exhausted. I made soup, pasta, and tea before settling in the 4Runner for a second night. (A 13:59 hour day, 12:50 hours moving, 23 miles, 7,850 feet of elevation gain).

October 20, 2021. I woke up to solid cloud cover. I looked up the Robinson Creek drainage to see what the conditions looked like toward University Pass, but it started to drizzle. Mount Bradley would have to wait for another day. After a cup of coffee, I drove off, stopping at the Alabama Hills Café for a big breakfast before the drive back to LA.



*Top: East Vidette and Lower Vidette Lakes.
Below: Nameless Pyramid, University Peak,
and Kearsarge Pinnacles from Bullfrog Lake
area (Photos by Romain Wacziarg).*



The 1980s

A Quest for Emblem Peaks

By Joe Wankum

By the beginning of 1980, I had climbed only one SPS Emblem peak (day hiking Whitney). In June of 1980, I joined Larry Tidball's weekend trip up Darwin. A backpack over Lamarck Col and a snow climb got us to within reaching distance of the plateau, followed by a short walk to the summit block, then a short, roped climb to the summit. The snow descent (glissade) back to camp went smoothly.

In July, I climbed Abbot (Mintzloff/Olsen). Reaching camp, I remember one participant pulling out of his pack brand new crampons with bindings still sealed in their original package, then finding that the bindings needed to be attached with rivets. Gene Olsen saved the day by locating a couple of rocks he used to hammer the rivets in place. The next morning, the leader never found the route he was looking for and may have pioneered a new route to the top. (The planned assistant leader who had been there before—and knew the route—had foot problems and had to drop out.) Descent required a couple of rappels, the last as darkness was approaching.

Not wanting to leave more climbing equipment on the mountain than necessary, the leader asked me (since I weighed less) to rappel last after retrieving all anchor hardware and resetting the anchor with just a sling. During the rappel, I kept the two rope strands apart to avoid a jam but at the bottom it still took two of us to pull down the rope.

Near the peak, we ran into two young climbers (the son of an SPS leader and a friend on his first ever peak climb) without



a rope who were very happy to make use of our rope for a rappel when it was offered. The hike back to camp was in the dark as was the backpack out which got us to the cars well after midnight. I remember this was the first time I had backpacked with a small AA flashlight, which luckily did not give out until the nearly full moon came out and lit the way.

An August climb of Lyell (and Maclure) (McMannes/Kabler) went smoothly. The snow/glacier took us to the final ridge followed by an easy climb to the peak. So I finished 1980 with four emblems.

I had previously tried to solo day hike Olancho but turned back where one leaves the trail for the cross-country climb to the peak. On

Starting the climb up Mount Darwin, June 22, 1980 (Photo by Joe Wankum).



the long trail leading to that point I had to climb (using an ice axe) over a dozen or more hard-packed snow ridges (six- to ten-foot high and ten- to twenty-foot wide) crossing the trail, something I had never seen before—and never since. When it was time to leave the trail for the peak, a black squall line appeared to the north heading in my direction. Realizing I would have to re-cross all those snow ridges on the hike out (possibly during a thunderstorm), I decided the peak could wait for another day.

In early July 1981, I decided it was time to get Olancho, but this time on a solo backpack. As I was approaching Mojave, I remembered that I had left my stove at home on the kitchen table, so stopped in Mojave and purchased some food items I would not have to cook. Saturday, I backpacked up to a campsite, but the only water I could find was a small spring near a horse camp. I was reluctant to use the water but had no choice so did so. The rest of the trip went smoothly, so I now had emblem #5.

A week later, I joined a ski club on an easy weekend backpack to a small lake NW of Onion Valley with no planned climbs. Along the way, we ran across a BMTC group dayhiking Dragon Peak. I recognized the leaders and asked if I could join the hike. They agreed. Once in camp, another ski club member (Gerry Hittinger) and I

quickly got our day packs and caught up with the climbers. When we arrived at the narrow traverse, the assistant belayed the leader (with a short rope). Half way across, the belayer called out: "You are out of rope." The leader stopped, looked at the situation, then said that we didn't need a rope. He untied the rope, climbed to the top and everyone followed. When we were starting to go down, a couple of people said they would prefer a belay. At that point, the other ski club member said he had a short rope in his pack. Tying the two ropes together created one long enough for a belay so everyone got down ok. The next morning, with an ok from the (ski) backpack group, I got up really early and day-hiked Kearsarge up a very loose scree route before returning to camp for the pack out. So, two more peaks when I had not expected any.

At the beginning of August, I drove to Bridgeport and did a solo backpack to Matterhorn. The only trouble on the trip: at one rest break, I unbuckled my waist belt on the backpack and as I was removing the pack, my camera bag came loose from the waist belt and bounced down the rock pile I was on. After retrieving the camera,

Approaching Darwin's summit block from the plateau, June 22, 1980 (Photo by Joe Wankum).



I found the viewfinder glass broken and nothing worked. The remainder of the climb was easy and uneventful. Back in LA, I took the camera to the Olympus repair shop. They took one look and gave me a standard price (\$40) for repair. They replaced the broken glass and the helicoid focusing mechanism. (More on this later.)

A week after Matterhorn, I joined Dave Dykeman on his provisional lead to Brewer and South Guard. It was a long backpack in, a nice climb, and a long and very hot backpack out to Kings Canyon. The following weekend, I joined Jackie van Dalsem on climbs of Independence and University. Back in town, I recovered my camera from the Olympus repair shop, and it seemed to be working properly.

For the next weekend, I had obtained a permit out of Mineral King to solo climb Kaweah. The first day, I went over Glacier and Black Rock passes to a camp near Big Arroyo. The second day, I crossed the river, hiked up the trail to a small lake which I planned to use as the marker to leave the trail for the climb. (The 15' map had the lake on the wrong side of the trail.) The soft scree slope resulted in a slow climb but an easy descent. Trying to

Climbers on Darwin's summit block, June 22, 1980 (Photo by Joe Wankum).

take photos, I found the camera was frozen and would not operate. The third day, on the pack out, a couple of miles before the trailhead, I saw a dog coming up the trail. Deciding he did not belong there by himself, I convinced him to turn around and hike back down the trail with me. Not too far from the trailhead, I saw a man coming up the trail looking for his dog. He said he lived near the parking lot, had spent the day looking for the dog and invited me to stop for a cold drink. Back in town, the camera went back to the repair shop where they found a hairline fracture in the printed circuit board, which required replacing the board.

Having read of Dale van Dalsem's long forty-six-mile hike to Goddard in *Echo* 24-3, I decided to do the hike over Labor Day weekend and obtained a permit for a solo backpack from Florence Lake. I drove up Friday night. Saturday I got up early, quickly filled my pack, got to the ranger station just as it was opening to pick up my permit, then rushed down to catch the first boat ride across the lake before starting the long hike to the east. Around mid-day, I realized that I could not remember putting my flashlight in the pack. I stopped and checked and found it was missing. After turning south up Goddard Canyon, I hiked until dusk but decided I had to stop (near the junction with the Hell for Sure Pass trail, sooner than I had planned) while I still had light to set up camp and eat.



Early the second day, I day hiked south, then east past Martha Lake to a saddle, then north along a ridge to the summit. Back in Goddard Canyon, I saw the mid-day storm clouds building on Goddard. At camp, I packed out to near the Evolution Valley trail. The third day, I got back to the lake for the noon boat ride back to the parking lot to start the long drive home.

In July 1982, I joined Dave Dykeman/Nancy Gordon for a climb of Russell, Tunnabora, and Carillon. The first day, we backpacked up the north Fork to Upper Boy Scout lake. The second day, we left camp at 6 am for a snow climb to the saddle (9 am), were on Russell at noon, back to the saddle at 3 pm, on Tunnabora at 4:30, the saddle at 6, Carillon at 6:15, the saddle at 6:30, and back to camp by 8 or 9 pm.

Later in July, Sherry Harsh/Ron Jones led Dade and Bear Creek Spire, then Jay Titus/Ret Moore led Clarence King, Cotter, and Bago. At Onion Valley, one of the leaders pulled out a heavy BMTc laid rope. Seeing the rope, I offered use of my 9 mm 120' rope which weighed only about half as much. The offer was accepted and we set out over North Dragon Pass. The second day, we climbed Clarence King. The third day Cotter, then did a snow climb up to Glen Pass, then hiked down the dry southern side. It was getting dark so we stopped at a small pond with horse prints right up to and into the water. We boiled the water thoroughly and had no problem. The fourth day, we

hiked Bago, then packed out over Kearsarge Pass. So this trip completed my tenth emblem, half on solo climbs (with thirty-one peaks total), completing the emblem requirements.

Labor Day weekend, I solo hiked Clouds Rest and Dana. This was my second attempt at Dana. Once before, I had tried to day hike Dana. Driving up to Tioga Pass on a clear, beautiful day, I parked, put on my boots, grabbed my pack and started climbing. By the time I reached the plateau near the top, my cotton clothes were wet with sweat. I then found a small cloud covered the peak and there was a wind blowing. I was quickly chilled and had to stop and put on all the clothes I had in my pack, then decided I had to go down to get back in the sun to warm up, so ended my first attempt on Dana.

1983/84 climbs included Starr King (Danta/Mantle), Williamson (Raiford/Wankum), and south ridge of Humphreys (Rutherford/Erb, RCS-SPS trip). Going up the south ridge (two rope teams) was a treat, but it meant missing the 4th class standard climb. After the rappel down the open book, the rope was jammed and the

On the summit of Lyell, August 24, 1980. Left to right: Joe Wankum, Mary McMannes, Al Benson. Mary, Al and Dave Vandervoet received their emblems on this trip (Photo by Joe Wankum).



assistant asked for a volunteer to join him up the 4th class route to retrieve the rope while the leader was setting up the second rappel—so this provided me the chance to experience the 4th class route.

A sprained ankle on Red and White (Keeler/Wankum), along with time spent on BMTC slowed me down after that.

In 1982, a couple of BMTC areas started an (Advanced) AMTC. In 1983, I thought Long Beach should do the same, recruiting Bob Hicks/Rusty Russell to lead one group and Larry Dennis (and his BMTC assistants) to lead a second group. (This was a time after Proposition 13 in California, school budgets were hurting, and I remember having to coordinate with a Vice President at Harbor College for a meeting room as all his helpers had been laid off.) For a (Tahquitz area) intro to rock climbing, Russell had a conflict so I ended up assisting Hicks; and for one of the snow outings, Dennis needed an assistant, so I helped on that one. After BMTC, quickly followed by AMTC, most of the leaders involved had had enough,

Mary McMannes signing the register on Maclure after climbing Lyell, seen behind on right, August 24, 1980 (Photo by Joe Wankum).

were burned out, and stepped down and/or retired from BMTC.

A year later, I again tried to schedule an AMTC but could not get anyone to lead so took on the job myself with different assistants on each of the various outings. Outings included Tahquitz and Fossil Falls (rock) and Dragon (snow). After struggling to find assistants to complete the course, I decided Long Beach could no longer support an area AMTC. Several years later, Dave Raymond re-started AMTC for one year before the Sierra Club mountaineering restrictions killed AMTC.

For the DPS emblem (six emblem peaks required), I already had been up Kofa and Rabbit (1979). I did solo day hikes of Charleston (1980) and Telescope (1982), then joined Jay Suehiro/Ron Jones (1982) for a midnight hike to Boundary and Montgomery. By 1984, I had fourteen of the fifteen DPS peaks needed for their emblem. Between work and other things, I did not get the fifteenth peak required for the emblem until 1991 when I was asked to assist a provisional lead to Eagle #2 and New York Mtn.

In these first several years of climbing, I had experienced a number of problems and tried to pass on that experience to BMTC (and later WTC) students to avoid their having the same problems in the future.

Wildlife Harmed by Exposure to Anticoagulant Rodenticides

A Post from California Department of Fish and Wildlife News on July 3, 2020

In late April, a dead owl was found on a nature preserve in San Luis Obispo County. CDFW's Wildlife Investigations Lab (WIL) performed the necropsy and found excessive bleeding on the owl's leg and abdomen. With no associated wound or apparent trauma, additional toxicology testing was performed. Cause of death: fatal poisoning by anticoagulant rodenticides, chemical agents used for rodent control. For the WIL, it was the thirteenth raptor death by anticoagulant rodenticides since August 2019.

In a four-year study conducted by WIL biologists investigating the causes of mortality for hundreds of raptors—and thirteen raptor species—across the state, more than 80 percent had been exposed to anticoagulant rodenticides. Roughly one-quarter of those raptor deaths were fatal poisonings directly attributed to anticoagulants.

In a two-year statewide study, the WIL found that 96 percent of necropsied mountain lions showed non-fatal exposure to anticoagulant rodenticides. Almost one-third of those lions had been exposed to at least four different types of anticoagulants.

Throughout California, chemical baits used to control rodents have injured and killed non-target wild animals and pets. Anticoagulant rodenticides work by preventing blood clotting in the animals that consume it, resulting in fatal bleeding. Predatory and scavenging birds along with mammals like raccoons, bobcats, foxes, skunks, and coyotes that have eaten rodents which have consumed the bait can also be fatally poisoned.

"It's troubling seeing an otherwise healthy animal die from anticoagulant rodenticides. In many cases these deaths may be preventable," said Krysta Rogers, an



(Photo courtesy CDFW News)

environmental scientist and the WIL's lead avian mortality investigator.

In 2014 California restricted the use of second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides with several chemicals known to be harmful to wildlife, pets, children, and the environment. Additionally, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has implemented a national ban on consumer use of rodenticide products that do not meet revised safety requirements. However, products containing second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides can still be used by licensed exterminators.

Despite the restrictions, the WIL says that wildlife is still being exposed to both first-generation and second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides. CDFW would like to remind the public of the measures that can be taken to help reduce anticoagulant rodenticide exposure in non-target wildlife.

The best way to protect wildlife is to use non-chemical means of rodent control. Habitat modification is an effective means of preventing rodents from inhabiting property. For example, many rodents like tall grass for cover. Mowing grass to no more than two inches makes it less appealing. Like most animals, rodents go where they feel safe and where food is available. The easiest way to discourage rodents from inhabiting property is to remove food sources and remove or modify anything that provides cover.

These simple actions can help:

- Keep your home and yard neat and clean.
- Keep tree branches and vegetation at least a foot away from home and roof.
- Seal any holes on your home and roof where rodents can gain entry.
- Be aware that pet food, chicken feed and bird feeders will attract rodents.
- Remove objects and plants that rodents can hide under such as wood piles, debris, construction waste, dense vegetation and ground-covering vines like ivy.
- Pick up fruit that has fallen from trees as soon as possible.
- Secure your garbage in a tightly sealed can.
- Seal water leaks and remove standing water that may attract unwelcome animals.

For more information, visit the [rodenticides page on CDFW's website](#).

Please note: Outings are being led again! In the interest of the health and safety of outings participants, the Sierra Club is currently requiring a two-page medical form completed by all participants and leaders for each outing (the form can be returned so that people may use them more than once). Leaders must also submit a Safety Management Plan for each outing. These rules apply to “backcountry” outings, i.e., those outings more than an hour from outside help. A surge in the pandemic could cause the Club to close down outings again.



We've chosen the photo above taken by Mat Kelliher, showing climbers ascending Mt. Emerson on an SPS trip, 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.

Jan 15 | Sat

LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS

I: Navigation: Warren Point Navigation Noodle: Navigation noodle at Warren Point to satisfy the basic (I/M) level navigation requirements. Practice skills or checkoff. Send email with contact info (mailing address, phone numbers), navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare to Leader: Robert Myers. Assistant: Ann Shields. (This is a backcountry outing; a medical form will be required.) 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 *Leaders Reference Book* for more information.

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

<http://angeles.sierraclub.org/activities>

<https://sierraclub.org/angeles/sierra-peaks/outings-schedule>

From the Outings Chair

By Phil Bates

Hello SPSers!

Well, another summer climbing season is in the bag! We here in the SPS section hope that you were able to meet your SPS peakbagging goals in spite of some of the obstacles we all know about!

From a SPS outings leadership perspective, we would like to set our collective sights on having more SPS- and Club-sponsored outings to SPS Peaks. Many SPS Peaks on the list are not visited frequently and many are quite suitable for SPS new-comers.

As you may know, there are some additional paperwork requirements and protocols associated with COVID, but all of these requirements are doable. Please let me know if you have any questions about these paperwork requirements. Additionally, please also let me know if you need support on leadership or ratings advancement as well as suggestions for fun climbs.

Again, it would be great if many of you posted your experiences to our SPS Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/366711653441263/>) so we can be more informed and enjoy your adventures.

OUTINGS

Feb 12 | Sat

LTC

LTC Seminar No. 1: Winter 2022: The five-hour (Virtual, via Zoom) event covers all the essential topics from Sierra Club Values, Conservation and Safety, to best leadership practices, group management, steps to leadership, and a First Aid overview, followed by our legendary scenarios discussed in small breakout groups and a final review. You'll want to apply at least two weeks in advance to guarantee your spot as space will be limited. Later applications may be accepted on a space-available basis but are not guaranteed, so register early. Come learn all about the best leadership

practices of our outings program. **Note:** National Sierra Club has just shared newly revised Outings Leadership Training ("OLT"), including the latest training on Sierra Club values, commitments, equity values, and more. Angeles will facilitate and/or incorporate these trainings into our own, refining our seminar throughout 2022. Email LTPSeminarRegistrar@gmail.com for information from registrar, Pamela Sivula. Also see:

<https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000002GDQEA4&mapLinkHref>.

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.fs.usda.gov/main/inyo/home

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.fs.usda.gov/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

Permits are required in Sequoia National Forest only for overnight stays in the Golden Trout Wilderness. For entry to the Golden Trout Wilderness via the Inyo NF or Sequoia/Kings Canyon National Parks, see the links provided for those areas.

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

47050 Generals Highway
Three Rivers, CA 93271-9599
Phone (559) 565-3766 for permit & trail info. Fax (559) 565-4239

For general information go to www.nps.gov/seki. For wilderness permits go to www.nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/wilderness_permits.htm.

SIERRA NATIONAL FOREST (WESTSIDE) ENTRY

Web site:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/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

Apr 3 | Sun

LTC

LTC Seminar No. 2: Spring 2022: The five-hour (Virtual, via Zoom) event covers all the essential topics from Sierra Club Values, Conservation and Safety, to best leadership practices, group management, steps to leadership, and a First Aid overview, followed by our legendary scenarios discussed in small breakout groups and a final review. You'll want to apply at least two weeks in advance to guarantee your spot as space will be limited. Later applications may be accepted on a space-available basis but are not guaranteed, so register early. Come learn all about the best leadership

practices of our outings program. **Note:** National Sierra Club has just shared newly revised Outings Leadership Training ("OLT"), including the latest training on Sierra Club values, commitments, equity values, and more. Angeles will facilitate and/or incorporate these trainings into our own, refining our seminar throughout 2022.

Email LTPSeminarRegistrar@gmail.com for information from registrar, Pamela Sivula. Also see:

<https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000002GDQEEA4&mapLinkHref>.

You can visit the SPS website for an up-to-date listing at <http://www.sierraclub.org/sps>

May 13-15 | Fri-Sun

LTC

C: Wilderness First Aid Course at Harwood Lodge: Find course information and application at www.wildernessfirstaidcourse.org.

Dare to Lead! Virtual Leadership Training Seminars Set

Winter Seminar: Saturday, February 12

Spring Seminar: Sunday, April 3

Becoming a Sierra Club outings leader starts with curiosity and a love of the outdoors. What better way to step up and lead than by taking advantage of the training opportunities that the Angeles Chapter's Leadership Training Committee provides each year?

As home to one of the largest outings programs on the planet, the Sierra Club Angeles Chapter's many groups, sections, and committees sponsor thousands of trips ranging from beach barbecues to mountaineering expeditions. You can take the first step toward becoming a leader by attending a five-hour class offered virtually via Zoom in 2022.

The seminar covers all the basics of leadership. Experienced leaders will tell you how to plan a trip, prevent problems on the trail, and make sure that everyone—including you—has a great time. They'll also explain good conservation and safety practices. And they'll give you tips for getting your "O" rating quickly and, if you choose, then pursuing more advanced ratings. National Sierra Club has just shared newly revised Outings Leadership Training ("OLT"), including the latest training on Sierra Club values, commitments, equity values and more. Angeles will facilitate and/or incorporate these trainings into our own, refining our seminar throughout 2022. We will also have a Safety Management Plan exercise.

The class costs \$25. The application is on-line at <https://www.sierraclub.org/sites/www.sierraclub.org/files/sce/leadership-training-committee-and-outings-management-/2022-LTP-seminar-app-fill.pdf>. See more information for both seminars here: <https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000002GDQEEA4>.



SPS Management Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 18, 2021
7:00 pm via Zoom

1. Call to order at 7:03 pm. Present were Tina Bowman, chair; Jim Fleming, secretary; Paul Garry, vice-chair; Dan Richter, archives; Alexander Smirnoff, fifth officer; Jason Seieroe, outreach; Laura Newman, treasurer; Philip Bates, outings; Joe Wankum, webmaster.
 2. Standard business and reports.
 - a. Approval of minutes (August, 2021)—approved via e-mail.
 - b. Chair (various-see items below).
 - c. Vice Chair—discussion of the banquet—virtual. No speaker has been contacted yet. Paul will contact Vitaliy Musiyenko to see if he can give a presentation. There will be an announcement and a banquet flyer in December. Jim F. will check with the HPS to see if there is any conflict with the January 23rd date.
 - d. Outings
 - i. Discussion of the fight against the medical form requirements imposed for “backcountry” non- restricted outings. Reviewed proposal by Ron Campbell and discussed as it applies to the SPS. The group agreed to endorse the proposal and is in favor of the idea to have individuals carry and be responsible for having medical information on their person.
 - ii. Discussion of the creation of Safety Management Plan templates for the various areas of the Sierra that can be used by leaders. Bob Myers has information that can be used to create this.
 - iii. Discussion of how we can regrow the SPS outings program—will be dependent on how we resolve the issues created by National outings with regard to medical forms. In the meanwhile, we will ask the leaders to get their outings ideas together and submitted, ready for approval. Phil Bates will keep them informed on how to do their paperwork (after we know what the requirements are going to be).
 - e. Treasurer’s report—sent out already. Balances at the end of September: \$8192 in checking acct., \$241 in savings acct., and \$2943 in Pay Pal.
 - f. Emblem Committee Report—John Hooper earned his Andy Smatko Explorer Emblem. Paul Garry completed the list (to be submitted for approval).
 - g. Outreach—Jason is going to ask for speakers.
 - h. Archives—nothing new to report.
 - i. *Echo*—deadline for the next issue will be November 24th. Scanning and website progress-see below under l.
 - j. Mountain Records—no report.
 - k. IT—no report.
 - l. Website—Banquet videos to the SPS You Tube account is still a work in progress. Joe Wankum continuing to work with Laura Newman on the scrubbing of old *Echoes* for the website to remove copyrighted material that was used without permission.
 - m. Conservation—no report (only a note that it is going to be a light snow year in the Sierra).
 - n. Safety Chair—no report.
3. Old business—none.
 4. New Business
 - a. Elections—Jim Fleming, Paul Garry, Jason Seieroe, Laura Newman, and Phillip Bates all agreed to run for the 2022 SPS Management Committee. Tina Bowman will contact Neal Robbins to see if he is willing to run as well.
 - b. Awards—no recommendations were made at this time for Chapter nominations or SPS awards (Leadership, Lifetime Achievement). Group is to consider for next meeting.
 - c. Next meeting date—Monday, December 6th, via Zoom.

Meeting adjourned by the chair at 7:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim S. Fleming, Secretary



Nile Sorenson

December 4, 1948-October 2, 2021

By Jason Pair

I have had the fortune of calling Nile Sorenson my friend and mentor, both in the mountains and in the world of orthodontics. I met Nile nearly twenty years ago when I began the process of becoming a member of the most esteemed national orthodontic study club in the United States—the Edward H. Angle Society. It would be years before I became a full member, and during that time I enjoyed Nile’s company, advice, and exemplary leadership. When you get a bunch of

orthodontic nerds in a room, the conversation rarely strays from scientific research and clinical pearls. And so it was that after ten years I finally got to learn what made this man tick outside the office, his church, and family obligations—mountaineering. When he learned that I had a love for the Sierra Nevada range, from long-distance backpacking to solo peak bagging, we were quick to become partners on a few jaunts in the mountains. Just as we rarely spoke about anything other than orthodontics at our meetings, we also unconsciously never spoke about orthodontics while in the mountains!

Nile was born on December 4, 1948, in Brigham City, Utah. He was the oldest of five children, having three brothers and one sister. During part of Nile’s childhood, his family lived near Yosemite National Park, where the family enjoyed camping and hiking. Nile attended Redlands High School, then Brigham Young University. While at BYU, he was drafted into the US Army, and volunteered for the Airborne Rangers. Immediately before being deployed to Vietnam, Nile was sent to Texas to become an Intelligence NCO to a Battalion Commander.

After discharge from the Army, Nile attended CSUF for the completion of his undergraduate studies, then the University of Pennsylvania for his dental school, and finally USC for his orthodontic specialty certificate, completing the program in 1982.

Soon after, Nile started his orthodontic practice in Yorba Linda, California, and became a diplomate of the American Board of Orthodontics in 1987. A few years after that, Nile was invited to join the Angle Society. Nile had always been passionate about the Angle Society and long served on our board of directors. He was so proud of our Society and said on many occasions that the Angle Society

*Nile Sorenson on Mount Williamson
(Photo by John Sheehe).*

PASSAGES



Jason Pair and Nile Sorenson on the summit of Mount Williamson, holding the flag of the Orthodontic Society (Photo courtesy Jason Pair).

was the benchmark of clinical excellence. He was our component president from 2002 to 2004, and, soon after completing his term as president, became our executive secretary, serving tirelessly until his recent passing. Nile was the epitome of what an Angle member stood for: he was highly principled, an excellent clinician, an excellent teacher, and an even better human being. It is with those principles that the Angle Society has decided to memorialize his legacy in an award of excellence to be given every year to the orthodontic resident who brings the finest treated case to our meetings.

As for the family man, Nile was married to Breta for forty-eight years. Nile and Breta had planned to take

their children to Zermatt, Switzerland, for their fiftieth anniversary. Nile had wanted his children to see the Matterhorn that he had summited in 2019. They raised five wonderful children and have ten grandchildren, ages two to nineteen.

Nile was a very private person, and in fact, shared with very few people that he was suffering from a rare blood disorder, essential thrombocythemia of the CALR gene, which was diagnosed in 2013. It was controlled satisfactorily with medications until recently, when it progressed to acute leukemia. Nile passed away on October 2, 2021, at the age of seventy-two.

Nile Sorenson

By Tina Bowman

I met Nile on October 4, 1997, on an E-provisional outing I was leading on Mt. Humphreys. After I belayed him up the fourth-class pitch, he stopped to examine my anchor and all before continuing on to the summit. Well, ok, I thought, whatever. Later, he liked to joke about his checking out my work, saying I must have thought, “Who is this guy? What the heck is he doing?” because I didn’t realize at the time that he too was working on his E rating. Nile completed his E rating in 1998, the year after I did.

Not long after becoming an E leader, Nile became a snow (and rock) examiner and soon after that the Snow Chair for the Leadership Training Committee for about twenty years. Anyone who ever did a snow practice or checkout or AMP (Advanced Mountaineering Program) snow seminar with him will attest to his excellence as a snow instructor and fairness as an examiner. He served on the Mountaineering Oversight Committee, the national Sierra Club committee that reviews applications for restricted mountaineering outings and applications for club entities to offer restricted outings. For many years he was a group leader for the Orange County Wilderness Travel Course. Nile’s service to the Angeles Chapter was recognized in 2000 with an Outings Service Award and in 2010 with the Chester Versteeg Outings Award.

Nile completed the SPS list (#76) on Clouds Rest on October 11, 2014, finishing along with Doug Mantle, who was closing the book on LF #7. The many pack trips Nile took over the years with Doug helped him check off blocks of peaks from his list. He earned the Andy Smatko Explorer Emblem in 2017 and was closing in on finishing the DPS list at the time of his death.



Nile Sorenson and Tina Bowman at Tina’s 3x list finish on Iron Mountain, September 28, 2019 (Photo by Tom Bowman).

Often I’d meet Nile at his office before we took off on a peak-bagging trip. I loved looking at the before and after photos he had of his orthodontic patients and concluded that Nile was a dental miracle worker. Without the photos, I’d never have believed such scary-looking teeth could turn into such wonderful smiles. Just think how much he was able to improve those people’s lives. On our drives, Nile sometimes talked about how he was going to approach a topic for adult Sunday school. I thought that if I ever had to go to Sunday school again, I’d want him to be my teacher because he really tried to make the lessons interesting, informative, and relevant.

We had lots of great adventures, leading SPS and DPS trips. At one Sierra snow practice and checkoff, Nile somehow lost his car keys. Yikes! I drove him down to Kramer Junction, where we met Breta, his wife, who brought the spare keys. Then back we went to Onion Valley to rescue his Suburban. On the DPS trip to Manly and Needle in November 2019 we led, the Suburban developed a leak in

a hose. Nile used a pole and duct tape to secure it—he made it home without a problem! On the pack trips—I went on a few—Nile would read from his notes about prior pack trips in the Sierra a little each evening, reliving the good times in the remembering.

Nile and I went on quite a spree of climbing northern peaks in 2009. Having climbed those peaks twice before, I could suggest what I thought was the most efficient way we could climb as many peaks in as little time as possible: fourteen peaks in nine days. By day eight I was really dragging, but Nile convinced me to go for Black Hawk with him. On the way out, Nile was anxious to get back to Kennedy Meadows in time to have a shower and then dinner (showers closed at 5:00 or something like that), so I told him to go ahead. Mr. Long Legs was soon out of sight, while she of the short legs trudged on back. Nile had convinced the resort folks to let me buy a shower even though I crawled in a little after the closing time. One highlight of the drive was stopping various places to buy ice cream sandwiches. Many of you know Nile as the guy who'd say it was time for a candy-bar break, but you may not have known how much he loved ice cream sandwiches. The low-point of the drive was my munching a panel behind a door on my Tacoma coming down the "short cut" road from Sierra Buttes. Oh well, it's a truck, and it didn't affect the door.

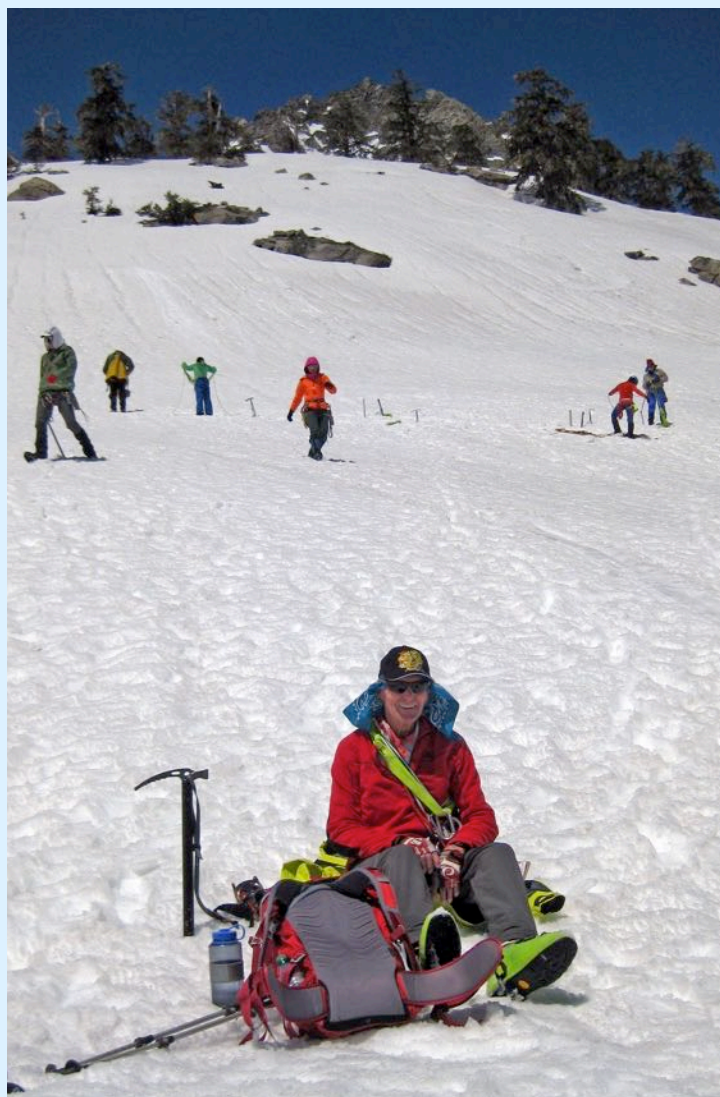
Though I don't know how Nile came up with his nickname for me, I loved that he called me Tina Sparkle. He was a dear friend, and I am so sad that our adventures together have come to an end but thankful for our times together. He will be missed by so many.

He was buried with his ice axe.

Remembering Nile

By Jason Seieroe

I first met Nile at a snow skills practice and right from the start I thought "This guy seems to really know his stuff, and he's such a nice guy!" For my first few years I just saw Nile at the annual snow



Nile Sorenson at one of the many snow checkoffs he led at Onion Valley, April 29, 2017 (Photo by Tina Bowman).

PASSAGES



Climbing the Matterhorn, July, 2018. Left to right: Nile Sorenson, Jason Seieroe, and their guide (Photo courtesy Jason Seieroe).

skill practices in the local mountains and the checkoffs in the Sierra when we had sufficient snow. I learned a lot from him. Then in 2018 I had the chance to go with Nile and several of the other more experienced leaders to climb in the Alps, and by the time I got to the planning meeting, they had already decided we would be climbing the Matterhorn and Mount Blanc. . . . Needless to say, these would be the toughest and most technically challenging climbs I'd ever done, but Nile helped to convince me that I would be able to get through it. We set up multiple training sessions before the trip both in local parks and the mountains, practicing our group travel skills. I learned so much from Nile and the other leaders during those training sessions that the trip to Europe was great, and celebrating with Nile and Jack on the summit of the Matterhorn was a once-in-a-lifetime experience.



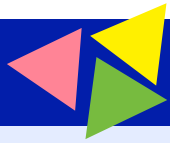
OR-93

April, 2019-November, 2021

Sad News from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife

We're sorry to say that OR-93, the young gray wolf who traveled to California and whose progress we've been following, died most likely as a result of being struck by a vehicle. This happened near Lebec in Kern County near Interstate 5. Read the report here: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/News/or93-found-dead-in-kern-county>.

OR-93 (Photo courtesy of Austin James, Jr., Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs).



Mystery Peak Challenge Answer



Ron Bartell answered correctly the day the *Echo* came out: Sandy Lara's photo is of Sawtooth (the light peak) and Mineral Peak in the Mineral King area, taken from the Eagle Lake trail.

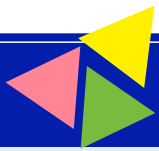
Treasurer's Statement Year to Date (1/1/2021 – 11/30/2021)

Money In		\$2,880.15
Donations		1030.00
Interest		0.15
Membership		1630.00
Merchandise Income		220.00
Money Out		-\$867.57
Echo Expense		-602.18
Postage		-294.77
Printing		-307.41
Merchandise Expense		-228.95
PayPal Fees		-15.54
Taxes		-20.90
	Money In	\$2,880.15
	Money Out	-\$867.57
	Net Total:	\$2,012.58

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.com. Refer to the SPS Roster for mailing address. The *Echo* will be available as a PDF download at the SPS website and via a link sent to all SPS members and *Echo* subscribers.



Mystery Peak Challenge



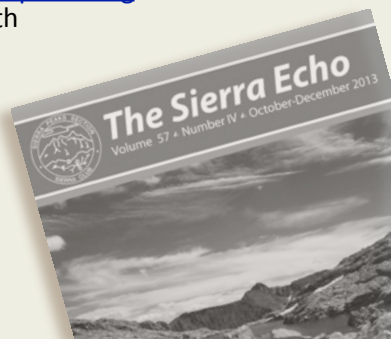
This occasional just-for-fun puzzle is for you to figure out which Sierra peak or peaks are featured in the image. If you have a fine mystery peak puzzle to challenge *Echo* readers, please send it to tina@bowmanchange.com. We welcome any mountain images, including those from popular culture - imagery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

Dive in to a different kind of puzzle! Tina Bowman saw this rock on the way to this mystery peak, and she didn't think it was a fluke. There is another photo in the beginning of this issue that provides an additional hint. Good luck!

Send your answer to Tina Bowman at tina@bowmanchange.com.

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



We Need Your Stories!

We need YOU to submit reports of SPS and private climbs, Trail Tech articles, Mystery Peak challenges, and anything else you think would be of interest to *Echo* readers! Please send submissions to co-editor Tina Bowman at tina@bowmanchange.com.

Thanks!



The Sierra Echo

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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, or through regular U.S. mail (electronic format is preferable). 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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