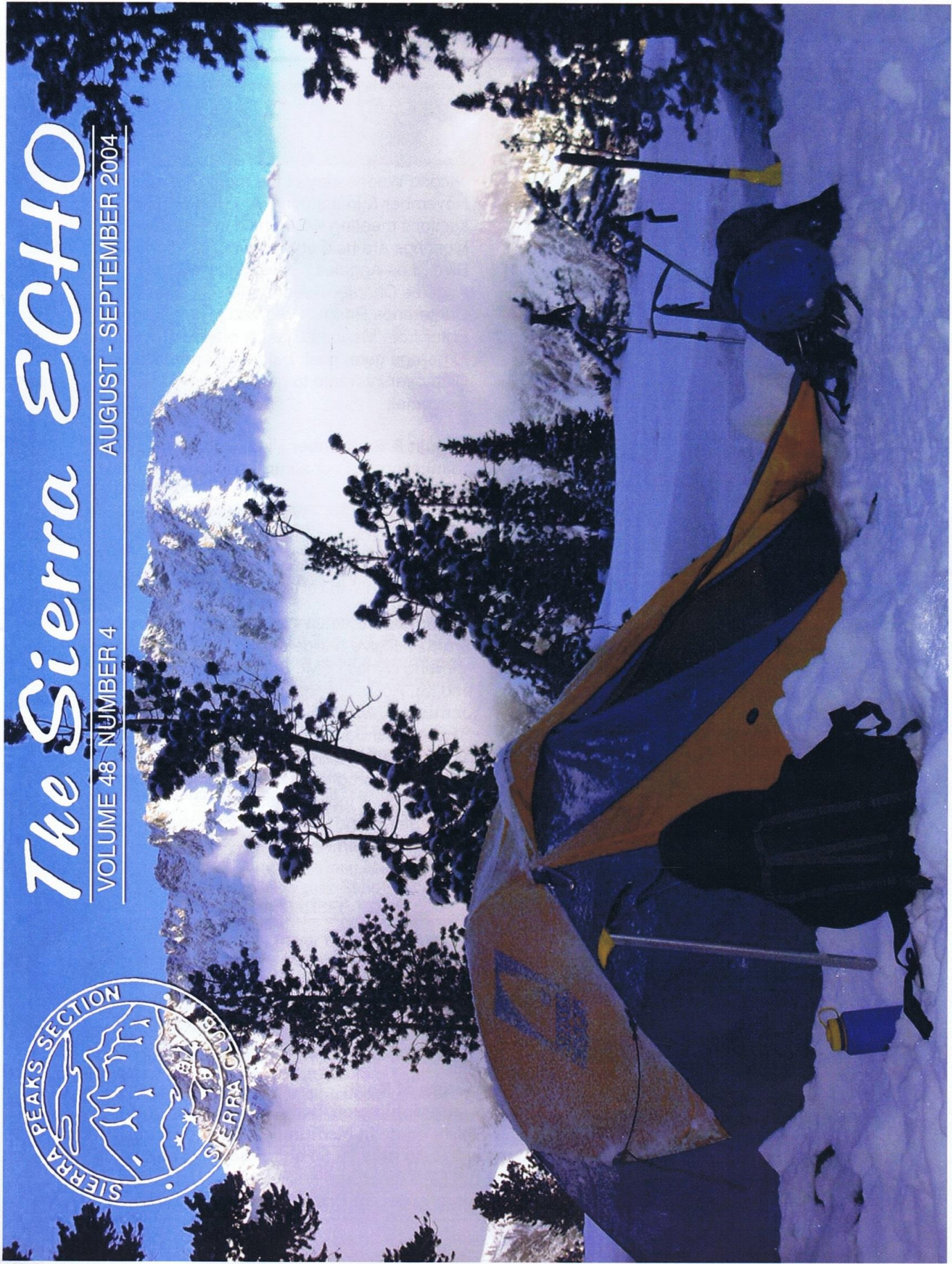
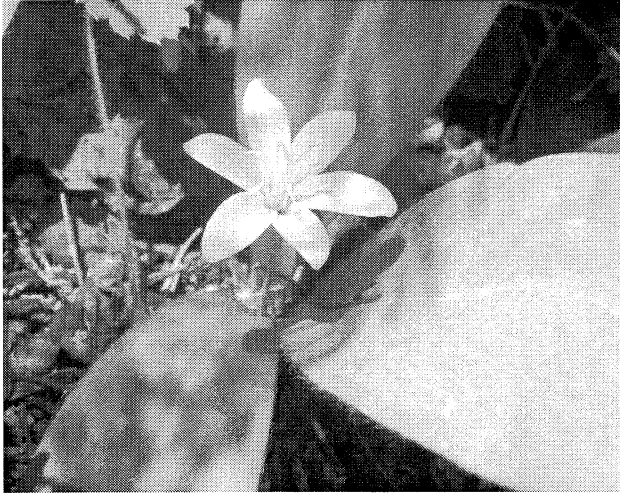


The Sierra ECHO

VOLUME 48 NUMBER 4

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2004



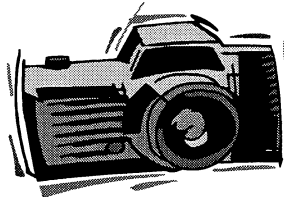


Mt. Morrison
 Bloody Mtn.
 Muah Mtn.
 Trail Peak
 Mt. Ansel Adams
 Foester Peak
 Sing
 Gale
 Pk. 10,550
 Volunteer Peak
 Pettit Peak
 Piute Mtn.

Eisen
 Lippincott
 Sawtooth
 Samoa High Places

Peak List

See Stories inside
 this issue



Front

Cover

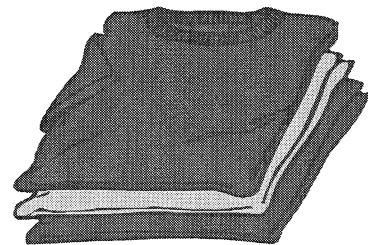
Congratulations to the 2004

Color Photo Contest Winner!

Independence Peak

photo by Paul Morash

SPS T-SHIRTS



Own Your Own SPS T-Shirt. They come with a picture of North Palisade on the front and the entire SPS list by geographic area, with Mountaineer and Emblem Peak easily identified on the back. T-Shirts come in Medium, Large and Extra Large. Colors are sand, ash and yellow. Cost is \$12.00 plus \$3.50 shipping for 1 and \$4.00 for 2 or more T-shirts. Buy them from Patty at the SPS meetings and save the shipping charge. Make check payable to the SPS. Send your order to: Patty Kline, 20362 Callon Drive, Topanga Canyon, CA 90290.

SPS PROGRAMS

SPS meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month - May through November & in January. A joint climbing sections meeting will be held in February. Meetings are held at 7:30 p.m., 3435 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles. Downstairs from the Angeles Chapter Headquarters - Lower Plaza Conference Room. Free and secure parking. Enter from Mariposa, just N of Wilshire. Pull up to garage gate, push button and mention Sierra Club over intercom to guard. Newcomers welcome.

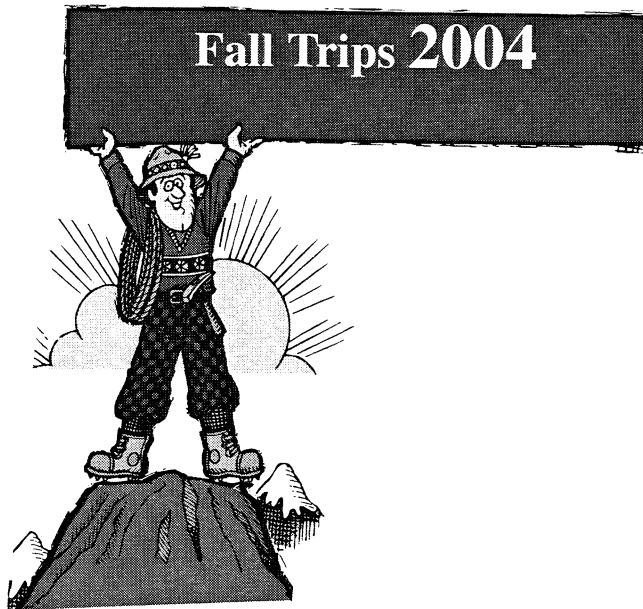
August & September Please note there will be no meetings as our summer outings have taken priority.

October 13, 2004 - Wednesday, Dave Endres will give a program of his trip to Ellesmere Island north of Canada. He will also present his backpack/raft trip combo to the Brooks Range in Alaska.

November 10, 2004 - Wednesday, Steve Smith will give a slide show of his trip to Europe showing climbs of Mt. Blanc, The Matterhorn and Mt. Rosa.

January 8, 2005 - Saturday

SPS Annual Banquet, SAVE THE DATE AND TELL YOUR FRIENDS. Royal Robbins will present the program entitled Sierra Adventures, and will include first ascents in the Sierra and kayacking down the length of the San Joaquin River.



SEPTEMBER

I: Sep 17-19 Fri-Sun, Yosemite NP/Koip Peak (12,962'): 3-day backpack & climb. Send check for \$10 permit fee (payable to Wilderness Adventures), 2 SASE (or 1 SASE & email) to Ldr: KEITH MARTIN. Asst: BETH POWIS

I: Sep 18-19 Sat-Sun, Mount Tom (13,562'): WTC/SPS, Gourmet Backpack! Join us for a weekend of high-altitude decadence. Send SASE with e-mail and your most outrageous culinary ideas to Ldr: RON CAMPBELL. Asst: GEORGETTE RIECK

I: Sep 18-19 Sat-Sun, North Maggie Mtn (10,234'): WTC/SPS, Moderate backpack trip to North Maggie Mountain. Send SASE or email, if recent student - WTC leader's name to Ldr: ED MORENTE. Asst: TOM MCDONNELL

MR: Sep 18-26 Sat-Sun, Week long backpack lots of miles and lots of elevation gain. Send SASE to Ldr: LARRY TIDBALL. Co-Ldr: BARBEE TIDBALL

MR: Sep 24-26 Fri-Sun, Tower Peak (11775'): Climb this Northern Sierra Mountaineer's Peak. Strenuous trip. Send SASE with \$5.00 permit fee. Ldrs: HENRY A. ARNEBOLD and STEVE THAW

O: Sep 24-26 Fri-Sun, Yosemite Volunteer in Parks Program: Saturday work under direction of Park Rangers. Potluck Bar B Que on Saturday night. Sunday do your own thing or join leaders on hike. Send 2 SASE to Ldr: KEITH MARTIN, Asst: JOYCE WHITE

I: Sep 24-26 Fri-Sun, Pilot Knob # 2 (12,245'): Send check for \$6 permit fee (made out to leader), email or 2 SASE to Ldr. MIKE DILLENBACK. Asst. K. C. REID

See past editions of *The Sierra Echo* for detailed write-ups of trips without full write-ups. Trips previously described are listed without detailed write-ups in subsequent publications. Note all trips listed as MR or ER are restricted trips open to Sierra Club members only with the appropriate rock or snow skills. For all trips remember to send a SASE, Sierra Club #, experience and conditioning resume (if you are not known to the leaders), H & W phone #s, e-mail address optional, and rideshare information.

All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read the Liability Waiver before you choose to participate on an outing, please go to: <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/>, or contact the Outings Department at (415) 977-5528 for a printed version.

SEPTEMBER *continued*

I: Sep 26 Sun Grinnell Ridge Navigation: LTC/WTC Navigation Noodle in San Bernardino National Forest for either checkout or practice to satisfy Basic (I/M) or Advanced (E) level navigation requirements. To receive homework assignment, send sase with navigation experience/training, rideshare info, H&W phones, to Ldr: Harry Freimanis. Asst: Bob Bradshaw

OCTOBER

M: Oct 1-4 Fri-Mon, North Guard(13,327') and Francis Farquhar(12,893'): Enjoy High Sierra in the Fall. Send SASE or email (preferred) to leader with class 3 experience. Ldr: JIM CROUCH. Asst: REINER STENZEL

I: Oct 2 Sat Mt Lowe (5603') Beginning Navigation Clinic: LTC/WTC 5 mi, 500' gain. Spend the day one on one with an instructor, learning/practicing map and compass. Beginners to rusty old timers welcome. Not a checkoff. Many expert leaders will attend; many "I" rated leaders started here in the past. Recent no-shows require a \$25 deposit, refunded at trailhead. Send large sase early with check made out to Sierra Club, H&W phones to Ldr: DIANE DUNBAR. CO-LDR: RICHARD BOARDMAN

Oct 2 Sat Deadline for Leadership Training Seminar: Last day to register for Oct 16th LTC seminar. See ad back pages of Angeles Chpt. sch'd.

M: Oct 9-10 Sat-Sun M: Moses Mtn. (9331'), North Maggie Mtn. (10'): Late season backpack to the Mineral King area. Take time to learn from our naturalist about the fauna and flora. Send email (preferable) or sase to Ldr: BARRY HOLCHIN. Co-Ldr: KENT SCHWITKIS. Naturalist: Sherry Ross

Oct 16 Sat Leadership Training Seminar

I/M: Oct 24 Sun LTC, WTC Sheep Pass, Joshua Tree National Park Navigation. Navigation Noodles to satisfy Basic (I/M) level nav.requirements. Sat for practice. Sun for checkout. To receive homework assignment, send SASE to Ldr: Harry Freimanis. Asst: Bob Bradshaw

C: Oct 29-31 Fri - Sun Wilderness First Aid Course (WFAC): LTC, Harwood Lodge, WTC Runs from 8 am Fri to 5:30 pm Sun. Fee includes lodging and meals. CPR within previous 2 years required. Fee \$165 with SC#/\$175 non-member (full refund through Sept 24). For application send e-mail or sase to Ldr: STEVE SCHUSTER

NOVEMBER

I/M: Nov 13-14 Sat-Sun LTC, WTC Indian Cove, Joshua Tree National Park Navigation. Navigation Noodles to satisfy Basic (I/M) level nav.requirements. Sat for practice. Sun for checkout. To receive homework assignment, send SASE to Ldr: Harry Freimanis. Asst: Bob Bradshaw

DECEMBER

I/M/E: Dec 5 Sun LTC, WTC Warren Point, Joshua Tree National Park Navigation. Navigation Noodles to satisfy Basic (I/M) level nav.requirements. Sat for practice. Sun for checkout. To receive homework assignment, send SASE to Ldr: Harry Freimanis. Asst: Bob Bradshaw



Have you met the Boeing Mountaineering Club? We did on North Palisade - They are working on the 14ers, SPSrs need to show them all the other great Sierra Peaks!

PEAK REGISTERS - REQUIREMENTS

Below is the current list of register and container needs. If you are planning a trip to a peak on this list and could help out by carrying a book and/or container, please let me know. Also, please continue to send in your register reports, even for those peaks not in need of a book or container. Thanks again for the help in keeping our records up to date and in filling needs. Tina Bowman

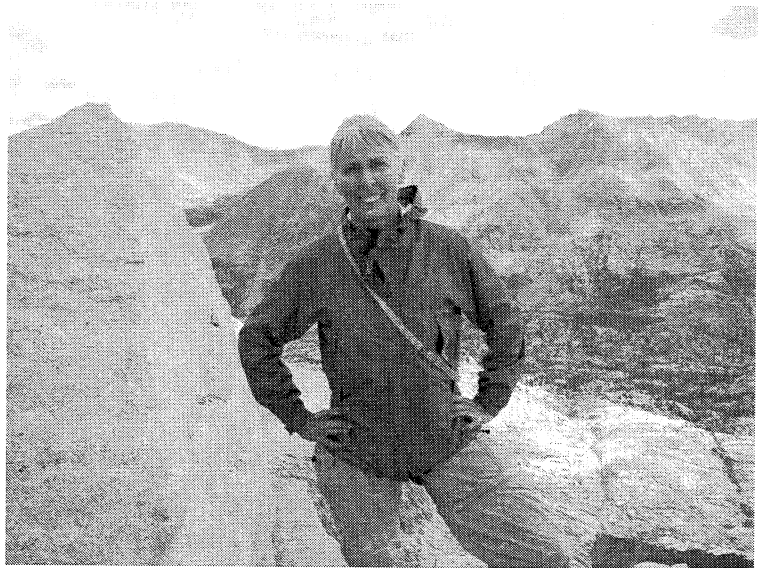
Mountain Records

<u>Peak</u>	<u>Need as Noted</u>
Alta	book
Barnard	container, book
Bear Creek Spire	pencil, book
Bradley	book
Cirque	book
Cloudripper	book
Dunderberg	book
Eagle Scout	container (exchange), book
Goethe	container, book
Lamarck	book
Matterhorn	book
Middle Pal	book
Morgan (south)	book
North	book
Perkins	container, book
Picket Guard	container, book
Ritter	wire for ammo box
Royce	book
Sill	book
Silliman	book
Trojan	container, book
Twin	book
University	book
Warren	ammo box
Williamson	ammo box, book
Unlisted peaks information	
Balcony	container, book?
Cahoon Rock	container
Columbine	container, book
Francis Farquhar	container
Hopkins	PVC pipe needs replace. new book?
The Hunchback	container
Matthes Crest	book/pencil
Painted Lady	container
Sherman Peak	container, book
Sphinx	container, book
Tioga Peak	container
Venacher Needle	container, book
Versteeg	book
Saddlehorn	pencil

Echoes from the Chair

Patty on Clarence King - the rain clouds with hail and pouring rain are building in the back ground for Sierra afternoon weather.

On Sunday, August 22 Brian Reynolds (age 31) died on Middle Palisade on the scheduled SPS trip. Our thoughts and reflections go out to his family and friends. This is a great loss of a young man that loved being out there on the mountains and also on the trail. Contributions can be sent to the Brian Reynolds Scholarship Fund, Box 1294, Lakewood, California 90714. He is survived by his parents Russ Reynolds and Jean Reynolds, if you would like their addresses to send your condolences, contact me via e-mail.



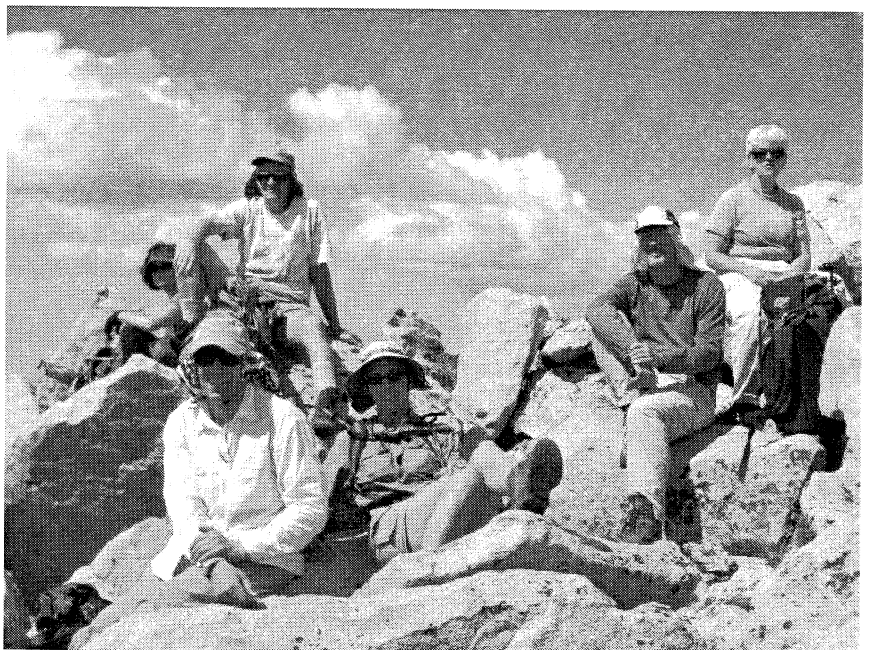
After a long conversation with David Petzold (SPS List Finisher/former SPS Chair), I just wanted to keep in touch with our past climbers. I had been informed that he had spinal reconstruction/fusion on August 25, 2004. He is recovering at home. David's comment was "I will be coming back for better or worse." He looks forward to his work in his home-based sound recording studio and studying string bass. I heard lots of his exciting stories starting with his first very long hike with Gene Mauk, his leads and assists with Dave Dykeman, climbs with Dale Van Dalsem, George Toby and many others. Hopefully he and his wife Carolyn West will be at our banquet in January.

The SPS Banquet will be held on Saturday night, January 8, 2005 at Taix Restaurant. Royal Robbins will present the program entitled Sierra Adventures. I have been contacting people so we should have a good variety of door prizes. I was recently at Whitney Portal Store and so enjoyed the book "Mount Whitney – Mountain Lore from the Whitney Store". I asked Doug Thompson, the author and owner of the store, and he gladly donated a copy for our banquet.

So we have a few weeks of the fall climbing season left, head out and climb carefully!

See you on the summit,
Patty

**Susan, Larry, Gary, Barbee,
Ed and Patty relax on Cotter.
Photos by Tina Bowman**



SPS Membership News

Congratulations to a new Senior Emblem holder

134 Patty Rambert, Sr. Emblem
8-21-04 on Mt. Clarence King

Congratulations Master Emblem holder - 3rd time!

R.J. Secor 3x Master Emblem
status 7-12-04 on North peak.

Welcome New Subscribers

Randall Taylor
350 W. 5th Street Suite 205
San Pedro, CA 90731

Lester Sapitula
1913 Grant Ave. Unit C
Redondo Beach, CA 90278
l1sapitula@yahoo.com

Jeffery Groenke
28460 N. Gold Canyon Dr.
Santa Clarita, CA 91390-5703

Phillip Rogul
1709 Catalpa Rd.
Carlsbad, CA 92009
H(760) 804-1870
rogul@cts.com

Karen Gorny
316 1st Place
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266
(310) 798-5731
kegorny@yahoo.com

Matthew Gelber
679 Saddlehorn Dr.
Incline Village, NV 89451
(775) 832-3785
mgelber@gelbercapitol.com

Yasushi Morita
3711 W. 230th Street Apt 217
Torrance, CA 90505
h(310) 378-3839
bxbo06277@nifty.com



**Fisherman or Master Emblem climber - R.J. Secor,
photo by Paul Morash**

Bob Hoeven
P.O. Box 73
Independence, CA 93526
(760) 878-0095
bobhoeven@earthlink.net

Jennifer Louie
2040 Las Colinas Cir. # 307
Corona, CA 92879
H(858) 229-4269
jenlouie@uclalumni.net

Jane Simpson
1951 Mandiville Cyn. Rd.
Los Angeles, CA 90049-2224
(310) 476-3059
jsimp6@earthlink.net

Sandy Sperling
5218 Parkcrest St.
Long Beach, CA 90808-1855
h(562) 421-8143
w(562) 933-2273
ssperling@juno.com

Welcome back

Neal Robbins
22631 Draille Dr.
Torrance CA 90505
h(310) 540-0589
w(310) 517-7548
neal.robbs@boeing.com

Welcome New SPS Members

Shirley Lerche
6644 Lemona Ave.
Van Nuys, CA 91405-4530
h(818) 988-2465
w(818) 413-3405
s.lerche@juno.com

Brian McElwain
91 Myrtle Lane
Big Pine, CA 93513
h(760) 937-5460
buckhowdy@msn.com

Shane Smith
719 Wildrose Ave
Ridgecrest, CA 93555
(760) 265-0567
sssmith4@yahoo.com

We Get Letters

To Echo:

In the long run, I think the Management committee should consider switching the ECHO to an electronic publication. SPS spends a lot of our dues on mailing and printing the ECHO, and the printed version really doesn't show the quality of a lot of the photos.

One way to do this would be to have the ECHO as a website, and update stories and pictures as they become available. (Please note, I am not suggesting a forum, such as climber.org.). Those without computer access could be mailed a print version of the text only at cost.

Another way would be to create the ECHO as a PDF document, and either email it to subscribers, or have them download it from a website. For those members who do not want to or do not know how to use a computer, a version of the PDF could be printed out on a laser printer and mailed at cost.

Dave Sholle

From the Editor: This is an idea we are hearing more and more about lately. It would replace the Echo Editor with a Webmaster position (volunteers?). Lets hear form the membership on this idea. Please send your comments to the Echo. I think conversion to the web may be a new direction for the SPS, but we need to also think about how the conversion will affect our member's new and old. Dave Sholle has indicated that in maybe a year he'd consider becoming the SPS webmaster. Dave has also offered "...to make a presentation or write a report to the Management Committee concerning this."

Barbee Tidball

Attached is a letter I received from Shane Smith. I thought it was pretty special. I sent him an e-mail and asked him if it was okay to share with others in the Echo, he responded back with a YES.

He is Steve Smith's son and also a DPS List Finisher. He was signed up for my Baxter trip with a cross country route I was leading and he had an external frame pack and was not used to cross country/2nd and 3rd class/with a backpack so after about an hour or two he and another participant signed out. Then he signed up for a Ron Hudson/Patty Rambert trip into the Kaweahs and we had very hard rain on the first day in and it was also a long day, he ended up pretty wet in his bivy and the next morning instead of heading in further for another 6 days, he signed out and went back over one pass and out. But the great news is, he has now jumped with both feet and done many, many peaks and is very excited about it.

Patty Rambert

Hello! Wanted to say thanks for giving me the idea of starting off with some SPS day peaks last season. I felt bad dropping out of two of your outings....but I always try to learn from all my attempts. Thank you so much for having me along even though they were not successful summits for me. I learn so much by simply starting and attempting and those two outings with you...though short....taught me a lot. I learned that I need to start off easy with the SPS peaks, and to have the right gear (A waterproof tent!! my bivy just didn't cut it)....So on your suggestion, I really improved this season. First, I researched and got all good, lightweight gear!! Then I started July 4th and climbed Adams, Elwell, Sierra Buttes, English, Tinker Knob, Granite Chief, Freel, Pyramid, Dick's, Tallac, Mokelumne, Highland, Stanislaus, Disaster, Leavitt, Black Hawk, Dunderberg, Excelsior, Warren, Conness, North (By this time you can see I gained all kinds of confidence and really started to enjoy the SPS peaks), Dana, Gibbs, Koip.....Now feeling ready to take the next step I did the Matterhorn, Whorl, Virginia, and Twin on my first 3 day backpack....everything went fine...then from there a 3 day to Tower, and then a two day to Cloud's Rest and Half Dome....I feel real confident now with the 2-3 day backpacks.... So thanks for getting me started by your suggestion of beginning day hikes in the Sierras (and getting a waterproof tent!!). I'm up to 52 now and looking forward to trying a simple introductory backpack with the SPS! Are there any types you might recommend as an intro for me..I hear of WTC, etc....? so that way I can work in slowly!! Thanks for getting me started with the day hikes!!

continued page 22

Mt Morrison & Bloody Mtn.

July 10 & 11, 2004

by George Wysup

Mt. Morrison

On the first day of a scheduled SPS outing, 14 eager hikers, some intrepid, a few somewhat more trepid, congregated at the Convict Lake picnic area at about 7700' elevation (end of the road, south side of lake) at 7 a.m., eager to bag this peak that looks so daunting from the east side.

The weather promised to be without monsoon, so we could be as leisurely as we wanted. A year ago, I reached about 600' below the summit, only to be turned back by lightning. You may imply from this that I am not a truly serious bagger of peaks.

We soon began the march up the brushy hill behind the toilet, a few bare legs wishing they were protected. 600' later we reached the west end of the Mt Morrison road [this seems to begin on hwy 395, just south of the Convict Lake turnoff]. We continued southward up an easily navigable gully, passing two large snow mounds, to an area at 9950' elevation (UTM 371588), about 200 yards to the west of a small lake. Some of us replenished water bottles from the feeder stream.

From this spot we could see a use trail heading up a shallow bowl. We followed this obvious trail, which heads west to UTM 365588, then turns south for a short distance to a flat spot, which invited a break. Only 1350' gain to go to the summit from here.

The hike now became class 2, in some areas perhaps reaching 2.9. We headed west just to the left of a ridge. The path is reasonably obvious. We took care in some chutes to avoid possible rock fall. A small group would not need to do this. At about 11,600' we turned right off the ridge into a steep gully. The true summit is obscured by the large block directly in front of us. We went left around this block, then veered to the right and easily reached the summit shortly after noon. We did the usual: reveled in the view, signed the register, lunched, and snapped innumerable photos.

The return, along almost the same path, was uneventful. We reached Convict Lake before 5 p.m.



Bloody Mtn.

My plan was to drive up the Laurel Lakes road as far as we reasonably could, understanding that 4WD high clearance is necessary. I had heard mixed reports regarding the quality of this road. I had scouted the first mile of this road 2 days early. I found its condition to be abominable, at best.

Bettye Swart and Robert Amaral excused themselves after the Morrison hike and Ali Sanaei joined us, for a total of 13 unlucky hikers. Unfortunately, mine was the only real 4WD vehicle available. Larry Hoak offered the services of his Subaru Outback, giving us a capacity of 8 passengers (The Subaru carried only 3 passengers in the interest of decent ground clearance). A few hikers got an early start hiking up the road. Larry in his Subaru led the way up. That vehicle managed to negotiate the road for about 3 miles to a point near lower Laurel Lake. Most of us were amazed that this car did so well without mishap. Larry had driven that road 2 years earlier in the same car. He pronounced that the road had deteriorated very badly since.

My 4Runner had no problem getting in 3.5 miles to the trailhead, where a few other 4WDs were parked. On the return down the road I used low range 4WD, a definite asset. My poor vehicle was called upon to return part way to shuttle more of the group. I was unwilling to climb on foot the entire 5200' gain to the summit, so I couldn't ask others to do so.

From the trailhead we hiked easily to the saddle between Laurel and Bloody Mtns. Ron Eckelmann signed out to climb Laurel. He made the summit up and down an ugly steep and loose scree slope, then waited for our return. The rest of us ascended, without problems, the northeast ridge to the summit and returned. There was no snow along the route. The route along the NE ridge is obvious. Some stretches have loose rock, making for a rather slow pace.

Leaders: George Wysup, Pat Arredondo, Gary Schenk
 Participants: Robert Amaral, Lisa Barboza, Bill Burke, Tom Connery, Mary Jo Dungefelder, Larry Hoak, Ron Eckelmann, Yim Lincoln, Zobeida Molina, Bettye Swart, Ron Zappen.

Muah Mountain and Trail Peak

June 5 and 6, 2004 – SPS/WTC Trip

Patty Rambert (Leader) writes:

An excited group of ten people gathered on Saturday, June 5 at 10:30 a.m. at Horseshoe Meadow, up the hill from Lone Pine. The trip destination had been changed due to a change in leadership. Patty Rambert one of the original leaders was able to lure George Wysup into the Sierras with promises of beautiful temperatures, scenery and a fun group of people. So George came up with a plan to do Muah Mountain and Trail Peak as a two day backpack with peak climb, thereby qualifying for a WTC Experience trip. So we are all set, we notify the participants and everyone is a GO! The ten participants were Patty Rambert, George Wysup, Brett Mizelle, Jennie Thomas, Lisa Buckley, Edith Jaranilla, Doug DeYoung, Jim Freckelton, Wayne Vollaire, and Gary Bowen. I had a great time, a few bugs but enjoyed the Horseshoe Meadow area, hiking part of the PCT, doing an SPS Peak (Muah Mountain), doing an unlisted peak (Trail Peak) and meeting potential new SPSers. I thought it would be fun to hear about others experience on the trip, so we are going to pass the trip report around.

George Wysup (Co-leader) writes:

Patty asked me, rather at the last minute (she must have been desperate), to assist on a WTC/SPS outing whose leader was forced to drop out. I noted that the trip was M-rated (due to class 3 on Crag Peak) and that it would be quite warm on the weekend. I am only I-rated, so we would have to stop well short of Crag's actual summit. Patty and I hate doing that! As I felt a bit tired at that time I came up with an alternative that should not extract too great a toll on our bodies, and would be high up enough for reasonable temperatures. Patty went for it.

I really enjoyed helping to lead this trek, despite a few mosquitoes at our camp above Diaz Meadow. And, as a retired old dude, it was great to be with some fine young folks for a change. Patty and I hope that many of these folks will strive to become M or E rated leaders some day.

Jennie Thomas, WTC Orange County, Group 1:

This was a great first experience trip after

finishing WTC. The trip was filled with people who had just completed WTC and who were on their first or second experience trip. Muah Mountain is a great destination for people like myself looking to get started climbing in the Sierras. Our leaders, Patty Rambert and George Wysup made a last minute trip destination change, but we were undaunted and ready to get out into the Sierra for the weekend.

A late start on Saturday morning left us plenty of time to hike in, set up camp, climb Muah Mountain, and then return to camp for a nice happy hour (around 6:30 pm). There were patches of snow on Muah Mountain providing a nice source of cool water on the way.

Sunday morning, we set out at 8:00 am after a short walk to pump water out of a nearby stream. We took the PCT to the base of Trail Peak and completed the climb to the summit in about an hour. We were out to the cars in the early afternoon, which left us time for Pizza in Lone Pine before returning to Orange County. Overall, great trip with great people!

Edie Jaranillo writes:

Despite the discomfort of altitude and mosquitoes I had a great time backpacking in the Southern Sierras for the first time. A bit of advice for people that are very sensitive to altitude sickness, acclimate by trying to sleep at the trail head, hydrate the night before and eat a high carbohydrate diet to have enough "oomph" to push you through the hurdles of a heavy pack and altitude. I came up with a friend that same morning. We backpacked in and climbed the peak. Knowing that in the past I have gotten sick at 10,000+ level I should have gone up that Friday night and acclimated. Coming from 2000+ level to 10,000+ within a few hours was just too much for my system to handle.

I forced myself to climb Muah Mountain and starting "puking" 400 feet from reaching the summit that I had to consent to be left behind to prevent the worse scenario of deterioration of AMS. After 3 more episodes of "puking", hydration was key for the evening agenda. Downing 3-5 liters of filtered water had its downfall of keeping one up, your tent partner and nearby neighbors of hearing the "zip, zip" every ½ hour. Thank God for the almost full moon and starlit skies I didn't need to have my head light to find my private BR. My apologies to the people I have inconvenienced.

As a reminder for me, a lighter pack, good

sleep, acclimation, hydration and Diamox should be a good formula to test for future high elevation backpack trips. Overall it was a great experience trip. We had good leaders, good company, good weather and a great time. I'll climb it again.

Wayne Vollaire – OC WTC writes:

I was happy to have the trip plans change as needed to allow the WTC experience trip to continue. I was pleasantly surprised by the picturesque open meadows and running streams at the 10,000' elevation of Horseshoe Meadow. As we hiked both on trail and cross-country, the conversations within our group provided additional enjoyment to the trip.

Special mention has to be made about George frequently calling the 2-minute warning of the need to be ready to move on. Warnings of being in an active bear environment never produced any visible activity or unwelcome need to share our food. Muah Mountain and Trail Peak were pleasant hikes that required a moderate effort that paid off in spectacular views. Trail Peak provided a 360-degree view with a nearly full view of Owens Lake bed off to the east, Mt. Langley to the north, Olancha Peak to the south, and inviting meadows as far as the eye could see.

Even though Trail Peak is not on any list, it will be on my personal list as a "do again" peak and will be on my recommended list. Patty and George, you did a terrific job at making last minute alternate plans for our weekend outing. Thank you.

Doug Deyoung writes:

Having attended many club trips in the past, this trip followed many of the trends I have noticed. First, the leaders were quite enthusiastic and helpful throughout the journey. They were conscious of the group's needs and gave us freedom when we needed it yet held us together in others. When one of the group fell ill to apparent altitude sickness, they were reassuring and patient with the victim and tried to help her achieve the goal of climbing Muah Mountain. All this with a trip that was literally rebuilt from the ground up when the

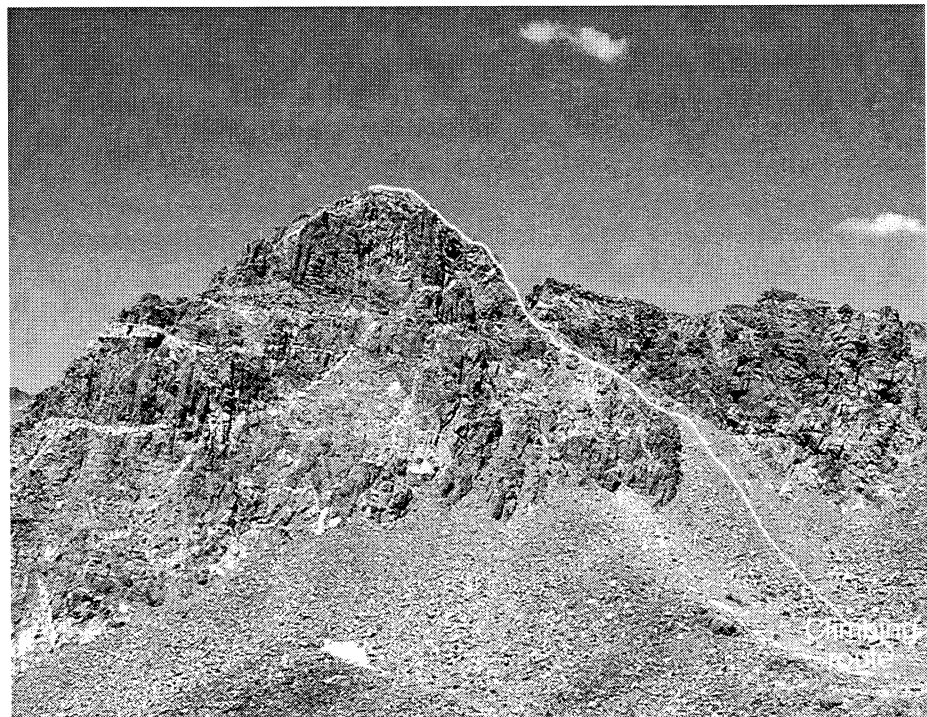
original trip leader had to cancel. Thanks to Patty for burning the midnight oil and keeping the outing a go.

Another tradition, which went over well, as usual, was the "potluck". We feasted on fresh strawberries, fine chocolates, nuts, imported salami, and many other delights that would normally not be found in that neck of the woods. Thanks to all for the treats.

Lisa Buckley, WTC Orange County writes:

Thanks Patty and George for going on with the show and not canceling the trip. I'm glad I went up the night before, the campsite at the trailhead was perfect. We had a nice dinner and then a leisurely breakfast before the hiking began. The views from the peaks were beautiful. I'm still not sure why Wayne carried a bucket of snow to the top of Muah. Ron was shocked and disappointed to learn that I brought beer nuts to the potluck.

Unfortunately, the mosquitoes enjoyed me a little more than I enjoyed them. I thought at first that it was because I am so sweet. I have since read that mosquitoes are attracted to carbon dioxide, lactic acid and especially sweat. So, it was my sweatiness and not my sweetness that drew them to me. Now I can't even be flattered by all the mosquito bites I received. All in all though, it was a wonderful experience for my first SPS peak and my first backpacking trip. Thanks everyone!



South face of Ansel Adams in summer, 7/31/04

Mt. Ansel Adams, Foerster Peak, Sing, Gale, Pk 10,550

July 30 – August 1, 2004

By Mark Goebel & Reiner Stenzel

Participants: Mark Vogt, Rudy Fleck, Bahram Manahedgi, Leslie Hofherr, Mark Goebel, Reiner Stenzel

Mt. Ansel Adams, 11,760', stands impressively at the headwaters of the Lyell Fork of the Merced River. The peak is located on the Yosemite Park border between Foerster Peak to the southwest, and Electra Peak to the northeast. We once passed the peak in spring on a Trans-Sierra Ski tour and got inspired to climb it (see <http://angeles.sierraclub.org/skimt/trips/yosem03/yosem03.htm>). While there are a number of routes to this area, we selected a southern approach, the Isberg Pass trail, only an 8 mile, 2000' gain to base camp at Sadler Lake. This trailhead, just north of Clover Meadow Ranger Station, is probably one of the most obscure starting points in the Sierra. A 70 mile winding road, that leaves Hwy 41 30 miles north of Fresno.

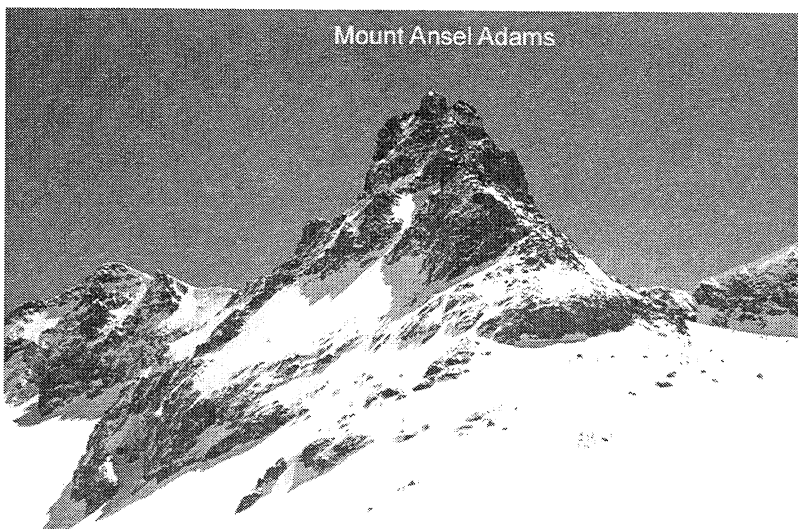
After securing our permit on Friday morning, we signed in and were on our way by 9am. The trail winds through the forest almost the entire way to Sadler Lake, which we reached by mid-afternoon. The lake is beautiful, but is a popular destination for mule pack groups, and as a result, a great deal of horse manure contaminated the area and our campsite. We had the lake almost to ourselves, but of course, as soon as we arrived, a ranger appeared out

of nowhere and asked to see our permit. While everyone else relaxed and swatted mosquitoes, Leslie and Reiner hiked up to nearby McClure Lake and successfully fished for their dinner. At night a full moon rose over Sadler Lake.

Saturday morning we started at 6:30 am, going over hill and dale numerous times. First we ascended the southeastern ridge of Long Mountain, dropped over the side, and traversed to another ridge where we could descend further to Rockbound Lake. This was followed by another ridge and drop to Blue Lake where climbed 1200' to a saddle just east of Foerster Peak. At this point, we had our first view of the final route to Ansel Adams, and it wasn't a pretty picture. It was 12 noon and time was running short. We faced another descent, and then a traverse of at least a half a mile across a jumbled glacial moraine to the base of the peak. Realizing this next section would require about 2-3 hrs and extra speed if we were to return to camp before dark, four opted to only climb the remaining 300' of Foerster Peak and then start the long hike back to camp. Reiner and Rudy turned on their turbos, dropped over the edge, and the next thing we heard was a dislodged boulder the size of a refrigerator rolling down the canyon. This is nothing unusual when climbing on a loose moraine and no problem when climbing in parallel with nobody else around.

Rudy and I (Reiner) descended on mixed rock and snow into the large cirque between Foerster and Ansel Adams. We enjoyed some fine standing glissades on red summer snow (after all, it was an SMS trip!). Then we ascended the south-facing chute into the prominent saddle on the East Side of Ansel Adams. From just below the saddle we

entered a talus chute, which ascends to the right (N). After about 50' we traversed into the next higher chute which also ascends to the right up on the north face. This is high class 3 territory with some class 4 ledges. The rock is loose and requires careful moves. But it is only a short 200' climb to the summit, which we reached by 1pm. We found a glass jar with an original summit register from 1985 and signed in. It mentioned a newer SRC register, which was located on the approach side below the peak. Quite a few people have visited this beautiful



Northwest face of A. A. in winter, 4/30/03



Group shot on way to Ansel Adams Fltr: Leslie, Bahram, Rudy, Mark V., Mark G

peak but hardly anyone from the SPS since it is not on the "List". Yet it would make a great addition as a mountaineers peak. We enjoyed the great views, from the summit and talked by radio to the rest of the group on nearby Foerster. After taking pictures and a snack we descended carefully, following our ducks set on the ascent. By 2:30pm we were back on the Foerster ridge and continued toward Blue Lake where we rejoined Bahram and saw everyone else on the roller coaster terrain home to basecamp.

Mark continues to write that from the summit of Foerster, we had great views including Mt. Lyell, Ritter, Banner, the Minarets, and Half Dome. Maintaining radio contact with Reiner and Rudy, we started back only after they down off the exposed 3rd class on Ansel Adams. We were all together again once we reached the southeastern ridge of Long Mountain, overlooking Sadler Lake. Then all downhill, and finally after 11 hours, we were back in camp. Approximate gain over and back from Ansel Adams was almost 5000'.

Sunday we were again up early and on our way back to the cars, which we reached in 4 hours, partially because mosquitoes prevented any lengthy rest stops. Although a long journey, this area of the Sierra is worthy of a visit, as it contrasts greatly with the popular Eastside routes.

Addendum for Sing, Gale, Pk 10,550:

This summer trip was partly

motivated by an earlier SMS ski trip across the Sierras along Yosemite's southern border. At that time we admired, but passed by, many fine peaks, planning to climb some in the summer. Among them was a group of peaks south of the Clark Range. Since we needed an extra wilderness permit, two of us (L.H., R.S.) came earlier and climbed Sing and Gale Pk on a private outing. We entered at Fernandez Pass trailhead and hiked past Vandenberg Lake, the Stanford Lakes and Chittenden Lake to Shirley Lake just east of Sing and Gale. After hiking in, we ascended in the afternoon Sing Peak (10,552') via its southeast ridge. Great views of the Sierra panorama! The peak has a PVC register can and a booklet with many signatures except from SPS members.

The next morning we hiked northwest toward Gale Pk. We decided to make a detour over Peak 10,550' 0.5mi NE of Gale, which had a more challenging class 3 East Ridge. To our surprise there was a peak register on the summit, but signed by at most one party per year. From this peak we ascended Gale Pk via the class 2 NE ridge. Similar to Sing, Gale has a register and is climbed quite frequently. From the 10,693' summit one has a fine view of both the Sierra Crest and the Yosemite high country such as the Buena Vista Ridge that we skied before. There is much wildlife in this area: We saw an eagle, a snake swimming in a lake, butterflies on the summit, caught a big trout for dinner, and of course, enjoyed the beautiful wildflowers everywhere. In the afternoon we hiked out. It was a nice introduction to the upcoming Ansel Adams trip.



Ritter Range reflecting in Blue Lake

Volunteer Peak, Pettit Peak & Piute Mountain

July 24 – 27, 2004

By John Cheslick

This was going to be a climb of the Mt Clark range but we had a last minute change of plans. I do mean last minute change. How about at 3:30 on a Friday afternoon after some of the trip participants had already left for the trailhead.

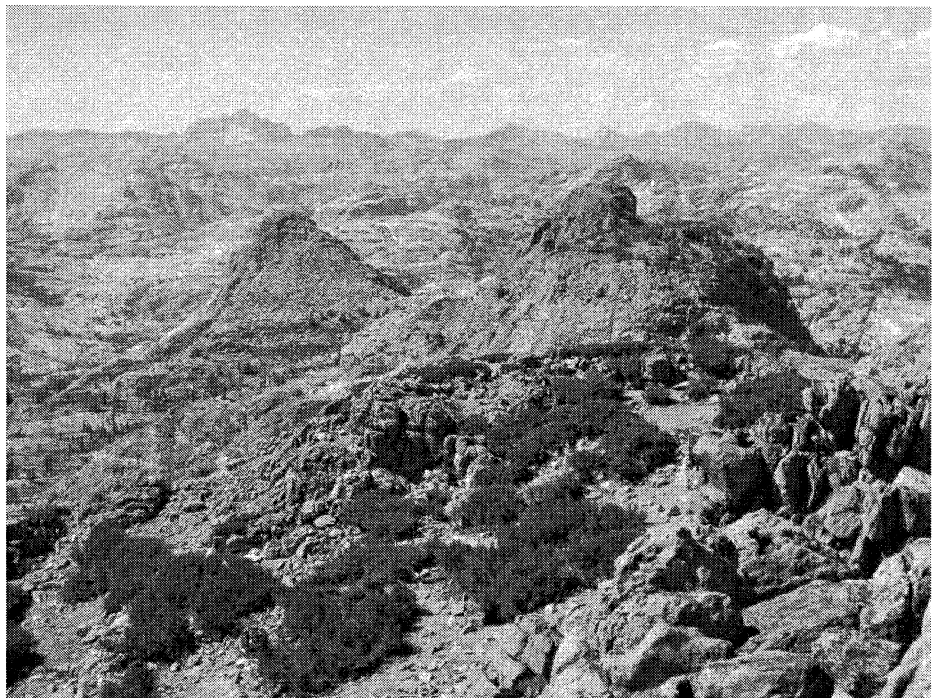
It all started when Randall Danta, my carpool partner asked me if I was sure the trail was open due to the recent fires in the area. I told him that I called the Yosemite Ranger Station earlier that day to confirm that the road was open and where I could pick up my permit. I also told Randall that the Park Service had my phone number on the permit so surely they would call if the trail was closed. Anyway, I called again and asked specifically whether the Mono Meadows trailhead was open. The answer came back NO! Plus, all other trails leading into the Mt Clark range were also closed.

The news that the trail was closed was a shock. This was the first time in a long time that I was going to be able to leave LA early on a Friday (before 5 pm) and now I didn't know where the group of eight was going. Randall and I swung into action. I logged on to the internet, pulled out the SPS list, and cross-referenced my "needed" peaks with both Patty's list and Randall's. Meanwhile, Randall got on my cell phone and started tracking down the rest of the group. Luckily, we reached Patty via the cell phone and she was driving with Mary Jo and Gary. The net of all this activity was that we came up with a new plan, got hold of everyone that was signed up for the trip either live or left voice mail messages, bought some maps and still got on the road at a reasonable hour.

[A comment about ranger stations and customer service.](#) I was very disappointed with the ranger station at Yosemite for a

number of reasons. Mainly because they did not call me and let me know that the trailhead was closed even though they had my telephone number. I had called earlier in the day asking about the Glacier Point road. The folks in Bridgeport on the other hand couldn't have been more helpful or friendly. When I called them in a panic on Friday afternoon, they assured me that there would be space available and when we went to pick up the permit they were again very friendly and knowledgeable about the area.

We met at 9 am at Twin Lakes. We wound up being a group of six that included Patty Rambert, my assistant, Randall Danta, Mary Jo Dungfelder, Gary Schenk, and Tom Sakawych. We were on the lookout for both Jim Conley and Ted Tassop but we did not see them. We waited until 9:30 am and then took off on the 15.6 mile hike to Seavey Pass. I hadn't been to this part of Yosemite yet nor had the rest of the group. You owe it to yourself to visit one of the nicest areas in the Sierra. We passed numerous streams and lakes during our hike to Seavey Pass and the weather was just fantastic. I really wanted to *continued next page*



View of Volunteer from Pettit Peak (Volunteer is the lower peak on the left.

hike a couple more miles to the Riviera of the Sierra, Benson Lake but the group was tired. We stopped hiking near the indistinct pass at a tarn at 9,200 ft.

At about 8:30, just when everyone was getting ready for bed we heard a voice in the distance shouting "John, Patty". It was Ted who somehow missed us at the parking lot at Twin Lakes and started hiking in a bit later in the day. He had seen our headlamps and thought maybe it was us. This was a lucky break for Ted. Another 10 minutes and everyone would have been in their tents.

We got a late start on Sunday. My plan was to hike down the trail and drop our packs near the stream that feeds into Benson Lake and then climb Volunteer and Pettit. This was going to be our long day. We dropped our packs around 8:45 and got started for Volunteer with day packs at 9:15. It is a grueling climb up the trail to Volunteer. We took the trail to the Rodgers Lakes trail and then headed to the saddle south of Volunteer once the saddle was visible. It was an easy class 2 scramble to the summit. We made it to the summit by 12:45 pm. Then the group discussed the best route to Pettit. We were at a slight disadvantage since we neglected to buy the topo map for Pettit since it was only about 3 inches of the Falls Ridge map. The peaks are also over a mile apart with at least one or two significant bumps between the peaks. We basically followed the recommended route of traversing on the west side of the ridge at about the 10,000 foot level. We seemed to be constantly in search of water as we were traversing the ridge since one member of our group liked to stay well hydrated but neglected to bring sufficient water.

We were on

the summit of Pettit by 3:45 pm. The group was tired but very excited to climb two out-of-the-way Sierra peaks. We enjoyed the view, took some photos and then headed back to camp. We made it back to camp by 7:45 after selecting a very nice campsite near a stream but away from the forest and the bugs down by Benson Lake. (This Benson Lake area was the only area with significant bugs.)

Monday, Mary Jo and Gary decided to take a break and enjoy the view and the beach at Benson Lake. The rest of the group headed on to Piute. We packed up and headed back up towards Seavey Pass. We dropped our packs at the 8,600 foot level and went up towards the northeast ridge. This ridge works better than you would think. We found a nice ramp on the north side of the ridge that leads to the bowl noted in RJ's book. We decided to take the left hand chute up. About half way up, the chute forks. We stayed with the left hand chute but we really should have then gone right which would have lead us up to the summit ridge. The left hand chute, now really a ramp lead us to three or four different breaks in the ridge. Randall climbed a short 4th/5th class chute that took him to the summit. Ted took another chute and then Patty and I followed. This chute took us right to the base of the summit. Tom



Fawn on the northeast ridge of Piute Mtn.

had stopped earlier in the climb and was waiting for us below. We were on the summit by 12:15.

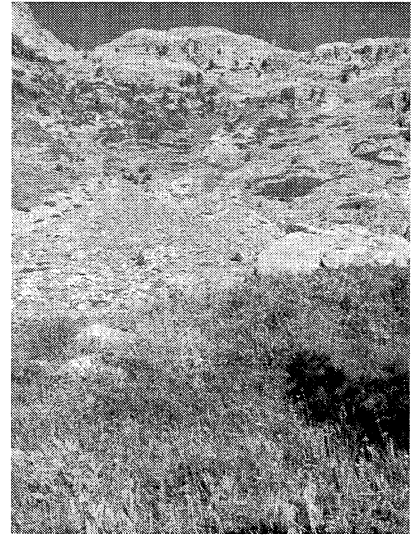
The way down was uneventful. We stayed on the summit ridge until we reached the top of the chute on the right hand side of the bowl and then we picked up Tom and headed out. We met up with Mary Jo and Gary. Then we all headed down Seavey Pass and camped along the creek. We got to camp by 5:30 and had time for a nice swim to clean up after 3 hard days of hiking and climbing.

Sunday, we got an early start (6:25) and made it back to the cars by 1:25 pm. It was just a beautiful area to visit. We saw bears and deer. We even surprised a fawn along the ridge to Piute. It was curled up and hardly even moved. It was still there when we returned a couple of hours later.

I want to thank the entire group for being so flexible. We were able to change plans on a moments notice and have an enjoyable four day trip.

Trip Statistics:

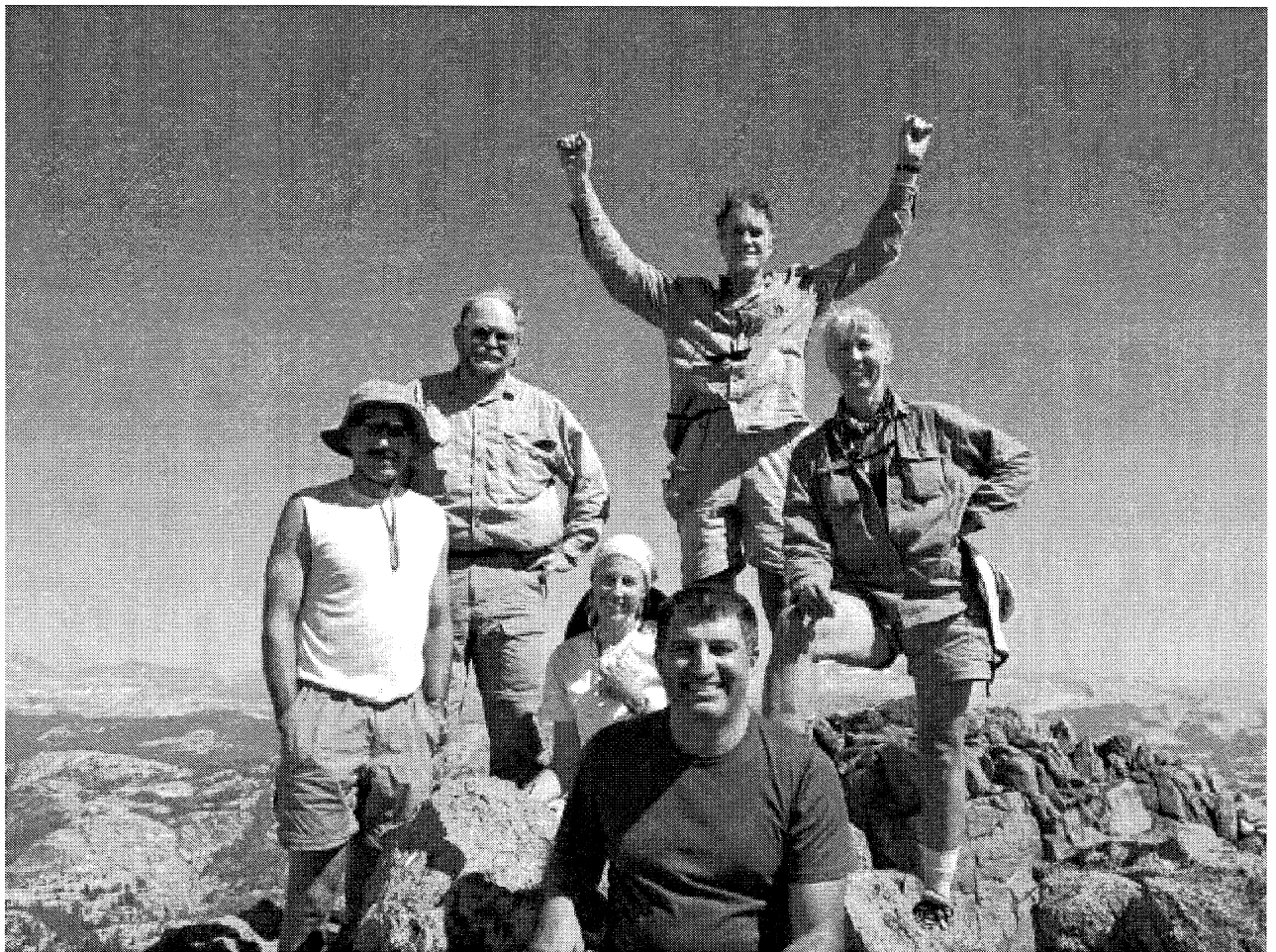
Saturday: 15.6 miles, 2,900' gain, 9.25 hours
Sunday: 13.5 miles, 3,900' gain, 12.25 hours
Monday: 4.5 miles, 1,700' gain plus peak climb of 2 miles rt, 2,000' gain, 10.5 hours total
Tuesday: 14.5 miles, 800' gain, 7 hours



Photos by John Cheslick

Upper photo - View of steep grassy slope leading to the northeast ridge of Piute Mtn.

**Pettit Peak summit photo (left to right):
Ted Tassop, Gary Schenk, Mary Jo Dungfelder, Randall Danta and Patty Rambert**



Article by Andy Selters.

Historical work is like prospecting:

You gather clues and trace hunches along the seams of possible ancestry. If you dig long enough, you will find the mother lodes of heritage.

One of the richest veins in mountaineering history is revealed by a simple look into the Minarets, right behind Mammoth. Each of these spires is named for a Sierra climbing pioneer: Clyde, Dawson, Eichorn, Bedayn. The second-highest and most intimidating of the towers is named Michael, for Charles Michael. In tracing his name, I found not one, but two of the most dedicated aficionados ever to greet a Sierra dawn.

Charles Michael was assistant postmaster at Yosemite, starting sometime before 1912. He never took a promotion because the role of assistant gave him free time, but 1912 was the first year there is any record of him climbing in the high country. He went to the remote core of what is now Sequoia National Park and saw the Kaweahs, a ripsaw of crags nearly 14,000 feet high.

Marching up to Red Kaweah, the highest of the steeper ones, he climbed it. The next year he did the same thing at the Devils Crags, scaling the highest tower in that far-flung chain with no partner, despite very loose rock on very

The HIGH LIFE with Charles and Enid Michael



EARLY 20TH CENTURY DAYS IN YOSEMITE

steep terrain. Here he carried a rope, but he used it only as a handline to get down over the steepest places.

It was 1923 when he toured from Tuolumne Meadows to the Minarets and climbed what looked to be their highest needle. Surveyors later measured Clyde Minaret as a few feet higher, but Michaels is a more imposing climb. He wrote that it has “a black and sinister look ... the spirit of the mountain is the spirit of defiance.”

Mountaineer Claude Fiddler and I have followed all three of these routes, and each time we neared these steep towers of uncertain meld, we unhesitatingly pulled out rope and hardware. Modern guidebooks

assign a modest Class 3 or 4 rating to Michael's routes only because they assume that a climb without a rope way back then must have been easy. To the contrary, this I can certify: Charles Michael pioneered high-angle, 5th-class climbs, unroped and solo.

In life and on most of his less severe climbs, Michael did have a partner. He and his wife Enid met because she was also in love with Yosemite. She was trained as a botanist, and she climbed too, including an ascent of Unicorn Peak back in 1911. They met sometime around 1912, and apparently were thrilled to know from the start that they were destined to explore the Sierra together. By the 1920s, one Sierra Club writer said that the Michaels "have made ascents of practically everything in (Yosemite) Valley that does not require pitons."

On the Minaret trip, Enid climbed with Charles through a steep access chimney, pulling real moves around chockstones, and stayed back only when the exposure got too serious. Charles wrote, "Climbing alone ... gave me no pleasure. I missed the steadying influence of my climbing partner."

In 1921 Enid was hired as Yosemite's first woman naturalist. Though the chauvinism of the day held that she wasn't an official staff member and she never acquired an advanced degree, she trained college students, and her personal daily walks attracted all the serious Yosemite visitors.

She wrote most of the couple's scores of brief articles describing their adventures in the Stockton Record and Yosemite Nature Notes. The charm of twin lives enthralled with nature lifts off these old pages: keeping track of a family of rare Lewis' woodpeckers, scrambling across the wall of Yosemite Falls during a fall dry spell, edging out a catwalk to a perch where the waters usually crash, and florid descriptions of the wild gardens atop Glacier Point.

These articles suggest Charles was, perhaps first and foremost, a birder. One of the few existing photos of him shows him high up on some cliffy slabs in Tenaya Canyon, getting a close look at an inaccessible nest of swifts.

Early in my acquaintance with the Michaels, an almost unbelievable coincidence occurred. My summer next-door neighbor, Cathy Rose, came by and asked, "Have you ever heard of Charles and Enid Michael?"

"Why, yes."

"I have a box of movie film that Enid took. It's in my garage."

We opened the box, and out came a powerful, musty odor of old film chemistry, and several reels of 16mm movies, generally in pretty good shape.

"Apparently there were a lot more reels, but the rest were lost in the 1980s Foresta Fire," Cathy said.

I transferred the footage onto a DVD, which now holds a few hours' glimpse of charmed Yosemite bliss, reincarnated after 70 years: the Michaels floating down the Merced on a homemade raft, cross country skiing, feeding bears, scrambling on slabs by the waterfalls, watching the work of woodpeckers. In every loving frame, their long-ago affair with Yosemite -- and each other -- is poignantly, perfectly preserved.

As I read the naturalist accounts, and watch the films of their dedicated study and play, I can't help but think that Enid and Charles carried the torch of John Muir well into the 20th century. They aspired to nothing more than to live by camping in their beloved Sierra, with the freedom to go out and find more wonders every day. For a few years, they were based in a hut on an island in the Merced. I also can't help but try to follow that spirit of innocent enchantment and see how far it has run.

According to longtime Yosemite enthusiast Fernando Peñaloza, who is finishing a book on Enid, Charles died of a heart attack in 1941. Just a few months later, wartime cutbacks shut down the park's naturalist program and Enid lost her job.

She became a schoolteacher in Pasadena and eventually remarried. Every summer, though, she was back in Yosemite. For some summers she was hired by the Sierra Club as the caretaker of their LeConte Lodge.

And employed or not, until she passed away in 1966, she kept track of all the living wonders with which she and Charles had lit their lives -- the unacknowledged expert on the undiscovered Yosemite.

This article first appeared in the July edition of Mammoth Monthly magazine www.mammothmonthly.com and was written by Andy Selters. Publication in the Echo is with permission of Mammoth Monthly.

Eisen, Lippincott, & Sawtooth

June 24-26, 2004 by Tina Bowman

When Doug Mantle and I led Pettit, Piute, and Volunteer several years ago, we had no participants. I was wondering whether it was the peaks or the leaders, and I still don't really know. This time we had one participant, Jon Skaglund, and almost another, David Copen. He had worked very late, driven the rest of the night, and valiantly met us at 5:00 a.m. (Yes, really, that was our planned starting time). Lack of sleep, however, took its toll, and David decided to get some sleep and explore the Mineral King area on his own and join us another time.

Though planned for four days, it ended up being a successful three-day outing. Thursday we left Mineral King, car hoods open and a nest of chicken wire under my engine to avoid marmot damage, and made our way up to Glacier Pass. The most snow of the whole trip awaited us on the north side of the pass, but it was easily negotiated. Down we went, to Spring Lake then up we toiled to Black Rock Pass. Well, Jon and I toiled; Doug seemed to float up there. How else to explain how he got fifteen minutes ahead? After lunch at the pass, Doug and I started the traverse for Eisen while Jon headed down to a campsite Doug pointed out from the pass at Little Five Lakes. Unlike the leaders, Jon wasn't driven by a "need" to climb Eisen. We were very puzzled by this.

As Doug told me, the traverse to Eisen goes really well at first, but it suckers you in. The farther you go, the slower the going. We weren't helped by

getting into a spot of more difficult climbing on the ridge, which we avoided on the way down. My "2x" looked pathetic besides his "6x" in the register. We were back to the pass in about four hours round trip and down to camp just over half an hour later, getting there before 6:00, on a day of 6650' gain per my Avocet, 5100' of it with full backpacks. Not too sleazy for my first Sierra outing of the season. No wonder Jon showed sanity in passing on the Eisen option.

Friday we headed down the trail toward Big Arroyo, turning off to follow the drainage to Lippincott. Again we made some interesting moves, this time near the summit on the southeast face. Again we avoided the area by descending the south ridge on our return. This day featured only 3480' gain. We were back in time to rinse off in a small stream, read, and relax. Here we were with the whole Little Five Lakes drainage to ourselves until two backpackers came and camped practically on top of us. Go figure.

Saturday we were on our way at 6:10, retracing our steps to Glacier Pass. We left packs near a convenient boulder off the Sawtooth Pass Trail and sauntered off to Sawtooth. Back at the packs, Jon decided he'd rather take the Sawtooth Pass Trail back to the cars, so he signed out. Soon after we parted ways we had a little rain, enough to get out the rain jackets, which then guaranteed it would stop within five minutes. Doug and I went down to Groundhog Meadow, picking up the official trail again and got back to the cars at 4:00 after 4480' gain.

How many participants will we have next time?

Thursday, August 5, 2004

In August the Sierra Peaks Section learned of the passing of a former member. Paul Lipsohn died of lung cancer. Paul's wife, Donna passed away in April 2004. He is survived by his daughter, Sheryl McCabe.

Paul was chair of the SPS in 1973 and SPS treasurer in 1972. Paul was also an active trip leader during that era.

Rhododendron *occidentale*
Western Azalea, Sierra westside June 2004





HIGH PLACES: THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF SAMOA

By Burton "We're Outta Here!" Falk

It was 5:30 p.m., and Steve, Siosi and I were standing atop one of the small craters along the ridge leading toward the summit of 6,094' **Mt. Silisili**, the highpoint of Independent Samoa. A half-mile to the east and perhaps 200' higher, we could see trees on the massive shield volcano's topmost crest, our ultimate goal.

The question was, should we plunge into the intervening rain forest and attempt to go a bit further that evening, or should we camp on the relatively jungle-free crater rim, and make our summit attempt the following morning? The factors to be considered were:

1. We were tired. Indeed, we had arisen at 4:15 a.m. that morning, driven to the village of A'opo, where we picked up our two local guides, Mosi and Siosi, negotiated our 4x4 vehicle up an overgrown road to about the 3,000' level on the north slope of Mt. Silisili, and then, at 6:40 a.m., began hiking, first on "plantation" trails, and later by punching our way through the thick vegetation. Mosi, by the way, after taking a wrong turn and causing us an extra hour of bush-whacking, had left us about 3:30 p.m. to return to his job as a night watchman at the village's small timber mill.

2. So far, the day had been exceptional in that it hadn't rained—unusual, considering we were in a rain forest. Even as we stood there, however, clouds were beginning to build up over the mountain.

3. Also the shadows were growing longer. In Samoa, near the equator, evenings arrive early and linger only briefly. We didn't have much time before nightfall.

4. Siosi, who had wrenched his knee a half an hour earlier while climbing a lava flow just below the ridge (and who had sat down and cried, something you don't often see in a twenty year old man nowadays), was in favor of camping where we were.

5. Steve Brown, my guide from Ecotours Samoa, was neutral on the subject. He thought that, since I was footing the bill for the expedition, I should make the decision.

6. And I, thinking of my wife, Jo, all by her lonesome in a termite-infested *fale* on the beach at Manase, some 6,000' feet below, figured that the sooner I got back, the better.

"Let's go a little further," I said. "We can probably go another half an hour before we have to stop."

Four nights earlier Jo and I landed at the Faleolo International Airport on Upolu Island, twenty-five kilometers to the west of Apia, Independent Samoa's capital city. Because we had crossed the International Date Line, we arrived there Sunday, March 9, the day before we departed Fiji, Monday, March 10.

And if traveling backward in time wasn't enough to addle our brains, we were even more perplexed by the countless open-sided oval structures we passed on our shuttle ride into Apia. What the devil were they? While some were dark; others were brightly illuminated with fluorescent light, reminding us of the bandstands to be found in small town parks in the Midwest. Surely, there couldn't be that many concerts on the island. Later, while checking into Aggie Grey's Hotel—the best in Apia, by the way—we learned that what we had seen were *fales*, i.e., traditional Samoan homes. With matting on the floors to serve both as chairs—at least, for those who can sit cross-legged—and as beds, the simple buildings are the epitome of functionality. Although curtains can be rolled down in case of bad weather, for the most part the islanders prefer the al fresco life style. In Samoa, when they say, “My life's an open book,” they mean it.

The following day—March 10 all over again—Jo and I toured Upolu, which just may be the most beautiful tropical island we've ever visited. While driving around the east end of the island, we savored views of small, neat-as-a-pin villages, each possessing at least one well-maintained church; gleaming white coral sand beaches, protected by a surrounding reef; verdant mountains rising up into a cerulean blue Pacific sky; busy streams cascading down to the sea; graceful coconut palms at every turn—indeed, it seemed as if Upolu was the very model for a tropical getaway.

On March 11, Jo and I flew from the small intra-island Fagli'i Airport, just outside of Apia, west across the 10 kilometer Apolima Straight, to the Ma'ota Airport, on the southeast corner of Savai'i, the larger of the two main islands comprising Independent Samoa. And it was there that we met our guide for the next four days, Steve Brown—a bearded 50 year-old veterinarian hailing from Adelaide, Australia, who had arrived in Independent Samoa some ten years earlier as a part of a project sponsored by the Aussie equivalent to the U. S. Peace Corps.

With Steve at the wheel of his 4x4, we then began a clockwise tour of the big island, first visiting the Olemoe waterfall on Falealila Stream, which flows off the southern slopes of Mt. Silisili, and then the Taga blowholes, which the *Lonely Planet Guide to Samoa* describes as perhaps the most impressive in the world. Unfortunately, on the afternoon when we visited the site, because of unfavorable tidal conditions, the resulting eruptions were minimal. On the positive side, however, while in the same area I got a good photograph of Mt. Silisili, which at the time was completely cloud free. Steve said it was a rare day, indeed, for the top to be in full view.

Continuing around the west end of the island, we then proceeded to village of A'opo, at perhaps the 1,000' level on north slopes of Mt. Silisili, where, meeting with the local chief, we arranged to hire Mosi and Siosi, a father and son team, as our guides for the following day's attempt on the mountain. We then continued a bit further to Stevenson's at Manase, where Jo was to lodge in a beachside *fale* for the next three nights.

But before recounting the rest of our climbing adventure, perhaps a little background information would be helpful.

To start with, greater Samoa, which includes both Independent and American Samoa, is part and parcel of Polynesia, that huge, mid-Pacific triangular cultural area, cornered at New Zealand in the south, Hawaii in the north and Easter Island to the east. The Samoa Islands, which stretch approximately 400 miles from east to west, lie about 1,000 miles south of the Equator, 750 miles northeast of Fiji and 400 miles north of Tonga.

The Samoa Islands, which stretch approximately 400 miles from east to west, lie about 1,000 miles south of the Equator, 750 miles northeast of Fiji and 400 miles north of Tonga. They were created in a process similar to that of the Hawaiian Islands, i.e., they popped up in a line across the ocean floor as a tectonic plate slid across a hot spot in the earth's mantle. The Samoas, however, are growing in the opposite direction. The oldest of the islands, Rose Atoll, now eroded down below sea level, lies at the eastern end of the chain, while Mt. Silisili, an active volcano that last erupted between 1905 and 1911, is at the extreme

western end.

Politically, because of a series of political events too complicated to explain here, the islands west of the 171st meridian now form the Independent State of Samoa, while those to the east of the line comprise American Samoa, an unincorporated U. S. Territory. And although the people of the two Samoas are of identical ethnicity and often of the same bloodlines, the entities are now separated by an ever growing disparity in life styles, i.e., while the Independent Samoans remain relatively traditional and self-reliant, those living in American Samoa, a mere 30 miles away, have become inured to a heavily subsidized welfare system.

The current population of Independent Samoa is 178,000, approximately 70% of them living on the capital island of Upolu. Most of the rest of the Independent Samoans reside in small villages scattered along the east and southeast coasts of Savai'i, the larger, but less developed, of the two major islands.

Religion plays a major role in Samoa. Indeed, activity in almost every village comes to a screeching halt for a 20 or 30-minute prayer session each evening. And rather than ask, "Where are you from," as you would expect, the first question a Samoan might ask a visitor is, "What church do you belong to?" I know—this happened to me.

Lonely Planet's *Samoa*, comments, "Samoans contribute what some people believe to be an exorbitant amount of money" to the church, and often the minister, pastor or priest—not the chief—will be the most affluent person in the village. Itinerant faith healers look forward to their visits to the Samoas, and usually leave with their pockets well-lined.

In spite of all the emphasis on religion, however, theft seems to be a problem in the islands. For example, at the outset of our climb, Steve Brown, for fear of a break in, had a friend drive his 4x4 down from and then, next day, back up to our remote trailhead. A guard patrolled our beach *fale* each night at Stevenson's. In his book, **The Happy Isles of Oceania**—a terrific read, by the way—Paul Theroux relates the following conversation between himself and a German national working in Apia:

"They pray a lot here, eh?"

'If you steal a lot, you pray a lot,' he replied.

But so much for facts, figures and innuendos—let's cut to the chase.

Steve, Siosi and I plunged once more into the forest, which showed absolutely no trace of prior passage. A half an hour later, with the light failing and amid a dense thicket of trees and ferns, Steve and Siosi, using their bolo knives, began hacking out a small clearing in which to camp for the night. After that was accomplished, Siosi reached deep in his pack and pulled out a package containing our dinner for the evening—home-roasted bar-be-que. Well, I was famished, and I started to salivate like a Pavlovian dog—until I saw the unwrapped *piece de resistance*, that is.

What Siosi held in his hand was a large chunk of pork belly—you know, unsliced bacon—but in his block there were few if any layers of red meat. It looked to be 100% solid white fat. Yuck. After saying grace, Siosi began to cut off greasy slices for his own dining pleasure, while Steve and I morosely plucked at the meat of two roasted breadfruits that Siosi had also carried along. And that, except for a few gulps of the precious water that we had packed up the mountain, and a handful of ginger snaps, was our dinner.

As the gloom deepened, we donned our jackets and rain gear, and began to fashion beds out of the fern fronds we'd hacked off earlier. My nesting spot, unfortunately, turned out to be somewhat concave, causing me to either lay on my back, hammock-like, or curled up in a ball, neither of which was especially comfortable, and so I lay there, unable to get to sleep. And that was the good news.

The bad news was that about 3 a.m. it started to rain—at which time it became apparent that my Gortex jacket had delaminated and thus leaked.

The news grew even worse as the rain increased in intensity, and I began to shiver uncontrollably. Gritting my teeth to keep them from chattering, I wondered if the night would ever end. An eon later, in an entirely new geologic period, I'm sure, when dawn finally did break, we found that, although the rain had tapered off, we were enveloped in a thick cloud through which we could see only a few feet.

We finished off the last of the breadfruit and ginger snaps, packed up, and, once more, began hacking our way ever upward toward the summit. Twenty minutes later, the terrain leveled off. Climbing first one tree and then another, Steve peered through the cloud looking for higher ground. Although nothing appeared

more elevated, he had been on the true summit once before, and he knew that we weren't there. Close, but no cigar—and, obviously, no GPS either.

We crashed around in the fog for another 15 or 20 minutes, at which point it became apparent that our chances of finding the actual highpoint were somewhere between slim and none. I remember thinking we'd be lucky to find our way back down the mountain. Again, the inevitable decision was left up to me.

"Gentlemen," I said, "we're outta here!"

On our descent, once below the cloud cover, it began to rain again, this time torrentially. Water poured off my Gortex hat and jacket, and the puddles were ankle deep. In spite of being soaked to the skin, because we were rapidly descending into warmer temperatures, I wasn't the least bit uncomfortable.

We reached A'opo about 3:30 p.m., and there the chief's daughter quickly assembled for us a delicious meal consisting of fish and pumpkin curry, roasted taro root, and a refreshing cold drink made out of Cacao beans (note that all this food was either home grown or caught, quite a different menu, I'm sure, than a meal that might be served in fast food-addicted American Samoa). Later, back with Jo at Stevenson's, I plunged into the aqua lagoon fronting our *fale*, and swam out to the surrounding reef and back. Soothingly and refreshingly, the crystal clear waters washed away all vestiges of frustration left over from our Mt. Silisili misadventures.

The following day, Steve, Jo and I left Savai'i on a short flight bound for Pago Pago, the capital city of American Samoa, where we intended to climb Matafao Peak, the highpoint of Tutuila Island.

All across the country, thousands of concerned Americans are standing up for the Roadless Rule. The Bush administration and the Forest Service are feeling the heat and, just 9/9/04, extended the public comment deadline until November 15th. Help us keep the momentum going—send your comments to the Forest Service to oppose the Bush administration's plan to eliminate the Roadless Rule TODAY.

Continued from We Get Letters

PS... I was wondering....Since SPS peaks really are hard to knock off....I thought it would be fun for more people to be recognized with every 25th summit. It can be many years between the current SPS emblems and it would be fun to share with everyone a 25, 50, 100, 150, 200 peak list total on the internet and records as we slowly climb peaks. It makes it more fun and more exciting and I think much more attractive to people....(just an idea as it's both the climbs and the fun of working on the list that has made climbing fun for me...and I think many other people as well). I think it might help boost more interest (if that's what the club is looking for!!) Anyway, thanks again and I saw your summit signature in many of the peaks. Have fun and be safe!!

Shane Smith

Dear Editor,

Doug Mantle must be suffering delayed hypothermia from his seven attempts to cross a certain rain-swollen stream on his way to Rockhouse Dome. That stream is not the "little Kern." It's not even the Little Kern. It's the South Fork of the Kern. After 100 peaks in one year, I guess Doug couldn't keep all those stream crossings straight.

Now if you'll excuse me, I've got to cross the Santa Ana River. On a sidewalk, dammit.

Ron Campbell

Hardrock 100

San Juan Mountains, Colorado

July 9-11, 2004 By Scott Sullivan

The Hardrock 100 is a 100-mile running/hiking race set in the San Juan Mountains in Colorado. The San Juan Mountains are much greener than the Sierra, with grass covering much of the elevation above tree line. This time of year there are flowers everywhere, far more than I have ever seen in the mountains. The scenery is incredible. The course makes a big loop starting in Silverton, visits the towns of Telluride and Ouray, passes near Lake City, and returns to Silverton. The course crosses twelve passes above 12,000ft, including an ascent of Handies Peak at over 14,000ft. The low point on the course is Ouray at just under 8000ft. The total elevation gain is over 33,000ft. The terrain includes jeep roads, single-track trails, and cross-country travel. I had finished nine previous 100-mile races, but none approaching the difficulty of this race. The time limit is 48 hours, and I would not sleep at all during the race. I would sit down for a break of 5-30 minutes every 2-6 hours. A pacer is allowed after 44 miles. The pacer cannot carry any gear for the runner, but is allowed to help determine which way to go, give encouragement, and keep an eye on the runner's well being.

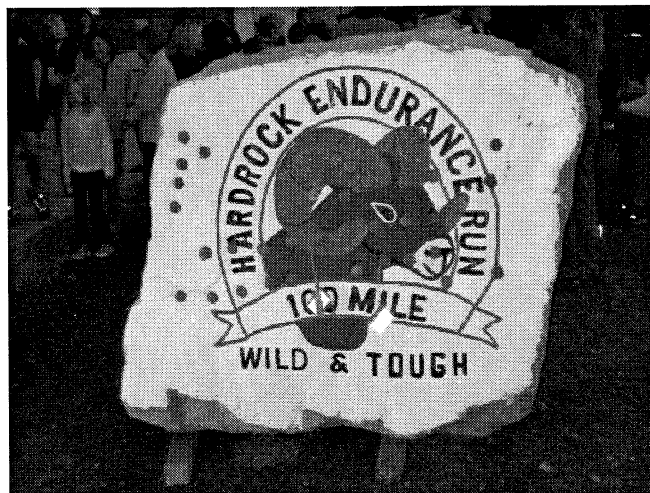
In addition to the usual difficulties of running 100 miles, I felt that Hardrock presented four additional challenges: altitude, terrain, sparse course marking, and a second night of running. The conventional wisdom is to arrive 2-3 weeks early so that you can acclimate, learn the course, and get some experience on the terrain which includes steep snow, talus, travel near the edge of cliffs with big drop offs, cross country over various obstacles, and difficult creek and river crossings. I felt that my mountaineering experience would allow me to deal with the terrain ok, and that I could acclimate in one week. I just hoped that I wouldn't get lost and that

the second night would go ok.

Elena and I arrived in Silverton exactly one week before the race. The next day we joined the course marking crew and experienced Virginius Pass, the steepest and most difficult snow on the course. We rested the following day and enjoyed the very worthwhile July 4th celebration in Silverton. Highlights included several F-18 flyovers during the parade and an awesome fireworks display. The next two days I would cover from mile 84.6 to the finish,

then I rested until race day. The rest of our crew, Bill and Lisa arrived late the night before the race after some travel difficulty.

At the trail briefing, it was stated with pride that there are less trail markers than they had ever used before. It was the runner's responsibility to know the course. I had seen less than one quarter of the course, and not getting lost



would be a big concern. I packed my topo map, compass, and the ten-page course description.

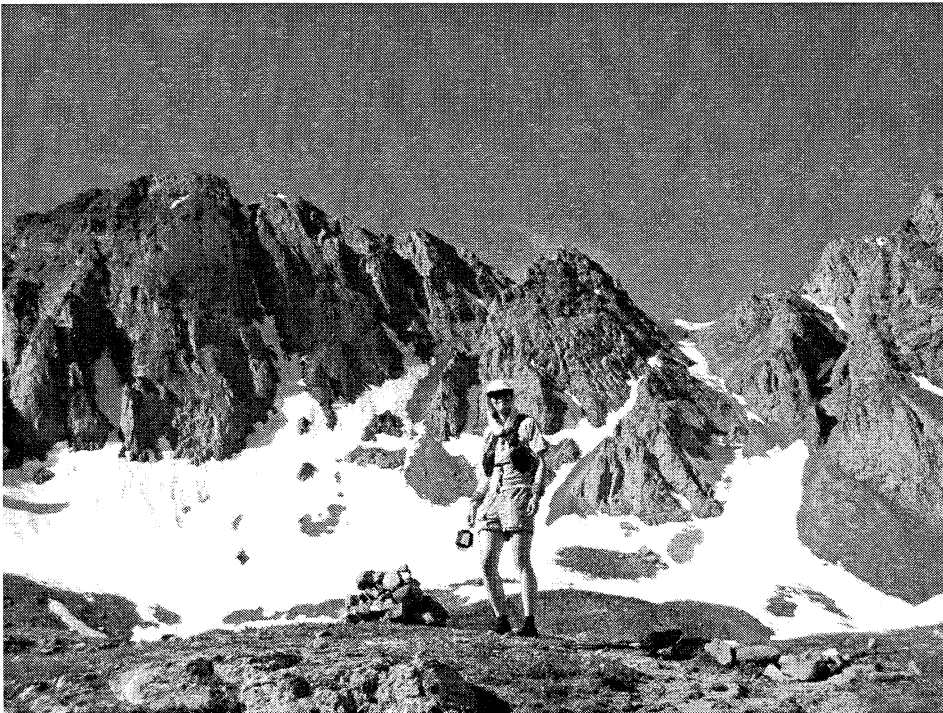
Race day dawned clear, and at 6am in the daylight we were off. After about two miles, we crossed Mineral Creek with the help of a fixed rope. My feet would be wet for the rest of the race. I gradually found my pace as we cleared tree line and headed into the high country. Here visibility was good and I could see runners already miles ahead. After cresting a couple of saddles, I headed down into the valley. Course marking was sparse here and I had to wait several times for someone who knew the way to catch up. Once I was caught, I followed rather than lead. I reached the first aid station about 10 minutes ahead of the 48-hour pace.

Leaving this aid station and heading across the Kamm Traverse, I realized it would be difficult to just follow someone. Everyone seemed to be moving

continued next page

at varying speeds up and down the hills, and nobody was matching my pace. I didn't have a lot of time to spare, so I went my own pace but tried to keep a runner in sight as much as possible. Soon came another unmarked junction; I followed a runner uphill. After a while, I was back above tree line and could see the runners stretched out for miles ahead.

I was climbing well, and actually caught a few runners near the top of Grant Swamp Pass. I picked up a rock and placed it on the Joel Zucker Memorial Plaque here and paused to read it. Joel was a three-time Hardrock finisher who died shortly after his third finish. When I looked up, everyone was gone. I quickly traversed the ridge to the chute where everyone was speeding down the steep talus. I plunged over the edge and almost immediately fell,



sliding about 15 feet down before I could stop myself. I was not hurt, but I would have to be more careful. I hustled to try and catch someone and fell one more time, but I did manage to latch on to one runner as we traversed down toward Chapman Gulch. Soon we joined a trail and continued quite a while to an unmarked junction. Fortunately I had someone in sight and just followed.

I left the Chapman Gulch aid station two minutes behind 48-hour pace, and headed up the steep jeep road toward Oscar's Pass. I passed a few runners on this section, crested the pass, and walked down the delicate snow traverse toward the trail. The

steps were good and this section was not a problem. As the trail improved so did my pace. It was a long descent with some steep sections along cliffs, but it passed quickly and soon I arrived in Telluride to meet my crew for the first time.

I left Telluride, by myself, 8 minutes ahead of 48-hour pace. The route out of town was surprisingly well marked. I headed up toward Mendota Saddle, and once above tree line I could again see the runners stretched out for miles. Arriving at the Mendota Saddle, one runner asked where is the aid station? I pointed up to Virginus Pass and he was very disappointed. I hurried to the pass, rested a moment, and put on my gloves, rain jacket and pants. I used the fixed line to do a sort of rappel down the steep

part and then sat down and glissaded. I was happy to get through this before dark. The rest of the snow sections went quick and easy and soon I was running and walking down the jeep road.

I eventually reached Ouray well after dark and crammed as much food in as possible. This was a victory of sorts to at least make it to the pacing part of the course. I left with Elena just 5 minutes behind the 48-hour pace. Once out of the aid station area, we could not see any course markings. Elena ran a block in two directions but no luck. We got out the course

description and were able to follow it to leave town on the correct path.

The next obstacle was the Uncompaghre River, which we waded hip deep in the dark with a flashlight and bottle in one hand and the fixed rope in the other. The current was surprisingly strong. We headed up the Bear Creek trail, probably the most dangerous part of the course. The trail is cut out of the side of the cliff, and the footing is not great in many places. One slip here could be fatal, but we survived it fine. Well above the dangerous section, I slipped and fell, hitting my knee. It was difficult to get up and walk, but after 15 minutes all the pain was

continued next page

gone. I needed to pay better attention.

The Engineer aid station was crowded with runners. I scored a great chair next to the fire and had some oatmeal and hot chocolate. Soon we were bound for Engineer Pass, where it was windy and cold. I put on the rest of my night clothes and tried to hurry down, but my strength was beginning to fade. We managed some running, but mostly walked down to Grouse Gulch.

This was low point of the race for me. I was surprised that as lousy as I felt and as slow as the last section seemed, I was now over an hour ahead of the 48-hour pace. I ate more oatmeal and hot chocolate, plus some Boost. I stripped down to shorts, shirt, and jacket. Elena commented that I would soon feel better and fortunately she was right. I left the aid station with my next pacer Bill and headed toward Handies.

After about 10 minutes of climbing, I started to feel much better. Bill was getting some great photos, and I was holding a reasonable pace into American Basin. Here we encountered a backpacker who played a stirring rendition of "Jammin" (like the Hardrocker's can) on his guitar. Soon we were on the summit, where we took a few photos and headed down the other side. I was slow at first, but as the trail improved my pace quickened. We ran long sections of this trail, eventually reaching Burrow's Park and the jeep road. There were no markings here, but there were other runners to show the way. Bill read the course directions just to make sure.

Lisa was waiting at the Sherman aid station as planned. It was just a few minutes after noon, but I wouldn't see the crew for another 10 hours, so I needed my night supplies. I got everything together, grabbed some food, and Lisa and I left still one hour ahead of 48-hour pace.

We followed the course markings across a creek and onto a good trail. After traveling one hour between markings, I asked Lisa to read the course description. One runner caught us and said we were on the course, and another pair soon followed so we



must be okay. All five of us stayed together to the next pass. As the trail started down, I was the only one who felt like running so Lisa and I went ahead of our group. I felt like I was only jogging, but I couldn't see anyone behind us or ahead of us in the open countryside. I knew the next aid station would be difficult to find from the

comments of others and the trail briefing. I switched to walking and hoped we would be caught. A runner and pacer soon passed us, and I quickened our pace to match. We were running quite fast now, but I wanted to be following someone. The pace did eventually slow to a fast walk, and we followed this pair to the Pole Creek aid station.

The next section was relatively flat and uneventful. I walked most of it until the drop into the Maggie Gulch aid station. This was a significant achievement, as I was now on familiar territory. We were 2.5 hours ahead of the 48-hour pace and my confidence was growing. I knew dark would catch us on the next cross-country leg, but I felt we had the time cushion to deal with this. We left the aid station quickly and tried to cover as much ground as possible by dark.

The first climb went well, followed by the steep descent to the Stony Pass jeep road. After we crossed the road, the sun dipped below the horizon. We stopped to don tights and ready our lights. I tried to push here but there wasn't much left in the tank. As darkness fell, it seemed like runners were streaming past us. We reached the next pass and were part way down when darkness caught us.

At first we followed the markings fine, but then lost them. Two other runners were with us and four lights scanned the hillside looking for markers. None were found. The two others wanted to just head toward where the course was going and not worry about the markers. This was a tough decision, but I decided to follow them. My race hung in the balance. If we were lost, I might not finish. I felt we were

continued next page



Scott, Lisa & Elena

heading in the right direction and Lisa and I struggled to keep up. After a long time, we saw course markings! This was a big boost, but we still struggled to match the pace. After another long stretch, the route was improving tremendously and we were losing the other runners. I fell three times in quick succession, and it was clear that I couldn't maintain the pace. Lisa suggested a break and I sat for perhaps five minutes. The markers were easier to follow now and we could see the aid station below. Soon we met Elena who guided us into the maze of the Cunningham aid station.

I rested and fueled up for the final stretch. The problems with the previous section cost me all but one hour of my cushion, but I knew the last leg was all on trail and fire roads. With Elena now pacing, I knew that I would likely finish. We slogged up the last pass and started down at a fast walk. Elena was keeping a close eye on the time, and I didn't really feel like running. We walked fast this whole section, even passing one runner. Our experience on this section paid off and we did not make any errors in course following. Eventually we could see the lights of Silverton, and then the ski lodge. We jogged the last half-mile through the streets of Silverton and finished at 3:52am for a time of 45:52:16. I made it.

A big thank you to the people that make Hardrock a reality. Everything was wonderful. The scenery is unbelievable. Also a big thanks Elena, Bill, and Lisa. I couldn't have made it without your help.

Editor's note that Scott served on SPS management committee for 3 years as secretary and treasurer. All photos are by Bill Timmons.

Conservation 2-Liners continued

is "preserving the wilderness character of the wilderness area" and thus, "The Forest Service's decision to grant permits at their pre-existing levels in the face of documented damage resulting from overuse does not have rational validity....Given the Wilderness Act's repeated emphasis of the administering agency's responsibility to preserve and protect wilderness areas, this decision cannot be reconciled with the Forest Service's statutory responsibility."

Finally, the 9th Circuit remanded the case to the district court to determine the appropriate relief under the Wilderness Act, "including whether remediation of any degradation that has already occurred is appropriate."

A great day for Wilderness! Many thanks to Pete Frost (Western Environmental Law Center) and Julia Olson who represented the plaintiffs, and to Gary Guenther, the tireless volunteer and former wilderness ranger who has spent years documenting the damage to these areas and trying to get the Forest Service line officers to do something. Maybe now they will.

Article by George Nickas, Executive Director, Wilderness Watch

The 9th Circuit Opinion can be viewed and downloaded at: <http://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/ca9/newopinions.nsf/Opinions+by+date?OpenView&Start=1&Count=100&Expand=1.1>

- Los Angeles Chapter election ballots will be in the November issue of *Southern Sierran*. To get ready to vote, members are encouraged to attend local candidate forums. This years candidates selected by the nominating committee are Silvia Darie, George Denny (currently on ExComm), Ana Juarez, Jay Matchett, Will McWhinney, Sherry Ross (currently on ExComm) and Garen Yegparian (currently on ExComm).

Forums will be held next on Sept. 20th Airport Marina Group, Oct. 6th Long Beach Group, Oct. 11th Orange County Group and Oct. 14th Santa Clara Group. See the article in the Sept. Southern Sierran for details

Remember your vote for ExComm membership does affect the Sierra Peak Section.

Conservation 2-Liners by Barbee Tidball

- The Healthy Forests Initiative announced by President Bush in 2002 put emphasis on thinning our forests to prevent catastrophic wild fires. The program however may be way under funded and over slanted towards thinning. Scientists have identified forests where cool, ground burning is beneficial; forests in the west where fire does not play a significant role; forests that will benefit from thinning and forests where thinning especially with the combined logging of trees over 7" in diameter can actually increase the risk of a major fire. As with many environmental issues location or area specific conditions rather than a policy that attempts to blanket all western forests needs to be applied. A very recent example of this was came from the lightning fires that started southeast of Glacier Point Road in Yosemite in July. Yosemite managers decided that this fire could safely play an important ecological role in maintaining forest health, they managed it for just that purpose. The fire was allowed to burn throughout July and it benefited over 5,000 acres of Yosemite backcountry. Visitors to the area may have experienced smoky air and filtered light, but the forest was ecologically benefiting from the fire.

- From Gary Guenther: We won our Appeal at the 9th US Circuit Court. I was very pleased with this victory. I perceive it as a significant ruling that will have ramifications nationwide related to wilderness management. (The following article from Gary was writtem by George Nickas)

The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals issued an Opinion in the case of High Sierra Hikers Assn., et al v. Blackwell. It is an important ruling for Wilderness and a big win for the John Muir Wilderness and Ansel Adams Wilderness. The Opinion involved both National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) claims and, most importantly, Wilderness Act claims.

The case involved a challenge by HSHA, Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics and Wilderness Watch to the Forest Service's (FS) administration of commercial pack stations that operate in these Wilderness. Our groups challenged the FS' actions because the agency continued to issue special use permits to the packstations without analyzing the impacts of those operations on the Wilderness, the damage those operations are doing to the areas' wilderness character, or the extent to which there is a need for commercial services in the area.

In 2002, the district court ruled in our favor on the NEPA claims and ordered the FS to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The district court also ordered the Forest Service to reduce the number of service days available to the pack stations and to reduce the number of stock in each group until the EIS was completed. The district court denied our Wilderness Act claims holding that the Forest Service's "needs assessment" for commercial services was adequate and holding that while the level of damage to the Wildernesses was "disturbing" and cause for concern, that the Forest Service had discretion to determine how much damage would be allowed.

The Forest Service appealed the district court's decision arguing that the court overreached its bounds by ordering an EIS and by limiting the amount of pack stock use in the Wilderness pending the outcome of the analysis. Several packstations also intervened.

The 9th Circuit rejected the FS' appeal and upheld the district court's ruling on the NEPA issues. It overturned the district court on our Wilderness Act claims. It held that the FS failed to determine the "extent" to which commercial services are "necessary" and to consider the effect of that determination on the Wilderness: **"At best, when the Forest Service simply continued preexisting permit levels, it failed to balance the impact that the level of commercial activity was having on the wilderness character of the land. At worst, the Forest Service elevated recreational activity over the long-term preservation of the wilderness character of the land."**

The 9th Circuit also rejected the lower court's finding that the FS has discretion to permit the wilderness to be degraded. The Opinion stressed that the Wilderness Act's **"overarching purpose"**
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