

The Sierra



ECHO

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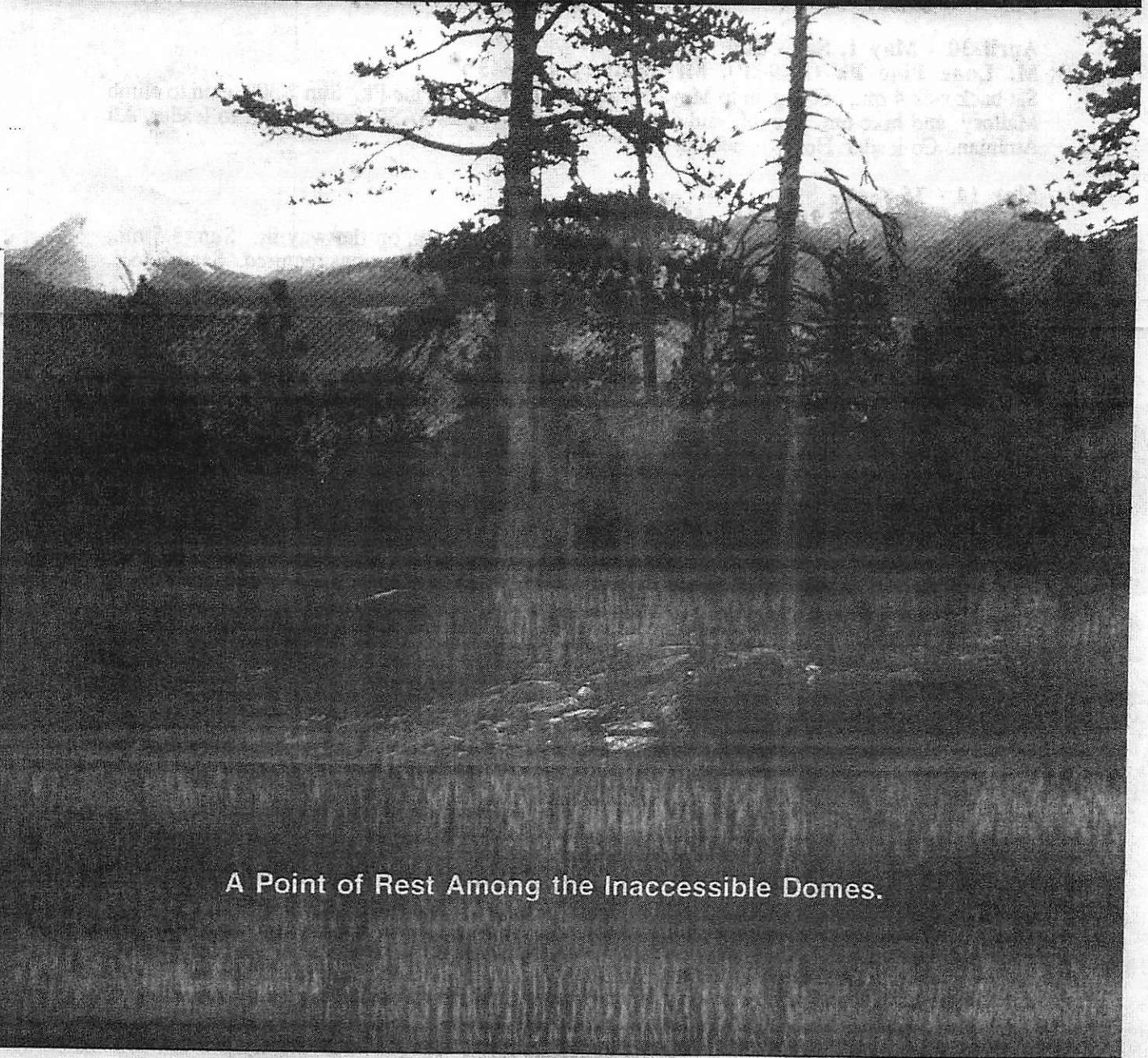
NOV-DEC

NUMBER 6

Half Dome

Clouds Rest

Mt. Starr King



A Point of Rest Among the Inaccessible Domes.

CLIMBING INSURANCE IS BACK!

SPRING TRIP DESCRIPTIONS

March 19 - 20, Sat - Sun

O: Trail Maintenance Party

Help keep our Shepherd Pass Adopt-a-Trail in good condition. Trim brush, toss off fallen rocks on Sat and half-day Sun, car camp on Sat. Send SASE to Campy. Leaders: Fred Camphausen, RJ Secor.

April 16 - 17, Sat - Sun

M: University Peak (13,632')

From Onion Valley, Backpack to Robinson Lake and snowcamp (1.7 mi, 1400' gain). Ice axe practice Sat Afternoon. Up early Sun for 3rd class Mountaineers Pk. SASE with experience, conditioning and phones to Bill. Leaders: Bill Oliver and Larry Tidball.

April 30 - May 1, Sat - Sun

M: Lone Pine Pk (12,943'), Mt. Mallory (13,845')

Sat backpack 4 mi., 3600' gain to Meysan Lk. and climb Lone Pine Pk. Sun 2,500' gain to climb Mallory and hike out. Ice axe and crampon required. Send SASE, cond/exper. to leader, Ali Aminian. Co-leader: Henry Arnebold.

May 14 - 15, Sat - Sun

M: Thor Peak (12,306), Mt. Muir (14,012)

Sat. Backpack 5 mi., 2900' gain to our camp. Climb Thor Pk. on the way in. Sun. 3.5 mi., 2300' gain to climb Mt. Muir, back to camp and out. Ice axe & crampons required. Send SASE, Cond/Exper. to Leader: Ali Aminian, Asst.: Steven Thaw

May 14 - 15, Sat - Sun

M: Mt. Thompson, Mt. Powell:

Let's hope the snow climbing conditions are good for these Sierra Crest peaks. SASE with conditioning, snow climbing experience, car poll info to Dave Dykeman. Leaders: Dave Dykeman, Barbara Cohen

Other Trips:

Date:	Rating: Trip Destination	Leaders:
May 28-30	M: Birch Mtn., The Thumb	Dave Dykeman, Nancy Gordon
May 28-30	M: Birch Mtn., Mt. Bolton Brown	Larry Tidball, Scot Jamison
June 4-5	M: Mt. Baxter	Dave Dykeman, Nancy Gordon
June 11-12	M: Mt. Langley	Ali Aminian, Reiner Stenzel
June 18-19	M: Bear Creek Spire, Mt. Dade	Larry Tidball, Scot Jamison
June 18-19	I: North Peak, Mt. Dana	John Cheslick, Charlie Knapke
June 18-19	M: Mt. Corcoran	D. Dykeman, Gordon, Cohen
June 24-26	I: Angora Mtn., Coyote Pk.	Barbara Cohen, Charlie Knapke
June 25-26	I: Moses Mtn, North Maggie	George Toby, Patty Kline
July 2-4	M: Black Hawk Mtn, Dicks Pk, Mt. Tallac	Dave Dykeman, Nancy Gordon
July 8-12	I: Trail Maintenance Party	Fred Camphausen, RJ Secor

(More Details on these trips next Echo)

As you know Sierra Club Climbing Insurance has been reinstated. While its too late to submit trips for the Feb.-July 1994 Schedule, it is still possible to submit trips for publication in the Echo. Please do so as soon as possible. Dave

Cover Photo: The Three SPS Peaks Closest to Yosemite Valley. View shot to NE by Bill Oliver on trail at knoll east of Mono Meadow.

SPS MONTHLY PROGRAMS

DECEMBER 8

Banquet Speaker: Kitty Calhoun Grissom. The annual SPS banquet will be held at the community hall at the Greek Orthodox church in Long Beach. This is a beautiful facility and the cater is a great Long Beach Italian restaurant, Buon Gustos. Our speaker is a world renown mountaineer. Kitty will show slides and present a program entitled "The Spirit of Alpinism". Tickets \$25.00. Send check made payable to SPS and SASE to Barbee Hoffmann.

JANUARY 12

"Antarctica" Doug Mantle will show slides and talk about his 1993 trip to climb Vinson.

FEBRUARY 9

"Climbing Khantengri" Jack Robbins will present a program on his climbing trip to Tienshan with Anna Toly Bukreev and Rinat Habibullini.

MARCH 9

"Geology of the Sierra" Bob Michael will present a program on the geology of the Sierra. Rocks to mountains, their history and structure.

APRIL 13

"Climbing Starr King" Bill Oliver's program relates both early historical and recent ascents of the sleek "absolutely" inaccessible" Yosemite dome.

MAY 11

"Sierra Wilderness Planning Update" Joe Fontaine will discuss the progress the Public Involvement Team has made in planning the new Sierra Wilderness management guidelines for the John Muir, Ansel Adams, Dinkey Lakes, and the Monarch Wilderness Areas.

JUNE 8

"Australia and Tasmania climbing" Doug Mantle's 7 summits list finisher in Australia. Vi Grasso will present slides from this exciting trip.

Monthly meetings are held at the L.A. Dept. of Water and Power Bldg. at 111 N. Hope St. in the L.A. Civic Center. Auditorium on Level A (1 floor below the main lobby). 7:30 P.M. Newcomers Welcome!

PEAK INDEX

Mt. Brewer

Corcoran

Mt. Humpreys

Gemini

Junction Pk.

LeConte

North Guard

Mt. Prater

Seven Gables

Shepherd Pass

South Guard

Split Mtn.

Mt. Starr King

Mt. Tinemaha

Mt. Tyndall

Waller Minaret

Zugspitze (Germany)

*Wishing Everyone a
Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year*

Sierra Club Mountaineering Insurance to Return

Awesome news! The Sierra Club is about to acquire insurance that will restore traditional four-season mountaineering activities to its rich and diverse spectrum of outings opportunities. The use of ice axes and ropes/climbing gear was banned late in 1988 when insurance premiums for such outings skyrocketed following costly accident settlements. The prohibition put the Rock Climbing Section (RCS) into deep hibernation and seriously impacted the Sierra Peaks Section and many other mountaineering-oriented sections.

Credit for the mountaineering restoration, which includes 5th class rock, will belong particularly to John Edginton, chair of the Club's Insurance Committee, and to Vicki Thorpe, Insurance Risk Manager. Working quietly but aggressively for over a year, their determined efforts have finally paid off. The additional coverage will cost the Club about \$45,000 a year plus an additional annual expense of about \$15,000 to provide medical insurance for ice axe/rope trip participants (details not yet known). These costs will be shared by the Club and the chapters in the same manner as our general insurance expenses. The current plan, then, is not to partially pass these extra costs directly on to the mountaineers.

Additional requirements on just trips using ice axes/ropes will be the use of liability waivers and the need for Sierra Club membership. Club membership has always been required for membership in any Section, Group or Committee. One cannot hold Section office, vote in elections, lead or assist on outings, earn emblems, etc. unless one is a dues-paying member of the Sierra Club. Club membership is not required, of course, to subscribe to newsletters nor to participate on outings - until now. Non-Club members will not be able to participate in outings using ice axes/ropes/climbing gear. They remain welcome on other trips. The membership requirement and the medical insurance coverage reflect the Club's recognition that members are less likely to sue "their Club" than non-members, and that accident victims with adequate medical coverage are also less likely to sue.

For at least another year or so, formal fee-charged training courses, such as Basic Mountaineering Training Course (BMTC) and the RCS class, will remain prohibited. Some major past accidents have occurred in training courses, and insurers remain yet shy in covering them. This does not prevent, however, the Leadership Training Committee (LTC) from conducting M and E checkoffs for rock and snow, nor does it prevent qualified leaders from conducting an ice axe/rope practice session as part of a mountaineering outing.

Credit for insurance restoration belongs also to the Club's Board of Directors for recognizing mountaineering as a high-value traditional Club activity, an activity which attracts and retains members and which feeds capable leaders into all aspects of the Club's endeavors. Credit goes as well to all of us who passionately voiced our concerns and frustrations at the loss of climbing and who patiently hung in there even when prospects appeared hopelessly dim.

Details of implementing the restored mountaineering program are in process. Leader certification is one item under review. This should not be a problem for Angeles Chapter M and E rated leaders. Trips can at least tentatively be scheduled now for next spring and possibly a little sooner. No longer a Club member? Regular Sierra Club membership is available for \$35/yr for individuals (\$43 joint). Seniors, students and limited income categories are \$15/yr (\$23). Your Club membership number appears on the mailing labels of *Sierra* magazine and the *Southern Sierran*. Lori Ives, *Schedule* Editor, can now quickly and easily verify anyone's current membership status. (Her database is updated electronically twice a week.) Give her a call or a jot. So, sign-up or renew already!

Bill Oliver, Activities Administration Committee Chair, 11/06/93

Echos from the Chair:

It has been another busy year for the SPS.

Thanks to all of the great trip leaders, we had about 50 trips led in the Sierra this summer. This in spite to the continuing insurance prohibition that kept out many spring season trips. Thanks to the outgoing 1993 Management Committee members and other volunteers who kept the section going through the year; Dave Petzold for coordination the outings efforts, Patty Kline for her work selling the T-shirts coordinating the donation of a Bear Box and keeping the financial records in order, Barbara Cohen for keeping the records and membership roster, Barbee Hoffmann for arranging all of the monthly meeting programs and the banquet. Wayne Norman did a great job in getting the Echo out in spite of a tough work travel schedule. Thanks also to; Bob Wyka for providing computer assistance on the membership roster, Vi Grasso for keeping the mountain records up-to-date, Bill Oliver as Historian, Dan Richter for taking over the Chapter Council rep job from Dave, and Mary Sue Miller for keeping us all informed about the conservation issues in the Sierra.

Among the monthly program speakers was Joe Fontaine. Joe brought us up to date on the ongoing PIT process that is planning the new wilderness management regulations that will be implemented in the central Sierra. (See my column in the Sept/Oct. Echo.) This is an area of continuing concern to the section, and we seek your continued input on these issues.

Great News! As we go to press, the National Sierra Club Board has approved the reinstatement of insurance covering mountaineering trips. This means that ice axes, ropes and crampons will be legal again on SPS trips. See the article by Bill Oliver in this Echo for more information. It looks as if can run spring snow climbs again, so trip leaders have been contacted to get them into the Angeles Chapter Schedule. If anyone wants to add trips to the SPS schedule after the chapter deadline, we can accept them for publication in ECHO.

A number of issues will carry over into 1994 to be addressed by the new Management Committee. These include the implementation of the reinstatement of mountaineering trips led by the section, and continued input to and monitoring of the PIT process. The 1993 Management Committee has discussed reviving the Mountaineer's List, and recertifying climbers to assure that those participating on mountaineering trips are qualified and current in their rope, ice axe and crampon skills. We don't want to risk losing insurance again. After several years of the insurance crisis, many climbers are rusty in these skills, and need a refresher so assure their safe participation on these trips. Stay tuned to the new Management Committee for final decisions on the Mountaineer's List, and the scheduling of practice sessions.

Thanks again to all who made this a great year. Larry Tidball

Wedding Announcement

*Best Wishes to Barbee Hoffmann & Larry Tidball,
married on November 13, 1993.*

Membership Report by Barbara Cohen

Welcome new members:

Cyndi Runyon
3350 W. Artesia Blvd.
Torrance, CA 90504
(310) 217-1063

George Thomas
1731 Mitchell Ave. #47
Tustin, Ca 92680-6352
(714) 975-6910

William Daugherty III
10608 Angel Ave.
Fountain Valley, Ca 92708
(714) 968-6097

Michael Udkow
1001 Longridge Road
Oakland, CA 94610
(510) 596-6923

Tom Sumner
1818 10th St. Apt C
Santa Monica, CA 90404

Reinstatements:

Robert Ayres
679 Waverley St.
Palo Alto, CA 94301

Scot Jamison
412 W. Carter Dr.
Glendora, CA 91740

Brian Lane
780 Paseo El
Mirador
Palm Springs, CA
92262

New Subscriber:

Ronald Banner
1318 E. 2nd St.
Long Beach, CA 90802
(310) 438-4473

Ken McElvany
2056 Shorewood
Upland, CA 91784
(909) 983-2623

New Address:

Tom Moumblow
2579 Kikapoo Tr.
Landers, CA 92285
(619) 364-3331

Sigrid Hutto
10410 Carlyle Ct.
Cypress, CA 90630
(714) 995-6840

John Morrison
1230 Stearns Dr.
Los Angeles, CA
90035
(213) 936-2800 W

Delores Holladay
10749 Camarillo #8
Toluca Lake CA 91602
(818) 769-7731 H
(213) 720-2654 W

Elena Sherman
P.O. Box 64
Malibu, CA 90265

CONGRATULATIONS !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Senior Emblem #111 Brian Smith (Mt. Ruskin)

List Finisher #41 Dale Van Dalsem (Lone Pine Pk.)

List Finisher + Senior Emblem #4 Bill T. Russell (Vandever)

A Quote: Adventure is not in the guidebook and Beauty is not on the map. Seek and ye shall find. - Terry and Renny Russel

MOUNTAIN RECORDS REPORT

(As of October, 1993)

Whether lead or private trips, SPSers had a busy climbing Season. That helped to replace registers to some of the important peaks. Because the replacements are recent, some of you will miss the fun of checking out past Reg. entries on important peaks such as Middle Pal. & Humphreys. I would like to thank the following individuals for their help and for sending me peak reports on the condition of the registers:

Jim Adler	Scott Jamison	Bill T. Russell
Mark Adrian	Ron Jones	Henry Shavelle
Fred Camphausen	Jerry Keating	Erik Siering
Pat Christie	Patty Kline	Tina Stough
Barbara Cohen	Ed Lubin	Scott Sullivan
Al Conrad	Gordon MacLeod	Larry Tidball
Dave Dykeman	Gene Mauk	George Toby
Mario Gonzalez	Bill Oliver	David Underwood
Sigrid Hutto	Dane Richter	Pete Yamagata
Rick Jali	Greg Roach	

Pete Y. has pretty much covered reporting on the Northern peaks. For at least the past two seasons, Pete has placed a number of nesting cans and register books on those peaks. From other reports I received, seems the canister/register plays hide & seek. A climber will report "none found" but another will report "it's there." Some damaged containers need repair or replacement, some popular peaks need an ammo box. Climbers have submitted reports informing me where the registers are ok, therefore only the ones needing TLC are listed below:

<u>Need Kit</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Banner	-Larry says the Ammo Box needs a hinge pin (A 4" coat hanger wire will do)
Bago	-Needs Canister. Per Tina, has coffee can
Bear Creek Spire	-Top of Cont. gone, no Reg. per Scott Sullivan
Baldwin	-Could use a reg/book
Baxter	-Oh, no! Ron Jones says nothing on peak. Missing!
Cartago	-Rick Jali reports nothing found on summit. (Need someone to volunteer to take up an Ammo Box)
Cathedral	-Pete Y. reports top of Cont. gone, no Reg.
Cirque	-Crowded Canister, an Ammo Box could go here
Clarence King	-Mario reported on Secor's trip they left a nesting can. I recommend a kit for this one.
Crag	-Can use a book
Emerson	-Needs Canister (current one lost lid) book damage
Excelsior	-Need book ASAP (Bill T. & R. Jali)
Dunderberg	-Ditto
Gray	-From previous report, needs kit (or nesting can)
Junction Pk.	-Campy reports no Reg. found. Disappeared sometime between 7/92-9/93.
Koip	-Scot Jamison/Patty K./Geo. Toby, all found no Reg. (I'd put a nesting can on this one)
Matterhorn	-From previous report, needs kit
Mt. Langley	-Tina says box in bad shape. Lid sports a hole where logo used to be. Popular climb. Ammo

- North Peak Box for this 14er.
- Red Slate -Needs a book
- Royce -Pete Y. says it needs a Canister (he left a book)
- Sawtooth (Min. King) -Needs Canister. Per Tina, has plastic bags only
- Seven Gables -Dave Dykeman reports no Reg. (I put one there in Oct. 1990) Let's forget it.
- Smith -On 7/20 Al Conrad reports reg. full, needs a new one; on 7/31 Larry T. reports no reg or container found, but left a book. Needs Canister.
- Thor -Can use a book
- Bill Lingle placed a canister in '92; Henry Shevelle found nothing in May '93; Sigrid Hutto reports it ok in Aug. '93; It does need a book
- Mt. Tom -Popular climb, Ammo Box and double Reg. books
- Vogelsang -Al C. reports no room in canister - a popular peak. (Recomm: If still there, retrieve canister & replace w/Ammo box)

And last, but not least, it's **John** Dodds - not Joan. (Echo May-June '93) - sorry, John, couldn't read your writing.

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NOTE: El Dorado National Forest is now enacting the Wilderness Act to remove all that is considered debris (that includes summit regs.) from the peaks located in the Lake Tahoe and Desolation areas. El Dorado N.F. Ranger Karen Leyse (who is a Sierra Club member and attends Mother Lode Chapter meetings) explained to me that since the peaks there are easily accessible, and so many locals take up pages writing nonsense and using offensive language, that NSF has been removing all reg./containers from summits. This policy affects three SPS peaks, Dicks Pk. Tallac and Pyramid. Ms. Leyse did mention that under a specific agreement and commitment to maintenance, they would allow groups such as ours to place registers. She also mentioned that her office sent out inquiries to other Ranger Stations concerning the placement of registers. She received some favorable reactions and some with a definite aversion to anything on summits.

The Section has ceased placing anything of value, i.e., aluminum canisters on the peaks up north - as well as in other areas - for the same reasons: accessibility and vandalism. Still, this doesn't explain the disappearance of registers from some of the better peaks such as Mt. Humphreys, Middle Pal., Junction, etc.



Vi Grasso
Mountain Records

CONSERVATION

My last Sierra hike of the season was to Disaster peak. That day was a day of such perfection that I felt its peace, and I thought a lot about John Muir's prose; that is until I glanced toward ground level at the ubiquitous cow pies - many alarmingly fresh. More peace drained away as I encountered trampled and destroyed water courses, closed gates, lowing and tinkling, the unmistakable clues to hamburger-on-hoof. As I thought about groups like The High Sierra Hikers and The California Wilderness Coalition which are actively trying to preserve the Sierra ecosystem, peace was restored to my mind through the geography of hope. I was reminded of this experience as I read the fall issue of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance publication.

SUWA has filed a request with the Utah Attorney General to investigate the following problem: Ranchers pay one dollar and 86 cents to graze a cow per month. Seventy cents goes to the federal treasury where it is usually spent to make more pasture. Another 12.5 percent is given to the state where the grazing takes place. Utah merely gives the money back to the BLM grazing advisory board which is composed solely of public lands ranchers. SUWA was unable to find out what the ranchers did with this money. When SUWA tried to attend a meeting of the advisory board, The BLM allowed the board to bar SUWA. These boards operate without statutory mandate.

Hope in this case is that last February, Clinton signed an executive order that instructed The BLM to terminate at least 1/3 of these advisory boards. SUWA and several national conservation groups have petitioned Secretary of the Interior Babbitt to abolish all such advisory boards. Another hope is that even though the Senate is filibustering attempts at grazing reform, Interior Secretary Babbitt has determined to carry out reforms through administrative means. His plan is to increase the monthly grazing fee per animal to four dollars and twenty-eight cents a month.

At the November meeting, I distributed fliers for the High Sierra Hikers Association. This organization is the only one that concentrates exclusively on Sierra Nevada issues. Since that focus is implied in the very name of our section, I believe this organization deserves your support both monetarily and by the power of your pen (computer). If the following statement agrees with your sentiment and experience, joining the HSHA is one way to change the current focus of the BLM. This excerpt is quoted from the aforementioned SUWA newsletter. "As far as BLM is concerned, the area may be of international significance when it comes to limiting hikers and horse packers, but it is just another cow pasture when it comes to livestock management."

Of course, HSHA is concerned with all of the issues confronting hikers in the Sierra that were presented to you by Joe Fontaine at the August SPS meeting and reiterated by Larry Tidball in his Sept-October chairperson's column. As Joe informed you, he is the only hiker-type member of the Forest Service's recently appointed Public Involvement Team. Our Chair, Larry Tidball, is planning to present a composite of comments from the SPS to Joe for his advocacy to PIT for hiker concerns. Please refer to the Sept.-Oct. Echo, then give your specific recommendations on these 11 concerns and mail them to Larry right away.

I also handed out fliers describing threats to the Carson Wilderness Area, the Emigrant Wilderness area and to the Mendocino Wildlands. If you are interested, please send me a SASE for these fliers which give you information about the threats and then guide you to take action. (if you weren't present at the November meeting.) I also have additional applications for membership in HSHA.

Elsewhere I used the term, "geography of hope", which was coined by Wallace Stegner in his Wilderness Letter written in 1960. Tom Watkins, writing in Wilderness Magazine which is a publication of The Wilderness Society, states that the concepts in this letter are central to our

understanding of our place in the great community of life and are as important as Leopold Aldo's Sand County Almanac. Stegner died April 13, 1993. Reading or re-reading these two conservation and literary classics can center thoughts in the geography of hope ; otherwise walking in all that manure could mire one in the Slough of Despond.

Also worthing of your reading, is 'Saving The Himalaya', a 12 page article in the Nov-Dec issue of World Watch, the publication of the prestigious World Watch Institute. It describes in detail how time is short in the narrow valleys of the earth's greatest mountain range where life is surprisingly diverse and vulnerable. After reading this article, the Himalaya of my imagination vanished.

Also recommended is reading the recently issued Warning to Humanity which the Union of Concerned Scientists has sent to all Nobel laureates and to other scientists. So far, 1070 scientists including 104 Nobel laureates have signed it. This warning is the first step in the Global Resources Project, a long term campaign by the Union of Concerned Scientists. The project is to increase awareness of the threat that global environmental degradation poses to humanity's life-support systems. This list sharply focuses on what these threats are and also lists clearly what we must do.

Angeles Chapter Council Meeting, Monday September 27, 1993

Robin Ives reported that the NFS has plans to charge climbers for the costs of rescues and that he understood that the policy is already being implemented on Ranier and Denali. It was noted by Chuck Stein that Sierra Club insurance does not cover climbers only leaders.

The by-laws and sectionhood of the Back Road Explorers were approved.

Bill Oliver had written the Council asking it to rule on the use of ham radios on trips. It was generally felt that the clause in the rules on page 21 in The Schedule of Activities stating that radios could be used for "essential uses such as navigation or communication" was adequate. It was moved and voted on unanimously that ham radios be permitted.

Dan Richter



Minutes from SPS Meeting August 11, 1993

Present: Larry, Barbee, Dave, Patty, Bob Wyka, Dan Richter, Bill Oliver, Bill T. Russell, Barbara

Larry started the meeting at 6:40pm. Minutes read and approved. Patty reports \$3756.57 in checking and \$2017.47 in savings. A \$500 deposit was given on the banquet.

A free photo and ad for SPS T-shirts will soon appear in the Southern Sierran.

The management committee discussed compiling a list of peaks that would be considered too dangerous to lead safely without a rope or ice axe.. WTC is currently leading some peaks that would appear on this list. We are concerned with safety.

A nominating committee is needed for the 1994 management committee--ballots to be in the Seep-Oct Echo.

Banquet choices will be chicken, salmon, or vegetarian. Meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.

General meeting began at 7:40pm. Bill T. Russell will contact members who still have not renewed for 1993.

It was noted that many Sierra Peaks are missing registers and cannisters.

Joe Fontaine presented a program on environmental concerns in the Sierra. Some issues addressed were: commercial use, livestock use, trailhead quotas, trailhead camping, permits, and fires. Many SPS members expressed their concerns to Joe, who will relay this information at the next Public Involvement Team Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Cohen, Secretary

Note: September SPS meeting was cancelled due to the DWP strike. Management committee members phoned all local SPS members to notify them of the cancellation.

Mario Gonzalez would be grateful for leadership to ascend the following peaks: Mt. Starr King, Mt. Darwin, Thunderbolt Peak, Mt. Gardiner, Norman Clyde Peak, Palisade Crest, Devil's Crags, Thunder Mtn., Glacier Ridge, The Hermit, Cathedral Peak. (213) 614-2344

From the Editor: **Background Noise**

I made a mistake! Please accept my apologies concerning the election ballots in the previous Echo. The ballots did not have a 'return by' date on them. Also, because of the way the Echo is now published, folded and stapled at the printers, there was only one ballot per Echo for active members. I did not even think about family memberships in the SPS. For those people for whom the SPS records showed as "inactive" this may be confusing because they received an Echo with one page saying "This Page Intentionally Left Blank". That is because there were two printings done, one with a ballot, one without. Only active members can vote in SPS elections. Anyway, I promise to implement a better system, with the help of the nominating committee, for dealing with the ballots next year. (Providing the Management Committee doesn't fire me.)

As this year ends, let me take this time to thank all of you who have sent in trip reports and other contributions to the Echo. You are greatly appreciated. The Echo is only as good a publication as the members make it. Keep up the good work.

Minutes from SPS Meeting Oct. 13, 1993

Present: Dave, Barbee, Patty, Bob Wyka, Bill Oliver, Wayne Norman, Dan Richter, Vi Grasso, R.J. Secor, Barbara

Barbee conducted the meeting in Larry's absence. Meeting began at 6:40pm. According to Council, radios are not prohibited on Sierra Club trips and the management committee voted to leave it up to the leader's discretion regarding their use.

Patty reports \$3844.96 in checking and \$2025.92 in savings. Seventy T-shirts were sold in one month due to the free ad in the Southern Sierran! We made \$350 profit!

A motion was passed to donate \$100 to each of the three search and rescue units: China Lake, Inyo Co. Sheriff, and Sierra Madre.

A bear box will be placed in the Big Arroyo in July, 1994.

A motion was passed to keep the Echo at \$12.

Dave Petzold compiled a list of peaks not to be led. We will discuss this in Nov.

Vi Grasso reports that the Mother Lode Chapter is anti register. Larry will write to the National S.C. office requesting that registers be kept on peaks. We would like to make it a national policy.

The banquet tickets are available at \$25 each. There will be 8 per table and tables may be reserved in advance. Meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.

General meeting started at 7:40pm conducted by Dave Petzold. Awards nominees are needed. Sondra Johnson passed out info about the PCT. Burton Falk presented a slide show on the high points of Europe.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Cohen, Secretary

MT. STARR KING - Part I, The Early Climbs

Bill Oliver

"In the angle formed by the Merced and the South Fork Canyon (Illilouette Creek), and about two miles SSE of Mt. Broderick (Liberty Cap), is the high point, called the 'South Dome,' and also, of later years, 'Mount Starr King.' This is the most symmetrical and beautiful of all the dome-shaped masses around Yosemite; but it is not visible from the valley itself. It exhibits the concentric structure of the granite on a grand scale; although its surface is generally smooth and unbroken. Its summit is absolutely inaccessible." (Whitney Survey: *Geology*, 1865) [Found in "Place Names of the High Sierra" by Francis P. Farquhar, *Sierra Club Bulletin (SCB)*, 1925. Note: South Dome was also an early name for Half Dome.]

Josiah Whitney, as usual, was absolutely right - until proven absolutely wrong. Mt. Starr King, one of the last of the major Yosemite "inaccessibles" was accessed for the first time in 1875 (or '76). The triumph belonged to a certain thirty-five-year-old Bay Area accountant/entrepreneur, who would later be known as "Chicken" Bayley for his prosperous poultry business.

Short in stature but high on adventure, **George B. Bayley** led a life full of gnarly summits - and did little to seek public fame for his achievements. Following a family tradition, at 15 the Boston-born lad went to sea. For seven years he agilely mounted the lofty masts and deftly walked the narrow spars. In 1862 the twenty-two-year-old wanderer permanently grounded in San Francisco, where a married sister was living. Four years later, two ahead of John Muir's arrival, Bayley made the first of his annual summer outings to Yosemite Valley. His second summer, in 1867, found him and his young bride atop Sentinel Rock - an early climb for man and a first for woman.

All the climbing guides consistently give a date of August 1876 for the first ascent of Starr King. The original source for many of these is probably the Francis Farquhar article in the 1932 *SCB*: "A Revival of Interest in Mt. Starr King." Some of the "contradictory" records referred to by Farquhar may be resolved with the conclusion that Bayley, in fact, made two ascents, both by the NE: the first in 1875 and the second in 1877. James Hutchings' climbs, by the SE saddle in 1877, were then the third and fourth ascents, on consecutive days. It is quite reasonable that the latter climbs may have closely followed in time Bayley's second. Farquhar, who clearly is aware of only a single climb by Bayley, implies Hutchings greatly exaggerated in claiming a near sequence.

George Bayley's Climbs

The principal source for this research is "Mountain Climber, George B. Bayley, 1840-1894," by Evelyn Hyman Chase, 1981. There appears to be no published or private account of Bayley's 1875

ascent. His good friend and some-times-mountaineering-companion, John Muir, however, offered the following tribute within an article which appeared in the August 26, 1876 *San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin* - "Summering in the Sierra": [Note: In acceding to Bayley's request for no public acclaim, Muir refers to our protagonist as "Mr. Short."]

A firm, condensed, muscular little man of my acquaintance comes acimbing in the mountains every year. His love of alpine exercise seems to suffer no abatement, notwithstanding he scrambles most of the year among the dangerous heights and hollows of the San Francisco stock market and among the arithmetical banks and braes of banking. He is a short man, or even shorter, who disdainng the plush lawns and gravelly margins of Yosemite, pushes bravely out among the precipices of the loftiest Alps; scaling cliffs for the dear love of the danger, glissading adown glacier declivities and floundering through snow fountains with indomitable perseverance, yet without any of the distinctive characteristics of the cautious mountaineer.

Mounts Shasta, Whitney, Lyell, Dana and the Obelisk [now Mt. Clark], all have felt his foot; and years ago he made desperate efforts to ascend the South Dome [Half Dome], eager for the first honors, and certainly no one could be better qualified to succeed in a chance way; for with the grip and audacity of a squirrel, his tense muscular limb bundles ply with a pattering, twinkling motion, seemingly independent of ordinary holds.

The only kind of mountain climbing at which he appears at a disadvantage are flood and earthquake taluses. The various blocks and boulders of which they are composed are all placed by natural laws in exquisite rhythmical order, and the tuned mountaineer, bounding adown their curves, finds himself playing upon a grand instrument. But here Mr. Short finds difficulty and discord in pattering from key to key, like a lady with stumpy, abbreviated fingers, playing a piano. Upon plain flowing folds of granite, however, the case is different, and happily our hero has at length found what he long has sought - an accessible mountain, with name and fame deemed inaccessible, and that mountain is Starr King, the loftiest and most symmetrical of the Yosemite Domes.

Returning the other day [Upon this phrase, very likely, Farquhar derives his first ascent date of August, 1876.] from an extended excursion into the high Sierra, he determined an attempt upon it from the north, and now the silk handkerchief of a brave young lawyer who accompanied him, floats above it on the breeze, proclaiming the small fact, that with the exception of a few branches of spirey needles, the last of Yosemite inaccessibles has been conquered. To [George] Anderson [on 10/12/75] belongs the honor of first standing in the blue ether above Tissiack [on Half Dome]; and to the dauntless San

Francisco Short belongs the first footprint on the crown of Starr King.

George Bayley again stood at the base of Starr King two years later. Details of this ascent are available thanks to the fact that his climbing companion, James Schuyler, happened to be an editor of the *Stockton Daily Independent*. The latter wrote several articles following his Yosemite trip. What follows appeared in the July 12, 1877 edition - "The Ascent of Mt. Starr King." [It appears that Farquhar may have been unaware of this account.]

Two years ago the mountain was first ascended by George B. Bayley, Esq., of San Francisco, who took with him his Mexican guide and a Mr. Smith of San Francisco. Mr. Bayley having made arrangements to make a second ascent with his wife and a lady friend, I was invited to become one of the party. ...

We were not long in reaching a point where we were obliged to leave our horses and proceed the remaining distance on foot. A climb of perhaps half a mile over broken debris brought us to the "saddle" [at the base of the NE face], a point which even the ladies had no difficulty in reaching by a slow but sure process of putting one foot before the other. But here began the serious part of the work. ... The ladies openly avowed that they would not budge an inch beyond where they were, a resolve for which I cannot too warmly commend their judgment.

We had brought with us a stout rope about fifty feet in length, and taking one end of this in his teeth Mr. Bayley started up the slope. His boots were provided with hobnails and by their aid and the exercise of that remarkable agility with which he is peculiarly gifted, he scrambled up the length of the rope until he stood on a narrow ledge some three inches wide running across the face of the mountain. Here he took a turn of the rope around his wrist and bracing himself back against the rock called to me to follow. I protested that I could not, that it was useless to imperil our lives in attempting to go on. He answered reassuringly and begged me to try it. I therefore thought I would go as high as he was standing and then persuade him to return. Putting my weight [250 lbs] on the rope to test his power to hold me, I found it pretty firm and started up. He is a small man but very muscular, and I trusted in him implicitly. I found I got up easier than I expected, and as he started off for another ascent I could not demur too strongly, especially as he assured me that the hard climbing would be over after the next 100 feet. Leaving me standing on the ledge, he walked along it to the face of a low wall, in the corner of which he scrambled up to another good footing point about fifty feet further. The rope had slipped from my grasp, and when he threw the end out toward me it would not reach. Fortunately he had a small piece of baling rope in his pocket with which he spliced out the longer one so that I could grab it. As I had not dared to follow along the narrow, contracting ledge to a point directly beneath him, my next climb was necessarily in a diagonal direction. This was not

pleasant, as after the first step or two my feet slipped from under me and I rolled and slide over to the wall, clinging to the rope for dear life. If it had broken I should have quickly met a terrible fate. My companion laughed heartily at my mishap to give me assurance, but my knees were barked and I was considerably bruised. I got up all right, however, and my companion started on. Going about twenty feet he braced himself again and told me he had a firm footing, so I again walked up the rope to where he was. I was at a loss to find the footing, however, and it was with the greatest difficulty I managed to twist one foot into a crevice and cling to a half inch ledge with my fingernails. How he had managed to hold himself in position against the strain of my weight, which is not light, I could not conceive.

"We are in for it now, Schuyler," said he. "Stick here and be ready to catch me if I should fall."

"In for it! I should say we were," I replied. "If you come down, do it as easy as you can. I can't hold on here very long."

Up he went again, but as he had anticipated, he had not gone more than ten feet before he came sliding down, bringing up on my shoulders, his boot heels cutting furrows in my hands and starting the blood. Three times this was repeated.

At last I exclaimed, "See here, Bayley, this is getting monotonous. We'll go to the bottom in short order if you do that again. For God's sake give me your knife!"

Taking the strong, curved back of the knife used for relieving dirt from horses' hooves, I applied it as a lever to a thin slab of rock which I succeeded in breaking out. This left a nice little ledge nearly two inches deep into which I threw my knee and breathed a sigh of relief. Mr. Bayley then took the knife and pried out a loose slab about ten feet long and an inch thick, lying on edge in the angle of the wall. The footing of the slab was not disturbed, but the top being pulled out four or five inches it served as a ladder for Mr. Bayley to climb over the slippery place that had given him several falls, and gave me something to cling to.

After that we got along without further trouble, by a repetition of our experience below, and a couple of hundred feet brought us to easy walking, when we mounted to the top. ... We planted our flag in a conspicuous place, and after I had recovered my equanimity, started on the descent. The ladies, who had been nervously watching our climb from below, hearing every word of our conversation and expecting every moment to see us dashed to the bottom, gave us an encouraging cheer to which we heartily responded.

We came down easily, without mishap, until we reached the diagonal descent, which I was obliged to make, when I slipped again, sliding down the full length of the rope, and fetching up with my toes in a friendly ledge. This fall was more serious than the one received when we went up, as I came very near pulling my companion out of his position. As it was he afterwards exhibited a black and blue mark encircling his arm where the rope had cut into his flesh. ...

At four o'clock we reached our animals, and before dark had got back to the Glacier Point House, where we enjoyed a good supper, eaten with uproarious hilarity. ... We did not sleep much, as Mr. Bayley was haunted with a remarkable and contagious fund of animal spirits and kept the house in an uproar until 2 o'clock in the morning.

James Hutchings' Climbs

Within a month or so we find a new party with eyes cautiously straining upward at the smooth, sheer face of Starr King - this time from the SE saddle. Farquhar assumes that James Hutchings was initially unaware of Bayley's prior ascent(s), hoping that his, Hutchings', would be the first. James M. Hutchings, who entered the region in 1855, operated an early Yosemite Valley hotel. He probably did more than anyone else, with the possible exception of John Muir, to advertise the wonders of the Valley. He mentions the earliest Starr King climbs in his classic travel book "In the Heart of the Sierras," 1886:

Less than a dozen persons have been able to ascend it. The first to do so was Mr. George B. Bayley and Mr. E. S. [sic] Schuyler; followed by George Anderson and this writer, J. M. Hutchings, a few days afterwards, who having attached ropes over difficult places, enabled Mrs. Hutchings and our daughter Florence to ascend it, who were the first and only ladies, at this writing, that have accomplished the difficult task.

There is disagreement in Hutchings' own writings as to what number of and which ladies participated in his climbs. Certainly there was no confusion regarding the choice of George Anderson to lead the Hutchings party. Less than two years earlier the carpenter and trail builder succeeded in climbing, solo, another Yosemite inaccessible - Half Dome. Employing a novel technique - artificial aid - that would someday become the standard on "hard" Yosemite routes, he also pioneered the use of "sticky" shoes. [But this is another story!] The following narrative is taken from Hutchings' journal:

August 23 and 24, 1877 - Our camping ground encircled by forest trees and about a mile from the goal of our ambitions was left about 10 AM, under the guidance of Geo. G. Anderson, the first to climb the South [Half] Dome. We threaded our way among silver firs, tamaracks, and pinus monticola to the edge of the debris lying just under this lofty landmark, then picking our way among blocks of granite and stunted live-oak shrubbery, we sought the saddle at the south-eastern side of the peak. Well supplied with ropes.

"Oh, that isn't much of a climb," exclaimed our leader, as we looked together up the smooth granite slope before us, standing at an angle of about 43°, and with here and there a block, or shingle, formed by the concentric and con-choidal cleavage of the rock - to climb over.

Taking off his boots and putting on some home-made moccasins, the soles of which he had

previously covered with turpentine, thick in consistency, then winding the coil of rope over his shoulder and under his arm, he picked up a hammer (which he fastened in his belt) and some eye-bolts; said "Well, here goes!"

Walking up the smooth granite as if it were a gravel hill, he arrived at the first shingle. "Now," he said, "I'll put an eye-bolt here." So an eye-bolt was driven in and the rope fastened to it, allowing the lower end to reach the starting point. Here a huge block of shingle was encountered. Fastening about twelve feet to his belt, so that if he slipped he could not fall more than that distance, he proceeded, taking hold of the edge of the shingle, and advancing inch by inch. But he had made the rope too short to allow him to reach the next point of safety. He said composedly, "Now Mr. H., can you come up as far as this?"

I tried, but the rope was small and my fingers long and I couldn't get a good grip. "If you cannot get up I shall have to fall." "Then I'll come." Catching the small rope over-handed, I knelt upon the rock and crept along aided by the rope, until I reached the eyebolt and could just reach to his foot. This I held until he got a grip that enabled him to move his other foot. In a couple of minutes he was in a place of safety. Obstacle after obstacle was overcome, and finally we were standing firmly on the summit of "Mount Starr King," 9230 [9092] feet above sea-level.

It is impossible to describe the glorious panorama! Mountain ridges and hollows, pine covered, like waves of the sea - with here and there white knolls, relieving the dark hollows! While away to the eastward lay the grand chain of the Sierras - lofty peaks in sunlight and deep canons in shadow, passing clouds casting shadows on the peaks.

Deep in the gorge below slept Yosemite. The panorama - to the north and east - the top of El Capitan, Eagle Point, Yosemite Fall, North Dome, South [Half] Dome, Mts Hoffmann and Tuolumne, Clouds Rest. Between Clouds Rest and Mt Hoffmann stood grandly up in the far distance a group of sharp peaks that must be among the highest of the Sierras in that direction. From Clouds Rest, Mt Wonderful, Mt. Dana (far away on the crest of the range), Monastery Peak, Cathedral Peak, Temple and Echo Peaks. Thence numerous unnamed mountains filled the space until the Lyell group. Near and high in appearance rose the bold sharp outline of Gothic Peak [another early name for Mount Clark] thence Gray Peaks and Red Mountain. ...

Forest fires are on every hand making the landscape hazy and dull. I execrate the vandalism of the sheep-herders!

Aug. 23rd G. G. Anderson, J. G. Lambert, and J. M. Hutchings made the ascent.

Aug. 24th G. G. Anderson, Mrs. A. L. Sweetland, S. A. Walker, and J. M. H.

The entire area of the summit is only about 100 ft by 75 ft. Two monuments erected gave evidence of someone having ascended this peak before us. We erected a flag pole, put up a flag, painted by J. G. Lambert - for our party.

[Found in Farquhar's 1932 *SCB* article, "A Revival of Interest in Mt. Starr King."]

Surprisingly, according to Farquhar, the summit was apparently not visited again for 54 years. [However, Richard Leonard's 1937 "Mountain Records of the Sierra Nevada" notes climbs in 1918 and 1922.] Then, suddenly, 1931 witnessed eight successful ascents, some solo: seven from the NE and one from the SE.

To be concluded in **Part II** - current climbing routes.

George B. Bayley, 1840 - 1894

In 1883 Bayley (then 43) made the third ascent of Mt. Rainier, accompanied by P. B. Van Trump (45) and James Longmire (63). Notwithstanding Van Trump's premier climb in 1870, the account of this arduous approach and perilous ascent clearly revealed the Sierran's masterful leadership. As was then often the case, the trio endured an alternately freezing/scalding bivouac at steam vents near the summit.

Frustrated at not having had time to go on to the north summit (now Liberty Cap), Bayley returned with Van Trump in 1892. This time, after another extreme bivouac, they made what they thought was the first ascent of the north peak. Actually, they missed this distinction by about three weeks. Recall, mountaineers then carried alpenstocks and wore hobnailed boots, but had neither ice axe nor crampons. While descending a steep, icy slope Bayley slipped and fell, 2,000 feet later, into a crevasse. Somehow, in spite of his broken ribs and Van Trump's subsequent snow blindness, the pair finally made it safely off the mountain.

Just two months prior to this high adventure, George Bayley was among twenty-seven prominent businessmen, educators and mountaineers enlisted

by John Muir in the incorporation of the Sierra Club. Less than two years later, on April 30, 1894, Bayley was killed instantly when his skull was fractured in a freight elevator accident on his property. He left his spouse and a son and daughter - and he left an impressive record of mountaineering boldness and modesty.

James M. Hutchings, 1820 - 1902

Born in England, Hutchings came west to America in 1848 and then farther west during the Gold Rush of '49. Initial success in the California gold fields did not pan out in the long run, and his career eventually turned to publishing the monthly *Hutchings' California Magazine*. In 1855, only four years after its "discovery," he led the first tourist party into Yosemite Valley.

It was while remodeling his Hutchings House hotel in the Valley that he hired "a shabby, nature-loving Scotsman" - John Muir - to operate his nearby sawmill. [From *Yosemite and Its Innkeepers*, Shirley Sargent, 1975.] SPS-listed Mt. Florence (12,561') was named for Hutchings' daughter while she was on a family outing in the vicinity of this peak. Mt. Hutchings (10,785'), overlooking Kings Canyon about 5 mi. NE of Cedar Grove, was named for the Valley publicist, most likely during a trans-Sierra trip he made in 1875. Hutchings briefly succeeded Galen Clark in 1880 as the state Guardian of the Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Grove Grant.

"Late in his life he took up hotelkeeping again, this time at the Calaveras Grove of Big Trees. He visited Yosemite often, and it was while entering the Valley with his wife for a camping trip on October 31, 1902, that he was thrown from the buggy when his horse reared, and was killed almost instantly." [From Peter Browning's Editor's Introduction to the 1990 republication of James Hutchings' *In the Heart of the Sierras*.]

Book Review

Sierra Classics: 100 Best Climbs in the High Sierra

by John Moynier and Claude Fiddler

Published by Chockstone Press, Colorado, 1993.

Most of us were quite happy to see R. J. Secor's *High Sierra* book (see the ECHO, May-June 1992, p. 8) hit the shelves last year - it was quite an improvement over Roper's Guide. One individual who wasn't so happy was Claude Fiddler, who wrote a scathing review of *High Sierra* which was published in the *1993 American Alpine Journal*. I was looking forward to Fiddler's upcoming *Sierra Classics*, and was anxious to see how he would "improve" upon Secor's book.

Sierra Classics starts out in the usual way, with sections on equipment, ratings, wilderness impact, and permits. The history of the Sierra is kept to a minimum, which is good since there are many other books available for history-seekers. The book is loaded with full-page photographs which greatly enhance the reader's grasp of the routes. There are also topo maps at the beginning of each section, though some are sloppily spliced together, especially the Palisades map.

Most choices for the list of 100 classic climbs are good: the southwest buttress of Cathedral Peak, southeast face of Clyde Minaret, north ridge of Lone Pine Peak, northeast face of Middle Palisade, south face of Clarence King, east face of Mt. Whitney, the U-notch couloir of North Palisade, etc. But then the authors also selected marginally challenging climbs like the east ridge of Mt. Gardiner, which is mostly class 2 with a bit of class 4 at the top. Not one of the best climbs in the Sierra. Go figure. And the southwest ridge of Mt. Morgan (south)? What is an overbloated slag heap like this, with one minor class 4 ridge, doing on a classic list? Get a grip guys. Instead, how about the east buttress of Mt. Muir? (After all, the book begins with a John Muir quote.) What about the other Devil's Crags (only #1 is included) and the other peaks of the Kaweah (only Black is included) group? What about The Obelisk? Or Clyde Spires?

Back to the text. The authors start each climb with a brief history of the mountain and particular route, and then tell a story or two involving past or present climbers. In this way they realize their goal of formally recording modern stories that aren't documented elsewhere. This would be fine as a preamble to an excellent route description, but it doesn't work out that way.

Why? Because the route descriptions don't improve upon previously published descriptions, and in some cases are worse. Take the Palisade Traverse (VI 5.9) description for instance. "This traverse climbs nine major peaks and many lesser summits between Southfork and Jigsaw Pass." No kidding? A chimpanzee can figure out that much. Where are the details? What are the most interesting cruxes of the traverse? Where are the best bail-out points? Where are the best places for food caches along this seven day traverse? There are no answers given to these and other questions, which is disappointing since there is a half blank page underneath that oh-so-lengthy description. The non-description of the Minaret Traverse is just as pathetic.

So where does *Sierra Classics* leave us? Those seeking stories about certain routes and peaks will get some satisfaction. Those seeking a list of the 100 best Sierra climbs will agree with some of the selections, and disagree with many. But those seeking a guidebook will be the most disappointed, and should go pick up a copy of Secor's *High Sierra*, if they haven't already.

If there's ever been a guidebook full of pluses and minuses, *Sierra Classics* is it. As I put it down after finishing it, I was left with a rather empty feeling, and I found myself comparing it to a climb. Say, for instance, climbing the west face of Cathedral Peak and stopping 50 feet below the top. It just isn't complete.

Bob Sumner

Ham Radios in the Sierra?

Bill Oliver

Sierra Club Rules of Conduct (found, for example, on pg 21 of the current Chapter Schedule) include: "use of radios on outings, except for essential uses such as navigation or communication, is prohibited." I believe this statement was intended to prevent one from playing standard AM/FM radios, etc as well as tape and CD players (which are not "radios"). Most Club members would consider openly playing such devices as an intolerable intrusion on their wilderness experience. But the statement has also been interpreted in a way that would prevent the use of ham radios except exclusively for immediate emergency use. At my request as Activities Admin. Committee Chair, the Chapter Council recently reviewed this rule. They concluded that the wording was adequate and would allow the appropriate use of ham radios. The Chapter Safety Committee and the Leadership Training Committee would not like to see the prudent use of emergency communication equipment discouraged. It is unrealistic, in my mind, to allow a ham radio to be brought out of the pack only in the event of an unfolding emergency. The operator probably needs to develop experience in using the radio in the wilderness locale and in discovering its capabilities and locale-dependent non-capabilities.

Surely no one can doubt the value of having a ham radio along in the event of the need for emergency assistance for ourselves or for others we may encounter. Leaders are trained to send out the call for help to the nearest phone/radio. Some of us have been lucky enough, in a dire emergency, to come across a ranger or backpacker who was carrying a radio. And many of us have not! Two concerns arise, however, that could argue against carrying radios. First, the concern that the radio could give the party or individual a false sense of security, or a willingness to take risks they might not otherwise. This could lead to additional rescues for accidents that might not have happened without the radio. (These people should understand, however, that the radio and/or radio operator could be disabled in the accident.) Second, people may be tempted to radio out for help when really they could accept the inconvenience of dealing with the situation themselves. In either case, then, great expense and perhaps great risk to Search & Rescue personnel, usually volunteers, could result from a careless attitude engendered by having a radio or by the imprudent, irresponsible use of one. Recognizing these inappropriate tendencies, let us affirm not to fall victim to them. (By the way, after several years of escalating S&R costs, at taxpayer expense, the National Park Service appears on the verge of implementing a cost-reimbursement plan. Don't look for a "free" rescue in the near future.) It's worth pointing out, on the other hand, that a radio could also prevent an unneeded rescue. Twice over the years I or my party was reported overdue by family/friends, the result of unexpected snow storms. In both cases elaborate S&R operations had been set off before our walk-out could turn them off. Had we had a radio, the rescues would never have started.

In closing I cannot fail to mention that some, or perhaps a lot of people, are turned-off, even deeply offended, by the non-critical use of ham radios/telephones in the wilderness. Clearly, the feelings of these people need to be recognized and accommodated. If this is seen as a problem on an outing, then surely the radio operator who wants to check the capability of his/her device can be directed to do so out of sight and sound of those who may be bothered. We have controversies enough without needlessly generating another by the careless or inappropriate or insensitive use of ham radios in the wilderness.

Late Update: Recently, on both a private climb of a DPS peak and on a SPS outing, Mark Adrian's use of his ham radio was instrumental in effecting a quick helicopter evacuation of a participant whose injury, while not life-threatening, was serious and very painful. P.S. The victims were different people. Mark Adrian, however, was the same person. Way to go, Mark!

ECHOES FROM OUR CLIMBS

Gemini & Seven Gables July 30- August 1, 1993

Larry Tidball & Barbee Hoffmann

This trip was advertised as a "leisurely" 3 days to climb these two peaks. This was clarified in the trip sheet to make sure that no one thought this was to be a "leisure trip", but just a more reasonable schedule than some of the recent 2 day trips to these 2 peaks that have climbed the peaks and gotten back to the cars in the early hours of the morning.

We met at the Florence Lake Store at 8:00 AM on Friday to purchase our tickets for the ferry boat across the lake. There were more people on hand than the small boat would hold, and the larger Sierra Queen was out of commission with a wiring problem. Some of us may have had to wait for the next boat at 10:30, except for some quick repairs on the Sierra Queen. So we all sailed on the Sierra Queen, a little late at 8:45, but still much better than the 4½ mile walk around the lake if you don't take the ferry. On the ferry with our group were Doug Mantle and Joe Stephens headed to the Evolution Region. The ferry costs \$10.00 round trip and runs every 2 hours starting at 8:30AM from the resort, and returns from the wilderness at 11:00, 1:00, 3:00 & 5:00PM.

After a lot of cancellations and no-shows we only had 6 people in our group for the backpack up the San Joaquin River and up over Seldon Pass. Joining us for the weekend were; Delores Holladay, John Dodds, Jim Fujimoto and Murry Zichlinski. The long drag up from the River and over the Seldon Pass always takes longer than it seems as it should, and we didn't arrive in camp until 5:00PM.

Our plan was to climb both peaks on Saturday, so we called for a 5:30AM departure from camp. Delores had already climbed Seven Gables and decided to meet us after we had descended from that peak. So five of us headed off for Seven Gables in the first light. We traversed along the east side of Marie Lake, gaining elevation as we went and crossed the intervening ridge at about 10,900' and dropped into the Medley Lakes drainage. We crossed the chain-of-lakes, wading at a shallow spot, a little up-stream from the inlet to Sandpiper Lake. From Sandpiper Lake, we ascended the class 2 West slope of Seven Gables. This slope ends at a saddle just north of the summit. From here we picked out a class 3 route up the west side of the final rocks to the summit, arriving about 9:30.

We planned on descending the South slopes of the peak to head on over to Gemini. Jon Inskeep had led a CMC trip to Seven Gables on July Fourth and we used his report of their ascent of the South slope to help locate the correct descent on that side of the peak. The top of Seven Gables is a labyrinth of ridges, gullies and ribs. To reach the South slope, we descended the summit rocks on the west side till we reached a bivi site, and then traversed south on a 3rd class ledge to reach a knife edge saddle. The South slope starts on the opposite side of the bump forming the opposite side of the saddle. From this point our descent was on easy class 2 slopes with scree down lower. Near the bottom we began angling towards the East and in doing so had to work our way through some cliff bands. As we reached the bottom of the slope, we saw Delores approaching from below. John who did not want to climb Gemini agreed to wait for us at this point. As Delores joined us, we hiked the remaining short distance to the 12,000' saddle on the ridge separating us from Gemini. We had lunch at this saddle before ascending the boulder covered NW slope of Gemini.

Near the top of Gemini, we skirted a remnant snow patch to arrive at the summit rocks at 1:45PM. From the top we were treated to a great view including several Emblem Peaks: Lyell, Ritter, Abbot, Humphreys, Darwin, Goddard, Clarence King, and Brewer. After descending the peak, we retraced our route across the 12,000' saddle, and descended the drainage towards the Medley Lake chain picking up John on the way. This drainage appears on the map to drop off rather precipitously, so we crossed a low ridge at 12,400' and descended to the outlet of the round lake at 11,120'+ SW of Seven Gables. From here it was easy to continue our descent to Medley Lake where we again waded across one of the narrow links in the chain. We recrossed the intervening ridge to Marie Lake and arrived back at camp at 5:00PM.

The next day we got away from camp at 7:30AM and made the longer than expected hike out to the ferry. The long flat stretch along the San Joaquin River takes a lot longer than you would think. Most of us made the 1:00PM ferry, but just by a minute. They wouldn't wait for the last 2 of our group to arrive, but promised to return in the speed boat right away to pick them up. Thus we all were safely back at the Florence Lake Resort and our cars by 2:00.

Larry

Mts. Corcoran & LeConte July 24-25, 1993

Bill Oliver and Larry Tidball

Our SPS trip of eight met at 7:30 Sat morning on Granite View Dr, which closely parallels Diaz Creek, at the NW-leading turnoff (unsigned) to Tuttle Creek Cyn. Quickly signing in we sped off to the trailhead, finally braking belatedly when I realized we were then actually driving the trail. Reverse gears applied. Park in the obvious area off to the right overlooking the cyn, just where the "road" starts left and contours up the south slope. This is a non-quota trailhead; just phone Lone Pine a day or two ahead and they'll leave the permit in the overnight box.

Setting out at 8:15, we made the large stone cabin by 9, too late for breakfast. The use trail continues south from above the cabin and can be, at least vaguely, tracked until the stream crossing at about 9500' (11:30). Look for a short log crossing. While eating lunch here I was fascinated by Mark Adrian's use of his ham radio. I was amazed by its light weight, clear reception and effective range. [See accompanying article.] I also felt good knowing that we could quickly communicate outside if truly necessary in an emergency.

Continuing along low on the south slope, we endured much boulder hopping enroute to our primo campsite, located at about 10,600' (1:50) on a large, partly-forested bench just south of the drainage coming in from the NW. It offered a superb view to the east, open and shaded sites, and a small stream at the south edge. While others read, relaxed or dozed, I scouted out the route ahead. Only Larry had once been in the area before. Everyone obviously took very seriously the call for Happy Hour contributions. The success of the weekend was already assured now by our various culinary indulgences and triumphs.

Sunday we were up at 4:30 and enroute an hour later up the cirque bounded by Corcoran and LeConte. I very cleverly did not fill up at what turned out to be our last stream crossing. (Thanks again to Larry, Barbee Hoffmann and Mark for later sharing their water with this inept writer.) A large prominent snow chute, visible from Hwy 395, appears to lead to the notch just north of Corcoran. Up close, however, a snow-free chute to the left of the latter led to the sought notch. We had no trouble walking over snow fields below the gully. The upper reaches of the chute required care lest one dislodge loosely-bound rocks. At 8:25 we dropped down the back side of the notch a short ways. We went south then and up the short chute leading to the summit - topped before 9:00. [RJ's guide has a good photo and route description for this climb. Many years ago the true summit among

the pinnacles was evidently a matter of some dispute even in the SPS.]

We were all set to declare victory and head home. A debate soon ensued, however, regarding the merits of now moving on to nearby Mt LeConte, which had not been planned. Those who needed it were free to sign out and go for it. Larry and I as leaders could not sign out. It was my understanding from Larry that the intended traverse, which he had not done, was quite exposed. In my mind, therefore, it could not prudently be led without a rope. I had misunderstood him, however, as he clarified that he thought it should go well. So, while two headed back to camp, six of us went for it - traversing low on the west side of the ridge. Climbing up finally into the third gully over from the notch, we were astride LeConte by 10:45 - one hour from the notch. There were only a few ducks, usually on the ribs, and Larry did really well as scout. Our route did not entail more than high third class.

Backtracking to the notch, we reclaimed camp at 2:15 and headed out before 3:00. The cars were reached about 5:45 - our exit slowed by losing the upper half of the use trail and by some weakening knees. The other participants were Greg Roach, Ali Aminian, Bahram Manahedgi and Steve Gatlin - the latter two on their first SPS trip. We had great weather, a fun group and gnarly peaks. Many of us learned anew the meaning of "arduous." Special thanks to Larry for his usual superb co-lead and to Mark for introducing me to ham radios.

"Mt Corcoran," named for a wealthy east coast art patron about 1878, was originally applied to what is now Mt Langley. The latter name finally won out on the 14er in 1937. Not until 1968, however, was the name Corcoran officially applied, perhaps as a consolation, to its present site. Mt. LeConte was named in 1895 for UCB geology professor Joseph LeConte, father of UCB engineering professor Joseph N. LeConte - a prominent early Sierra explorer and mountaineer. Both were original charter members of the Sierra Club. [Source: *Place Names of the Sierra Nevada*, by Peter Browning.]

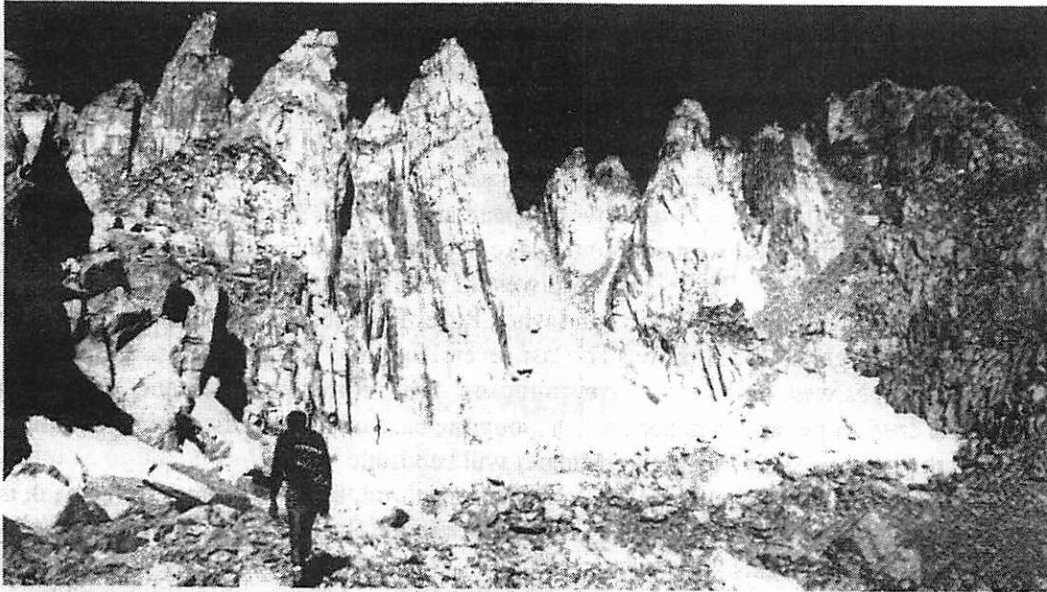
LeConte was first climbed by Norman Clyde, solo, in 1935. The first ascent of Corcoran was from the north, solo by local RCSer Howard Gates in 1933. The first climb from the south, also solo, was in 1938 by future SPSer R.S. (Sam) Fink, still active now at 90.

Bill

MT. CORCORAN



MT. LECONTE



Mt. Corcoran and Mt. LeConte as seen from the 12,000' high basin to the east of the peaks. The route up Corcoran is up the obvious scree gully in the center of the photo (just north of the peak) and then around to a gully on the west face, which is ascended to the summit. The traverse from Corcoran to LeConte is out of sight on the west face of the pinnacles. The chute leading directly to LeConte from the east is very steep and loose at the top, and is not recommended.

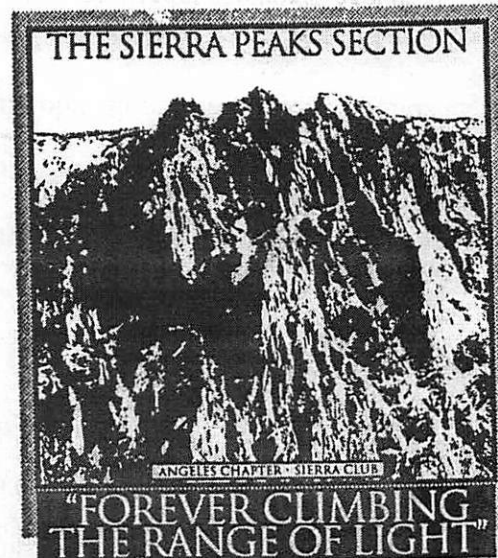
SPS T-SHIRTS

It is not too late to get your SPS T-Shirts. Wynne Benti-Zdon did a great job on the design. The T-Shirts show a great view of North Palisade on the front and the entire SPS list by geographic area on the back.

They are priced a \$12.00 in 3 colors: ash (sweat-shirt grey), fuchsia and yellow. There are 3 sizes: medium, large and extra large.

Buy them at the SPS meeting. You can also mail order them through me specifying color and size and enclosing a check (payable to the Sierra Peaks Section) for \$14.00 (\$2.00 to cover shipping).

Patty Kline
20362 Callon Drive
Topanga Canyon, CA 90290



Waller Minaret

9-4-93

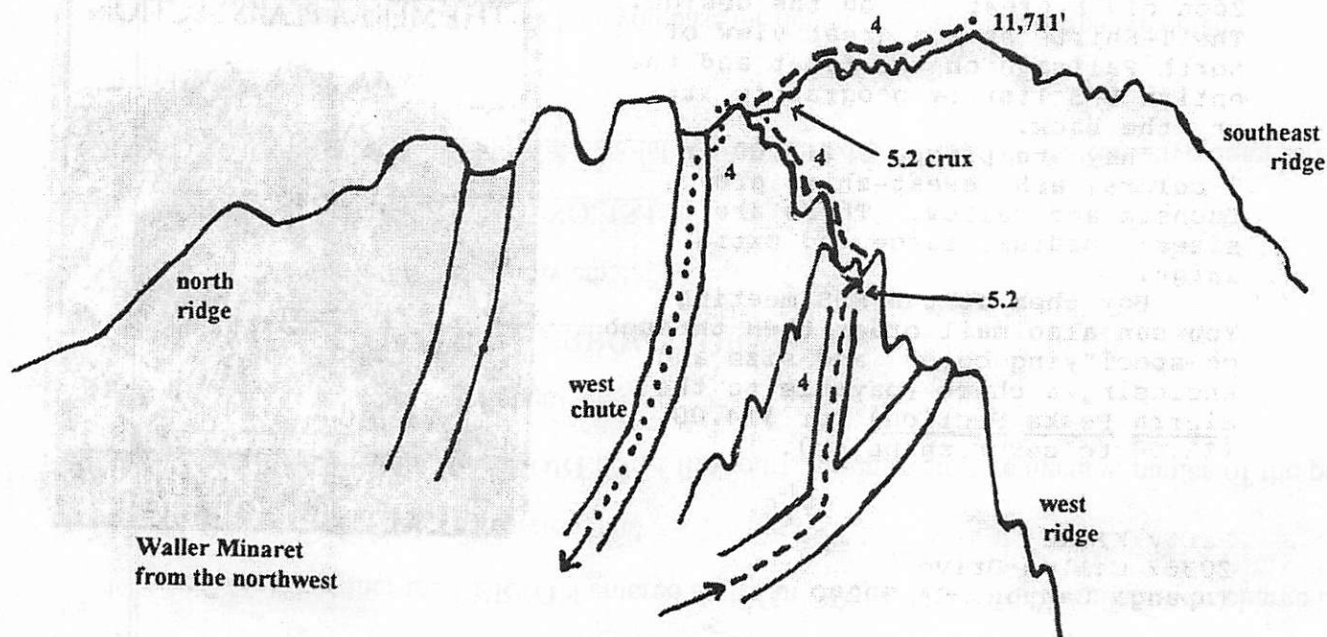
Waller Minaret was first climbed in August 1934 by Ted Waller and Jules Eichorn. Since then it has seen many ascents, but due to its low altitude (when compared to other Minarets), it remains a seldom-visited peak. The northernmost of the Minarets, it is their last gasp of grandeur before fading down into a smattering of gendarmes near Ritter Pass.

Departing from the Agnew Meadows trailhead at 6:15 AM, I arrived at Lake Ediza just after 8:30 AM. From the southwest side of the lake, a good use trail continues southwest to a large meadow at about 9700'. This is just northwest of a small horseshoe-shaped lake. From here veer right (west-northwest) to avoid cliffs and when Ritter Pass becomes visible head southwest towards it, keeping right to avoid snow. The last several hundred feet to the pass are a scree trudge, but the slopes west of the pass are even looser. From Ritter Pass, descend 300 feet on this very loose crud slope, and then head south along the base of some cliffs. Soon you will round a corner and the northwest side of Waller Minaret will be visible.

To the left is a broad chute leading to Waller's north ridge. In the center of the peak is a narrow steep chute - this is the "West Side" route described in Secor's *High Sierra*. To the right is another broad chute, but this leads to the west ridge. I decided to explore the west ridge vicinity to see if any route would go, and found one that did, though many others are possible.

For this west ridge route, go up this broad right chute. A couple of hundred feet before it reaches the west ridge, another steep chute will appear on the left. Go up this chute, which has mixed class 3 and 4 rock. Several hundred feet higher, a flat slabby area of white rock will be found. (Here you can walk to the left for a view down into the main west chute.) Continue a little ways further where progress will be barred by cliffs. Step to the right and find a 15' jumbled crack which goes at about 5.2. Easier terrain then leads quickly to a notch on the west ridge.

Now switch onto the right (south) side of the ridge and follow this east to the summit ridge, encountering more class 3 and 4 enroute. Upon reaching the main ridge, go south and you will be at the crux immediately. On the west side of the ridge is a 15' - 20' crack. It appears to be in the 5.4 to 5.6 range. To avoid this move up and left onto a small exposed slanting platform. Then a 10' stemming move (5.2 again) will put you onto a large slanting slab. Most people will



want a belay (and rappel) here, and indeed old anchor slings are still in place. The ridge continues up steeply and then levels out. It becomes very narrow and knife-edged, with airy views straight down both sides. The broken blocks forming the ridge are slanting and precarious, and each one should be tested before continuing. Reached the 11,711' summit at 12:45 PM.

The view of the Minarets from the top is impressive. Nearby, Turner and Jenson Minarets appear as jumbled masses awaiting collapse, while farther off the mighty ramparts of Eichorn, Clyde, and Michael Minaret tower over the land. Ritter looms to the north, while Iron and several domes are visible to the southeast. Snow and ice still clogged the western chutes of the higher Minarets, and the cacophony of falling rock resonated in the distance. It was warm and sunny, with random cumulus fluffballs dotting an otherwise clear blue sky.

The descent from Waller can be much simpler. After descending the crux, continue north towards an obvious gap in the ridge. Here search around for class 4 ledges leading down into the chute. This is the main west side chute and is nightmarishly loose class 2 all the way down. Then the 300' gain back to Ritter Pass on more loose crud. Reached Ritter Pass by 2:15 PM, and strolled back to the car by 6:15 PM.

SUMMARY: *Waller Minaret, West Ridge.* Round trip - 15 miles, 4800' gain, 12 hours. Rating: I, 5.2. Exposed class 3 and 4, with two short sections of 5.2. Technical climbing equipment recommended. An exciting and airy climb for experienced mountaineers.

Bob Sumner

MT. HUMPREYS (13,986')
(A private trip July 31, August 1, 1993)

Dan Richter, Greg & Mirna Roach, Charlie Knapke

Leaving North Lake trail head at the civilized hour of 7:00 a.m. we arrived at Marmot Lake a little after noon and made camp. While Charlie and Mirna relaxed Greg and I went off to scout the route.

I explored the standard route up the scree covered ledge that starts above the prominent scree fan at the west end of the highest of the Humphrey Lakes. Greg took the more direct chute to the right of the ledge that has two large chock stones in it. I found the going easy second class and the ledge soon gave way to a large chute rising to the right all the way to the notch below the summit. I climbed up to a few hundred feet below the notch to verify the route. Greg found that his chute went, but had to get into some climbing to pass the second chock stone.

The next morning we were all off by 5:30 and taking the route I had explored were at the notch by 7:30. Easy class three brought us to the wall below the summit area. We free climbed the first pitch leading to right and up onto the arete. Greg protected the top off the second pitch with some runners on the horns two thirds of the way up it and we were on the summit about 9:00.

We placed a new canister and register on top, as all that was left was a zip lock bag.

A short belay at the top pitch and a down climb of the second had us back on the way down to the notch. We were back at camp a little after noon and back at the cars by 5:00.

Jan

**MT. BREWER (13570), NORTH GUARD (13327), SOUTH GUARD (13224)
LABOR DAY WEEKEND, SEPTEMBER 4-6, 1993**

We met Saturday morning at 6:45 a.m. at the Kings Canyon ranger station; it is located at the end of the Kings Canyon road near the Bubb's Creek trailhead. The ranger station opened at 7:00 a.m., and after listening to the ranger's talk about the rules and regulations of the park we received our permit. Our group was on the way by 7:30 a.m. in excellent spirits. The morning sun reflected off the glacier polished rock walls of King's Canyon. It felt good to be back in the Sierras again. We reached the Sphinx Lakes and Bubb's Creek trail junction at 9:00 a.m.; took a five-minute break, ate a snack, and crossed the bridge to the Sphinx Lakes trail. This trail goes south on a granite mountain with polished dark gray rocks. At this point the trail gets steep and the elevation gain starts. You could see the Sphinx mountain throughout the trail. Barbee spotted gooseberries, blueberries, and currants, and identified some flowers all along the trail. At noon we stopped for lunch in a meadow that was full of wild strawberries. The berries were a tasty addition to our lunch. The route to Sphinx Lakes turns southeast from this meadow on a cross-country route following Sphinx Creek. The route traverses some white slabs and continues up the canyon. We arrived at the upper Sphinx Lake at 3:30 p.m.. Dan immediately took a refreshing swim at the lake. He was the only brave person to really take a plunge and enjoy the icy water; the rest of the group looked for a good campsite. Greg and Barbee went fishing and the rest of us enjoyed the scenery. For dinner Barbee fixed an excellent salad, bean dip and trout. The day ended peacefully.

Sunday -- we were up at 5:00 a.m. and on our way an hour later. The first peak to climb was North Guard. From Sphinx Lake, point 10520, we continued up the Sphinx Creek drainage above the lakes to a predominate saddle northeast of point 12393. From the saddle there is a tremendous view of Mt Brewer and South Guard. From the saddle we dropped to an elevation of about 11920 and contour around the ridge between the saddle and Mt. Brewer. We followed this contour-line up the canyon toward the saddle between N. Guard and Mt. Brewer. Looking at the south face of N. Guard there are many chutes; the correct chute is the second chute from the saddle between N. Guard and Mt. Brewer. It is the larger of the two chutes with big slabs of granite at the bottom. We climbed the slabs until we were able to traverse west to the next chute, which is behind a ridge that comes down off the western ridge of N. Guard. The chute you traverse into is sandy at the bottom. Climb this chute toward the west ridge of N. Guard and angle over toward the summit block. The high point is above the east face. This peak is a challenging boulder scramble and a good Class 3 climb. We reached the summit at 11:00 a.m. Some of the group climbed this rock to touch the top of the summit block that extends out over the eastern face, while the rest of the group took photos. After a half hour we descended the mountain and headed to Mt Brewer. We had lunch just below the North Guard and Brewer saddle and were under way at about 12:30 p.m. The route to Brewer is straight forward; we reached the summit at 1:30 p.m. The view was super! However, the clouds to the north and west concerned us as there was some uncertainty as to how fast they were moving toward us. Dan pulled out his favorite chocolate cookies as we helped him celebrate his 10th emblem peak. We spent 15 minutes at the summit of Mt Brewer admiring the grand view. We descended south to the saddle between Mt. Brewer and South Guard with the clouds getting thicker and darker as we hiked down to the saddle heading toward South Guard. Many in the group had mixed feelings about climbing South Guard with the storm approaching our direction. As the clouds continued to move in and thinking safety first we decided to descend and headed back to camp. We dropped down to about 300 feet to the lakes above Brewer Creek. Dan and Eric were determined to climb South Guard by the northwestern slopes. At this point they signed out and headed to South Guard. After a while they disappeared into the clouds. The clouds were hanging on the top of the peaks and ridges. However, no rain, lighting or thunder appeared. While the main group headed for camp, the clouds continued to roll in accompanied by a gentle cool breeze. The panoramic view of the canyons and mountains were majestic. By the time we reached camp at 6:30 p.m., the clouds had all disappeared. The alpen-glow shone at the top of the mountains. We had a quiet dinner and our thoughts were on Dan and Eric. By 8:30 p.m. two dim lights appeared on the upper left side of the lake; to guide them to camp we shone our flash lights toward them. Upon the safe return to camp, Dan and Eric were greeted with

congratulations for making the third peak. We had a good time on this climbing day. This was a hard day for all of us and everyone slept soundly.

Monday -- We slept in late Monday morning and did not get started hiking out until 8:00 a.m. Eric, Dan, Asher, and Rex took off while Barbee, Mirna and Greg took the morning stroll, stopped for pictures, and kept an eye out for gooseberries. Barbee and Mirna picked up three full water bottles of berries. Barbee promised to make jelly. We stopped at Bubb's Creek and Sphinx Lakes' junction where Rex joined us for lunch. Eric, Asher and Dan headed out to get chicken fried steak and pie on the way home.

Participants: Barbee Hoffmann, Rex Hyon, Daniel Richter, Greg and Mirna Roach, Erik Siering, and Asher Waxman.

Thanks to all the participants for making this weekend an enjoyable trip.

Greg and Mirna Roach

Split Mtn., Mt. Prater & Mt. Tinemaha July 23-25, 1993

Jim Adler, Larry Hoak & Kathy Price

This trip began haunted with problems, real and imagined. First I called the Forest Service about road conditions. I was given the impression that high water might block road access. Almost everyone worried about snow conditions. As a result I drove up the previous weekend and scouted the road and hiked in to Red Lake. All stream crossings were trivial (for four wheel drive) and from what I could see there was no snow problem (though not much could be seen from Red Lake).

Meanwhile my original co-leader had to cancel for personal reasons. Fortunately Larry Hoak and Kathy Price who were signed up for the trip agreed to help out.

We started out with 14 people signed up and three more on the waiting list. After cancellations and promoting one from the waiting list, 10 of us met Friday morning at a road junction on the MacMurray Meadow Road just before the start of the four wheel drive portion of the road to the trail head. We consolidated into 4 wheel drives (with which we were well supplied) and drove to the trail head.

We started up the steep short trail to Red Lake. About half-way up, a participant who prefers not to be named developed severe leg cramps and had to turn back. Kathy (who already had Split and Prater) volunteered to escort him out and drive him back to his car (parked in Big Pine) so he would not have to camp at the trailhead for three days. This was the last "problem" encountered on the trip! The rest of the party had a leisurely afternoon at camp on Red Lake. Some of us took swims (brief) in the lake (cold). We had a community ("garbage bag") salad with dinner.

On Saturday morning (6 am) we left to climb Split and Prater. Larry expertly and flawlessly guided us to the top of Split by about 10 am and to the top of Prater before noon. We were back in camp before 4 pm. Snow was not a problem. We had to detour around snow on the way up to the saddle (between Split and Prater) but on the way back it had softened up and we could, in some cases use it as our preferred route. All eight participants got both peaks.

On Sunday morning, everybody but Wim, Kathy (who had rejoined us), and I signed out and hiked back to the cars. The three of us then climbed Tinemaha (great view) before hiking out.

Many thanks are owed to Larry and Kathy for stepping in to co-lead when needed. The entire group was great and contributed to a very successful trip. Participants: Kathy Price, Keith Martin, Paula & Bruce Peterson, Larry Hoak, Eric Lesser, Bruce Rorty, Wim Burmeister, the unnamed participant, and myself. — Jim Adler

Shepherd Pass Trail Party, 10-14 September, 1993 by Campy For People Who Have Better Things To Do Than Read This Trip Report

Eight people showed up. We got our work done and climbed a couple peaks.

Kicking Jurassic. This year the Forest Service obtained mules to carry our camping gear and tools up to Anvil Camp. I asked people to bring backpacks rather than duffles to allow us to carry our own gear out if need be. My instructions were to be at the corral by six am. I arrived at 6:20 and found everybody either waking up or eating breakfast. The owner of the Cottonwood Pack Station is Dennis Winchester. He drove up with his horse trailer and unloaded and saddled his horse and harnessed three mules. We left our packs there to be carried up on the mules.

Good Enough for Government Work. Diana made good on her promise to be there when federal employees go to work. She drove up in her truck at eight and she had the tools with her. We left behind most of the shovels and Mcleods ("McClouds") for the mules and then we took our day packs and drove to the hiker trailhead.

Hairy Chested Animals. Our trail apes consisted of Bill Sampson (2nd time), Scott Kingham (a Sierra Club national trip leader), Bill Holmes (retired Secret Service), Rob Patton, RJ Secor (Assistant Leader), and Mary Sue Miller. I include Mary Sue here and I will hear from her about this paragraph headline no doubt.

She Who Must Be Obeyed. Diana Jo Worman is the Wilderness Manager of the Mount Whitney Ranger District. She has been our help and guidance for the past four years. On the trail she is just "one of the boys".

Motrin Mother. She also had the largest first aid kit. Some of us complained about aches and pains from working on the trail. After hearing this for awhile she began dispensing her ibu-

profen daily. She also kept Bill Sampson supplied with band aids.

A Trail Too Long. Some years ago an Idaho trail builder got the contract to rebuild the Shepherd Pass trail. He and his son followed Forest Service specs and cut a completely new and low angle stock trail up to "Symmes Saddle". This is the place where you can walk 1/4 mile and ascend only 15 feet. The trail replaces a now abandoned hiker trail which is steeper to the saddle and can still be followed, although it is now filled with dead pinecones. The new trail is in good shape. Some rock and debris has fallen into the trail farther in but these can be swept off by a ranger or future trail crews as they pass through. Thick brush above Mahogany Flat will need to be cleared in places where it is beginning to take root in the trail.

A Switchback Too Far. The big effort is near the pass. Switchbacks cross and re-cross steep and always moving scree. Snow accumulation each Winter brings major displacement. The trail builder is to be complimented for cutting down to base rock and dirt. Normally each year new rock has fallen in everywhere on the trail. It's really bad near the ends of the longer switchbacks which extend into the the middle of the actively sliding face. Our great trail maintenance technique is to shovel the debris farther off the ends and hope that we don't cover the trail below us.

We started at the Pass and worked our way down. Too many people were grouped together at first so Bill Sampson and I made the teams "more even" by starting a new team halfway down. Bill shoveled and I scraped with a McCloud. By lunch time both teams had completed two-thirds of the switchbacks.

Fear of Frying. I had rescheduled this trail party away from July because of heavy snow. Then we had great warm Summer months. No snow at all remained in the usual places,

like just below the pass, and it was sunny and warm while we worked. Hot! Bill Sampson and I compared this with our crew in July last year when it snowed and we worked hard just to keep warm. Now we were shaking sweat drops off the tips of our noses.

Perfect Spot for an Industrial Waste Site.

The climb of Junction Peak was beautiful. Last year's route was repeated. From the top of Shepherd Pass we turned west and followed a creek flowing through small green meadows. It comes from a deep lake in a cirque basin between Junction Peak and Diamond Mesa.

The climb of the mountain involved a bad-looking scree chute. It wasn't so bad if a route was taken along a rock rib on the right side. After resting awhile we continued up to the ridge. Here the terrain became interesting. Diana, Rob, Mike, Bill, and I made it up the mountain and the first three climbed the actual summit.

Topless Entertainment.

Four of us went for Mount Tyndall. We chose the north rib which I had not climbed before although I descended it last year. I thought it was steady and easy going and I climbed toward a notch on the right. It was too far to the right and it faced a pinnacle. I hollered down to Rob, Bill, and Mary Sue for them to go left. Only Rob did. Rob came to the summit and the others were still at the pinnacle on the regular west ridge route. They decided to go down that way rather than climb over to the summit.

Drinking and Lovemaking. Brewing perfect coffee is easy at home with a "Mr. Coffee". In camp last year Diana shared some great coffee she made with her imported *Bistro* pot. This time I came prepared with finely ground French Roast coffee and a *Bistro* pot. This pot has a plunger which gets rid of the grounds by pushing them down to the bottom. The French roast is European-tasting and strong enough to "grow hair on your...".

But then Rob showed up with a different tech-

nique. He would come to the kitchen area carrying a bag with all his food, water, stove, and a portable chair. He had everything at hand and he wouldn't ever get up again. He would put a tiny espresso pot on his stove and wait until steam came out the tube. This coffee was pretty dark looking also.

Dances with Small Game.

I got up the courage to ask RJ Secor what the "RJ" stands for. He told me what it was but I don't remember. The J initial is for John. He said that at one time he either thought or merely put on that he had some Indian blood in him. A guy who he told this to was a real Indian and he started calling RJ "Running Jackalope". I think only half of this story is true but I forgot which half.

Critical M-ass.

On the day we were leaving Dennis came up with three mules to pick up our gear. We were working the rockslide below Anvil Camp. When he stopped to talk we asked if we could put our shovels on the mules so we could go down lightly loaded. He said "Well, reach the shovels over to me one at a time. My mules won't let strangers load them and I don't want to have to chase up the hill after them!"

After Purgatory What?

We have a thought that we should assist on other trails. Shepherd Pass is our SPS Adopt-a-Trail but it has been slammed every year and it can hold up for awhile. On 19-20 March 1994 we will still do our weekend there. We'll brush the usual fast-growing riparian and have a nice Saturday car camp. We can leave early on Sunday to get home at a reasonable hour. SASE to Campy.

A year from Now We'll only Remember the Good Parts.

We can do a different trail next year. Diana believes that Cottonwood Pass needs more attention now and this will offer the chance to Climb Mount Langley. We'll schedule this on 8-12 July 1994. Camp will be at Chicken Spring Lake and we'll make time available for daily local hikes. SASE to Campy.

IN HIGH PLACES: GERMANY

Burton A. Falk

In light of the current trend for larger countries to break into smaller ones (e.g., U.S.S.R., Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia), it is heartwarming to those of us collecting national high points to find two countries who have, instead, united--such as the recent case of West and East Germany.

The 9,715' Zugspitze, newly combined Germany's highest peak, is located in the Wetterstein chain of the Bavarian Alps, twelve miles southwest of the German resort area of Garmisch-Partenkirchen and twenty miles WNW of the Austrian city of Innsbruck.

The peak lies on the German-Austrian border, a line which was redrawn after WWII, stripping the Germans of most of their pre-war alpine regions. Indeed, the present national boundary now follows along the northern ridges of the Alps, placing Germany, for the most part, on the "north slope."

Because the Zugspitze and its environs lie so close to metropolitan Munich, the area usually teems with visitors. In addition to an extensive network of trails throughout the region, there is also a plethora of ski lifts and funiculars, many of which operate year around, to transport hikers and skiers up to the alpine heights. On the Zugspitze itself, two cable-cars and, yes, even a railroad are waiting to whisk tourists to the observatory complex on the top and the seven story hotel just below. It is so developed, in fact, that two of the three original summit peaks have been completely built over with structures.

It is, in other words, the proper-thinking Sierra Clubbers very worst nightmare come true.

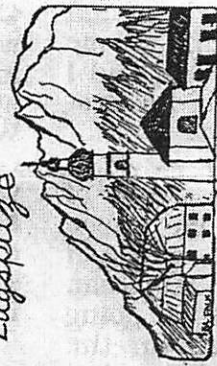
Charlie Winger and I, both suffering from jet lag, arrived in Garmisch-Partenkirchen about noon on the rainy first day of Aug. 1989. Our only clue to climbing the Zugspitze was a copy of Michael Kelsey's, "Guide to the Mountains of the World," and, frankly, that wasn't of much help. During that first afternoon, we toured sports shops, book stores, the tourist information center--we even consulted with the climbing guide at the U.S. Armed Forces recreation center--in an attempt to determine the best and fastest route to climb Germany's highest. The information we gleaned concerned three routes, all of which began in Germany. The first, the Reintal, was long (about 20 km, taking 10-12 hours). Another, the Alpspitze, involved riding a cable car to the top of a mountain of the same name, then traversing a long ridge to the Zugspitze. The last, the Hollental, was semi-technical and, according to the U.S. Armed Forces guide, shouldn't be considered without someone (such as himself) to lead. Because the rain continued and because we were tired to the point of ambivalence, we made the short drive into Austria to see if we could find a better route starting in that country.

That evening we enjoyed comfortable lodging and good food at the Spielmann Hotel in Obermoos, at the lower terminus of the Tiroler Zugspitzebahn, a cable car which climbs the steep western side of the Zugspitze. The next morning--another rainy day--we had breakfast at the hotel, then began the ascent of the grassy ski trail that meanders up the mountain beneath the cable car. Upon

reaching the cable-car's midway station, however, we discovered that a mean-looking snow storm was in progress on the mountain above. We paused to discuss whether or not to attempt the icy second half of the route--watching all the while a herd of chamois feed on the nearby mountain side. And as we sat there, one of the cable car crew, noticing our dripping rain gear and wet packs, hailed us and, pointing first up the trail, then waving his hands back and forth, and repeating "nix" and "nine" several times, explained that the trail was closed above. When we gestured why? he made explosive sounds, indicating, we finally determined, that blasting was somehow involved. Despondent, we hiked back to the hotel. From there, we bagged the peak--much to our chagrin--via the cable car. Later that day we drove deep into Austria, to the base of Grossglockner, that country's highest.

On the evening of Aug. 7th, five days later, Charile and I were back in Obermoos. Because we had climbed both the Glockner and Treglav--then Yugoslavia's, now Slovenia's highest--in good time, we decided to again attempt the Zugspitze before pushing on for the high points of Liechtenstein, France and Italy. Frankly, we were embarrassed about our original method of bagging the peak.

The following morning, Aug. 8th, yet another rainy day, we ascended a ski lift located at the east end of the Austrian resort village of Ehrwald. From the top of the lift, we hiked eastward, gradually ascending the flanks of a prominent east-west ridge, to a junction, Feldernjochl, and from there we crossed the ridge north into Germany at the unmanned border station, Gatterl.



About a mile and a half beyond Gatterl, at a large hut, Knorrhutte, we joined the Reintal (see above) Trail, which leads west from lowland Germany, up the long valley draining the Zugspitze's southern slopes. Although the clouds hung low and it was raining (Charlie was hiking with an umbrella), we could see that the cirque at the head of the Reintal valley, below the Zugspitze, was festooned with ski lifts, no doubt explaining the year-round seven story hotel, the Schneefernerhaus, built into the south-west slopes of the peak. At 3 p.m., reaching the peak's base, we began working up a steep, trail-less scree slope, finally coming across a precipitous trail, blasted out of the limestone and protected by steel cables, leading to the summit. Just before reaching the top, we were enveloped in a thick cloud, much the same as on the day of our initial cable-car ascent. On the summit, the pea soup was so thick that all we could see were the outlines of the maze of telecommunications equipment on the roof of the observatory building. From somewhere out in the mist, cable cars could be heard whizzing by. In our summit photos, our faces are barely discernable.

Since it had grown fairly late by then-- about 3:30 p.m.--and because we were tired, we opted to take the Tiroler Zugspitzebahn back to Obermoos, and from there we rode a bus back to our car parked at the base of the ski lift in Ehrwald. That evening, feeling much better about ourselves, we drove off for Liechtenstein. ODDS & ENDS The Zugspitze stands on the border between maritime and alpine-continental influences, reaches up into the weather-forming layers, an is exposed to intense foehn (fall wind) currents from the south. Weather, therefore, is always an important consideration for the climber. Locals compare the climate at the top to that of the south coast of Greenland.

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Peak Name	Date Climbed	With SPS?	If yes, Leader Name

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 Topanga Cyn, CA, 90290

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