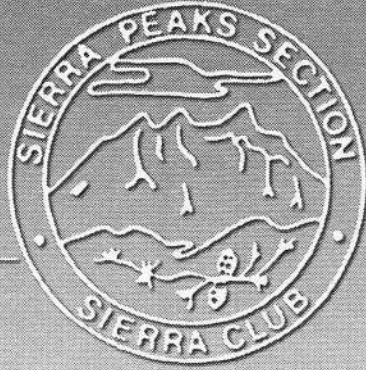


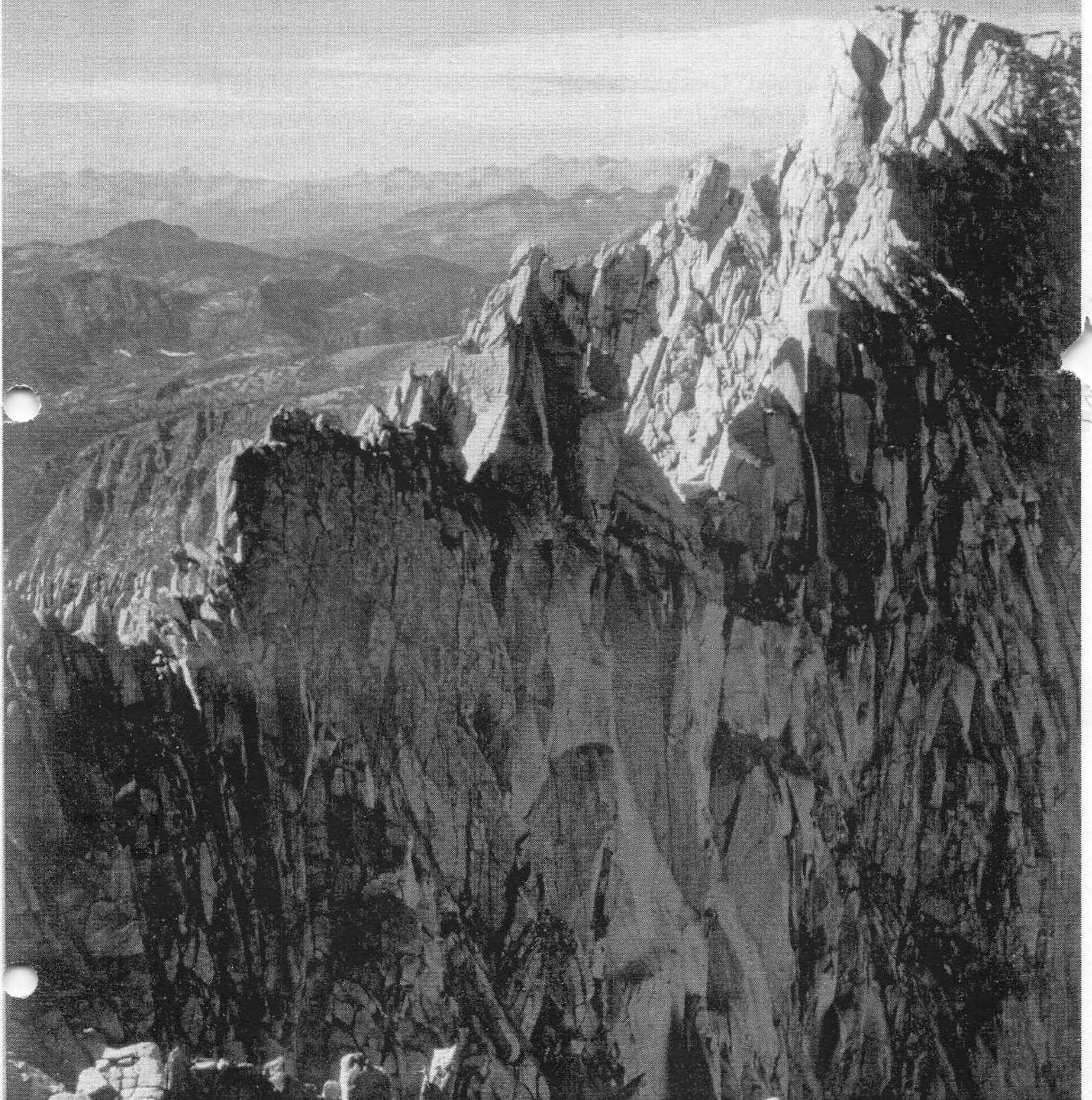
The Sierra

VOLUME 42 NUMBER 6



ECHO

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 1998



SPS MONTHLY PROGRAMS

Sierra Peaks Section meetings will be held in the Los Angeles room behind the cafeteria at the DWP, 7:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month.

Dept. W&P, 111 N Hope St., LA, Free parking on site.

December 9

SPS Annual Banquet Location Greek Orthodox Cultural Center Long Beach. Speaker **Majka Burhardt**. AAI climbing guide, American Alpine Club 1997 Fellowship Award winner, World class mountaineer Co Speaker (Majka's husband) **Eli Helmuth** AAI climbing guide and world class mountaineer.

January 13

Joint Meeting SPS/DPS/HPS/SMS Dan Richter LTC Chair & Bill Oliver LTC co-Chair will present a program on the changes in the LTC and how they will effect the Mountaineering Sections. Great night to socialize and meet old friends or make new contacts from the climbing sections.

February 10

Mingo Morvin climber and nature photographer, will present a program on his experiences while photographing bears in the Sierra.

Attention all trip leaders

Send in your trip write-ups for the next publications of the *Echo*. Also send in photos. We accept photos that accompany an article or identified photos without articles.

FRONT COVER

- ❖
- ❖ **Mt Abott**
- ❖ **By Mitch Miller**

PEAK INDEX

Mt Gould
Mt. Silliman
Homer's Nose
Mt. Henry
Mt. Shasta
Mt. Abbot

SPS T-SHIRTS

Own your own SPS T-shirt. They come in Ash, yellow or light blue in medium, large and x-large. Specify size and color. Cost is \$12 plus \$3 for shipping per order. Buy them from Patty at the SPS meetings and save the \$3 shipping charge. Make check payable to the Sierra Peaks Section. Send your order to: Patty Kline, 20362 Callon Drive, Topanga Canyon, California 90290.

Wilderness Travel Course

Would you like to improve your hiking skills and meet others who share an interest in the outdoors? Have you wanted to learn how to use a map and compass? Would you enjoy learning wilderness travel in preparation for SPS climbs in the Sierra?

The Wilderness Travel Course, a Sierra Club sponsored 10 week program, provides the basic knowledge needed for enjoying wilderness areas. Certified and experienced volunteer Sierra Club instructors teach the classes, which begin in January in four SoCal locations. The program has something for everyone, from the novice to the experienced hiker.

During 10 classroom sessions and 4 field trips, WTC students will gain the knowledge necessary for safe, enjoyable experience in the wilderness. Meetings include lectures, workshops and visual presentations on backpacking, equipment, field navigation, wilderness ethics, first aid, food preparation, winter camping, and safety & rescue.

The course locations are Long Beach, Orange County, San Gabriel Valley and West Los Angeles. The cost is \$150 for SC members.

For information, call 909-980-1210 or send a SASE to WTC Registrar Pat Johantgen at 7661 Haven Ave. #D, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730-1756. Website: www.angeleschapter.com/wtc.

SPS - WINTER TRIPS 1998



See past editions of *The Sierra Echo* for detailed write-ups of trips without full write-ups. Trips previously described are listed with out detailed write-ups in subsequent publications. Note all trips listed as MR or ER are restricted trips open to Sierra Club members only with the appropriate rock or snow skills.

DECEMBER

M/E Dec 12 Sat Rock Workshop, Stoney Point
Ldr. Ron Hudson

I Dec 13 Sun Navigation Workshop and Check Off Warren Point Ldr. Harry Freimanis

RM/E Dec 13 Sun Rock Workshop, Stoney Point.
Ldr Dan Richter, Assts. Pat McKusky, Bill Oliver

JANUARY

M/E Jan 16 Sat. Local Snow Refresher: Ldr : Bill Bradley; Assts.: Qualified Safety Instructors

FEBRUARY

M/E Feb 6 Sat. Annual Baldy Snow Refresher. Ldr : Bill Bradley; Assts.: Qualified Safety Instructors

MARCH

O Mar 10 Wed Climber's Social Hour: Join us for L.A.'s best happy hour before the regular monthly Sierra Peaks Section meeting. Let's show the DPS how to party! Meet at 5:00 pm (or whenever, first one there finds a table) at McCormick & Schmicks in downtown L.A. Send SASE to leader for map, parking instructions, menu. Co-leaders: Ann Kramer, Erik Siering

M/R: Mar 14 Sun Mt Baldy Snow Climb (10,078') Strenuous 3900', 8 miles. Trip restricted to Sierra Club members with ice axe & crampon proficiency. Call leaders for reservation & verification of qualifications. Ldrs. Don Croley, Ray Riley

APRIL

M/R: Apr 3-4 Sat - Sun Mt San Gorgonio Snow Climb (11,499') Strenuous 4600', 16 miles. Sat pack in to Dry Lake and camp, 2100', 6 miles. Sun climb north slope Mt San Gorgonio, 2 miles, 2500' and pack out. Trip restricted to Sierra Club members with ice axe and crampon proficiency. Call leaders for reservation & verification of qualifications. Ldrs. Don Croley, Ray Riley

M-E/R Apr 10-11 Sat - Sun Snow Practice: Location to be announced. Trip restricted to Sierra Club members on good standing with some prior basic training in snow. Prospective SPS/DPS/HPS/WTC leaders and Asst. welcome. Send 2 SASE & resume of recent snow experience to Leader: Bill Bradley; Assts: Qualified Safety Instructors.

O Apr 14 Wed Climber's Social Hour See March write-up. Ldrs. Ann Kramer/ Erik Siering

M-E/R Apr 17-18 Sat - Sun Rock Practice, Joshua Tree: Join the SPS crew for a weekend of brushing up, checking off, or just good practice. Send SASE with qualifications/expectations to Ldr Tina (Stough) Bowman, Assts: LTC Safety Instructors

MAY

M/R May 1-2 Sat - Sun Bloody Mtn (12,544') Sat pack into camp (5 mi, 200' gain) at Laurel Lake. Sun climb mellow, 1500' north couloir to summit. Return to camp; pack out. Crampon/ice axe skills req'd. Send 2 SASE qualifications, conditioning, and experience, H&W phones, SC#, rideshare info to Ldr. Tim Keenan, Asst: Matthew Richardson

O May 12 Wed Climber's Social Hour See March write-up. Ldrs.: Ann Kramer/ Erik Siering

MAY CONTINUED	JUNE CONTINUED
M-E/R May 15-16 Sat – Sun Snow Check-Off Ldrs: Doug Mantle, Bill Bradley.	M/R June 12-13 Sat – Sun Diamond Pk (13,127'), Black Mtn (13,291') Strenuous backpack (6-7 mi., 4000+ feet gain w/pack) & 2 snow-climbs (possibly NE couloir on Diamond). Restricted to SC members, Mountaineer's List or equivalent. Send 2 SASE w/ recent experience & conditioning, SC#, carpool information, \$3.00 trail fee, H&W phones to Ldr. Matthew Richardson, Co-Ldr.: Asher Waxman Possible date change or combine w/ Roach trip
I May 22-23 Sat – Sun Lamont Pk (7429'), Sawtooth Pk (8000'), Sirretta Pk (9977'), Taylor Dome (8802') SPS & K-9 Comm trip. 2 consecutive day hikes of 4 dog peaks in the beautiful southern Sierra. Well-mannered dogs w/ leashes welcome. Sat 4 mi rt, 2000" gain to Lamont & 8 mi rt, 2440' gain to Sawtooth: eve carcamp & Happy Hr. Sun 6 mi rt 2000' gain to Siretta & 3 mi rt, 900' gain to Taylor Dome. SASE w/ carpool info to Ldrs: Julie Rush, RJ Secor	M/R June 19-20 Sat – Sun Mt Ritter (13, 143') Restricted to SC members, snow climb up the "glacier route" of this SPS Emblem Pk. Pack in Sat 6 mi, Sun climb peak and pack out. Possible snow camp depending on winter snow pack. Send SASE with snow climbing, ice axe exper to Ldr: Larry Tidball, Co-Ldr.: Barbee Tidball
May 22-23 Sat – Sun Olancha Pk (12,123') SPS & Wilderness Adventures trip. Moderately strenuous climb of emblem peak in Southern Sierra. SPS introduction trip geared to new SPS climbers and strong WTC students. Sat mike 7 miles, 4200 ; of gain from Sage Flat to base camp at Bear Trap Mdw. Sun climb peak and out. Total gain for weekend 7300' in 21 mi rt. Send 2 SASE, H&W phones, recent conditioning, rideshare info. to Ldr Patty Kline Asst. Jason Lynch & Paul Graff	M/R June 25-27 Fri – Sun Tower Peak (11,503) Too early, too hard (Class 3), but somehow, (restricted to SC members w/ snow experience) send SASE w/ qualifications to Ldrs Doug Mantle, Tina Stough
JUNE	I June 26 Sat Homer's Nose (9023') Ready for a very strenuous dayhike? This is the hike. Long, 22mi rt, 7,000'+ gain to seldom led peak near Mineral King Send SASE with rideshare info, H&W phones and Conditioning to John, Ldrs: John Cheslick, Charlie Knapke
M/R June 5-6 Sat – Sun Middle Palisade (14,040') Restricted SC members w/ CL3 rock, ice axe & crampon exper reqd. 14 mi rt, 6300' gain, Sat backpack to Finger Lk., Sun climb pk via NE face, pack out. Sen 2 SASE, H&W phones, SC#, exper/cond, rideshare info to Ldr. Brad Jensen, Asst: Beth Epstein	M/R June 26-27 Sat – Sun Temple Crag Ldrs Matthew Richardson and Tim Keenan
M June 5-6 Sat – Sun N Maggie Mtn. (10,234') & Moses Mtn. (9320') Backpack 4 miles through redwoods to camp. Climb N. Moses. Sun climb Maggie, with some class 3 rock and pack out. Send SASE to Ldr.: Barbee Tidball, Co-Ldr.: Larry Tidball.	JULY
O June 9 Wed Climber's Social Hour See March write-up. Ldrs.: Ann Kramer/ Erik Siering	I July 3-5 Sat – Mon Silver Pk (11,878') SPS & WTC trip. Moderate climb of pk in Western Sierra.SPS intro trip geared to new & perspective SPSers and WTC students. Sat backpack from Lake Thomas Edison to Devils Bathtub Lake; 6 mi, 1500' gain. Sun do class 2 pk x-country; 8' mi rt, 3000' gain. Community happy hr Sat & Sun. Mon return 6 mi to roadhead. Send 2 SASE w/ recent cond., H&W phones, rideshare info to Ldr: Patty Kline, Co-Ldr: Joe Wankum
M/R June 12-13 Sat – Sun Diamond Pk (13,126') Join us for a spring snow climb in the Sierra Restricted trip for experienced climbers/SC members. Ice axe and crampons required. About 7000' gain and 12 miles for the weekend. Send SASE with exper/cond, H&W phones, rideshare info to Ldr.: Greg Roach, Co-Ldr.: John Cheslick	

1998 SPS Outings

The SPS had a great year for outings. We had 48 outings the went despite El Niño. Two rock workshops are yet to come in December, which will make a total of 50 outings. Last year the total was 52. Of the 50 trips this year, 37 were restricted trips. The SC restricted trips of the last few years under our reinstated insurance have really helped make the SPS the great climbing section that it is. 13 non-restricted trips were led. These are essential too, as a nice way to interest new members. Thank you to every leader who led in 1998. On the next page is a list of leaders with leads first and assists second.: **by Patti Kline**

1998 SPS Leaders

Dan Richter 2/5
Tina Stough 2/4
Doug Mantle 3/2
Patty Kline 4/0
Larry Tidball 3/1
Bill Bradley 3/1
Beth Epstein 1/3
Bill Oliver 0/4
Matthew
Richardson 3/0
Sheryl O-Rourke 3/0

Darrell Lee 2/1
Marc Hertz 3/0
Virgil Shields 0/3
Nile Sorenson 3/0
Tim Keenan 0/2
Greg Roach 0/2
Charlie Knapke 0/2
Ron Hudson 2/0
Barbee Tidball 1/1
Asher Waxman 1/1
Brad Jensen 1/1

Jim Fleming 0/2
Barry Holchin 2/0
Barbara Reber 0/2
Keith Martin 1/0
Patrick McKusky 1/0
Al Conrad 0/1
Randall Danta 0/1
Mike Adams 0/1
John Peterson 1/0
Scot Jamison 0/1
Kim Geminez 1/0

Jerry Keating 1/0
Don Croley 1/0
Nancy Keating 0/1
Erik Siering 0/1
Roy Siley 0/1
Eddie Riveria 0/1
Bob Bruley 1/0
Joe Wankum 1/0
Henry Arnebold 0/1
Barbara Sholle 1/0
Bob Wyka 1/0

Echoes from the Chair

THANK YOU

I want to thank our leaders for scheduling trips in an El Niño year. Many SPS trips were cancelled but I admire those pathological optimists who volunteer to lead our trips. Thanks to the 1998 Management Committee and sub-committees for keeping the SPS moving through the year. **Patty Kline** for coordinating outings and selling merchandise. **Scott Sullivan** for keeping the minutes of our meetings and recording our members' achievements. **Tina Bowman** for keeping the books and maintaining mountain records. **Keith Martin** for organizing our programs. **Pat McKusky** and **Eric Lesser** picked a heck of a year to be Co-Conservation Chairs, but their review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the four USFS wilderness areas of the Sierra was exemplary. **Doug Mantle** and **Duane McRuer** for coordinating our training sessions and serving as Safety Chairs. I have never been sure who our Membership Chair is, but I believe that **Mirna Roach** and **Dan Richter** had something to do with this, and I am thankful that the job got done. **Elena Sherman** labeled and lugged the *Echo* to the post office for us. **Barbara Sholle** for editing the *Echo* with **Barbee Tidball**. **Barbee** not only edited the *Echo*, she also organized our banquet and presented SPS concerns to the Sierra Club's National Board of Directors, the Wild Planet Strategy Team, the Southern California/Nevada Regional Conservation Committee, and the "Whiskey Creek Group," a discussion group of wilderness users concerned with the future of Forest Service wilderness areas in the Sierra Nevada. Her professional representation of our interests resulted in positive outcomes and also enhanced the image of the SPS.

I regret that we disagreed on a few things, but I want to thank everyone for all of their hard work, excellent performance of their jobs, and commitment to the SPS.

Sierraly,



R.J. Secor



Minutes from the SPS Meeting October 14, 1998.

Location: Department of Water and Power downtown LA
Minutes taken by Scott Sullivan

RJ Secor chaired the meeting which started at 7:35pm.

New attendees were introduced.

Minutes of September meeting were read and approved.

Tonight's trivia question is "What is the official name of the highest peak in North America"? Prize is the book "Denali Climbing Guide" by RJ Secor.

Treasurer reports a bank balance of \$4,468.92.

Tina Stough and Tom Bowman were married.

Barbara Sholle finished the SPS list 9/19/98 on Cloudripper.

Eric Lessor gave the conservation report and urged everyone to send letters with the comments on the DEIS plan.

SPS endorses Liz Pomeroy, Bob Gelfand, Paul Sailor, and Armando Soto Mayer for the executive committee election.

Banquet is Dec 9, tickets are \$25.

Patty gave the outings report.

The SPS nominating committee has nominated the following candidates for the fall ballot: Bob Bruley, Eric Lessor, Tim Keenan, Patty Kline, Keith Martin, Matthew Richardson, and Scott Sullivan.

Steve Heslen won the trivia contest with the correct answer of Churchill Peaks.

Sam Roberts presented his program on the John Muir Trail.

October 14, 1998.

SPS Management Committee Meeting

Minutes taken by Scott Sullivan

Attendance: RJ Secor, Tina Stough, Keith Martin, Patty Kline, Scott Sullivan, Barbara Sholle

The meeting started at 6:40pm

September meeting minutes were read and approved.

Treasurer reports a bank balance of \$4,468.92.

Discussed the DEIS plan. We decided that RJ would write a letter from the SPS addressing the following concerns:

potential trail deletion

group size limits for cross country travel

quotas

Programs and room were discussed. The SPS has the room through Nov 98, Keith needs a check to secure the room for future meetings. Tentative program plan is :

March 99 - David Brown

April 99 - Kurt Wedberg

May 99 - Bill Oliver (Mono Lake)

June 99 - ?

Helmets are required at all LTC rock and snow checkoffs.

All emblem pins will cost \$15 from now on.

Voted to endorse Liz Pomeroy, Bob Gelfand, Paul Sailor, and Armando Soto Mayer for the executive committee election. Vote was 3-2 with RJ and Scott against.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30.

SPS Membership Report

December 1998

Achievements !!!

Mitch Miller received his emblem on 7/1/92 on Mt. Brewer.

Ken Olsen received his Senior Emblem on 10/3/98 on Coyote Peak.

Congratulations !!!!! List finisher #52! Larry Tidball finished the list on 10/31/98 on Mt. Gould.

Congratulations !!!!! Doug Mantle became the first SPS member to solo all 247 peaks on 11/20/98.

Welcome !!! New Members

Jim Crouch
2654 Worden St. #96
San Diego, CA 92110

Alice Tseng
6801 Trojan Ct.
Moorpark, CA 93021

Susan Loftus
1278 21st Street
San Pedro, CA 90731
(310) 831-8820

Neil Robbins
22631 Draille Drive
Torrance, CA 90505
(H) 310-540-5089
(W) 310-517-7548

Address Changes

John Bees
6052 Plumas Street Apt C
Reno, NV 89509

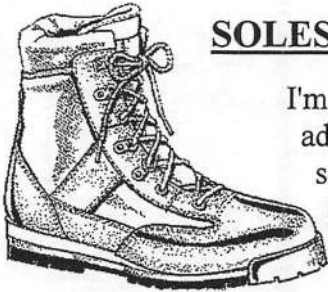
Jay Fuhrman
1567 Paso Robles Court
Camarillo, CA 93012
(805) 389-5323

Barbara and Anne Wright
PO Box 427
Ketchum, ID 83340
(208) 622-6694

1998 SPS Election Results

Ballots were tabulated at the November SPS meeting and Scott Sullivan received the most votes, followed by Tim Keenan, Keith Martin, Matthew Richardson and Patti Kline (not listed in any order). Following the election the 1999 Management Committee selected positions. Patti will be the next SPS Chairperson, Tim Vice Chair and Outings, Matthew Secretary, Scott Treasurer and Keith fifth officer and Programs. Patti will announce the appointed positions in her first "Echoes From the Chair" in the January/February issue of *The Sierra Echo*.

Letters To Editors



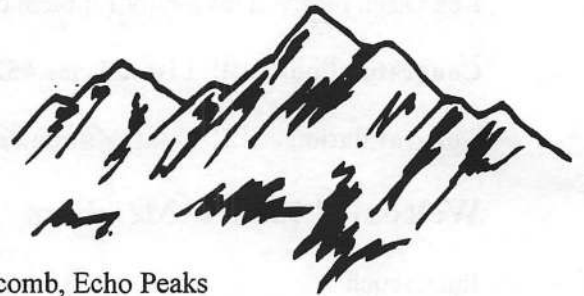
SOLES Wednesday, November 25, 1998

I'm just a subscriber to the Echo. I enjoy the trip write-ups. They are great adventure stories. I am writing in regard to Charlie Knapke's blown out boot sole mentioned in the last Echo: Mt. Keith, Mt. Bradley, Center Peak, Can Somebody Hold My Hand? I don't know if it's just me, and I don't want to sound like a complainer, but there seems to be a trend developing. Hiking boots are becoming increasingly inferior. My Vasque Super Hikers II's didn't come apart, but the sole did separate from the shoe and they are no longer water tight. I had them repaired, but they regressed to their previous condition. The shoes had less than ten miles on them and didn't even leave the L.A. Basin before coming apart. Something serious is going to happen when someone's boot comes apart in a critical situation. An article addressing itself to the best type of boots and where to buy them would be nice. I'd like to hear from the experts (Doug Mantle, the Sholle's, etc.) on footwear, what to buy and where to get it; also, the pros and cons of stitched soles, etc. In the meantime, we need to let the manufacturers of these inferior products that we are not going to take this lightly. I let REI know along with the manufacturer, Red Wing out of Minneapolis, MN.

Yours truly, Steve Gabel

Peak List Comments

As a member of the SPS since its formation, I see some list deficiencies. The mountaineer's peaks were determined by asking all who had climbed 160 peaks or more (before anyone had finished the list) to list the best peaks. Some good peaks were not included because few had climbed them. Some good peaks were also added after that time. There are even some good peaks not on the listyet! (eg. Sentinel Rock, Matthes Crest, The Coxcomb, Echo Peaks high point, Michael Minaret, Polemonium Peak, Angel Wings). The original request was for the best 50 mountaineer's peaks, but then the emblem peaks were separated out by fiat so the remaining mountaineer's list is now 35 peaks.



We now have a large pool of real experts in those who have finished the list. Why not have them give us their best 35? This might result in several changes. When Scylla was replaced as a mountaineer's peak by Charybdis, we made no allowance, but we have been generous in emblem peak "grandfathering". I hope those who would see the peaks they have climbed removed from the mountaineer's list could still count them. I have 16 emblem peaks because I climbed Mt. Sill when it was an emblem peak. Does anyone have 17? (Needham Mtn.) Multiple finishers should get extra "votes".

The original list (I have a copy of the list of 215; 212 of which are still listed) was made up by studying topographic maps, taking only named peaks. In the case of Koip Peak, this led to listing of the wrong peak. The Mono Craters 15' quadrangle 1953 edition shows Kuna Peak as the 12,880+ft hump northwest of Koip Peak. The peak which is labeled Kuna Peak on the new 7 1/2' Koip Peak quadrangle was just an unnamed 12,960+ft peak on the 15' quad, although the old climber's guide used it for the peak. I believe the new map designation of the highest peak as Kuna Peak, at 13,002 says it is the peak.

This is a much nicer peak than Koip Peak; the class 2 route from the latter might even be blocked by a cornice early in the season, making it class 3. Previous peak deletions were not grandfathered into counts on the list but they were minor climbs (Donohue Peak, Mammoth Mtn. and Sherman Peak) and had no peak substituted for them. I recommend allowing prior ascents of Koip Peak to count as climbs of Kuna Peak if this change is made.

by Frank Meyers



Larry leading towards the summit. Photo by Jack Wickel

October 31, 1998 Halloween? Yes. List Finish? Yes!

Mt. Gould (13,005') by Larry Tidball

On Halloween Day a group of 17 accompanied me as I finished the SPS list on Mt. Gould. It was a fine fall day with a few inches of snow remaining from a storm the prior week. (More about that storm later) We assembled in the otherwise empty parking lot at Onion Valley for the leisurely paced hike to Kearsarge Pass, and then on up the slopes to the summit boulders.

As we neared the summit, I asked Barbee (who has been with me on most of the last 90 peaks), and Scot Jamison (who has co-lead many of the peaks with me) to join me at the front of the group. These 2 have been many miles on the trail (and on the road) with me as I whittled down the remaining peaks on the list. It seemed fitting to have them near at hand as I went the last steps.

the easy route up and after ledges, I discovered Doug showing to the base of the final boulder. The and I stood on the, fortunately

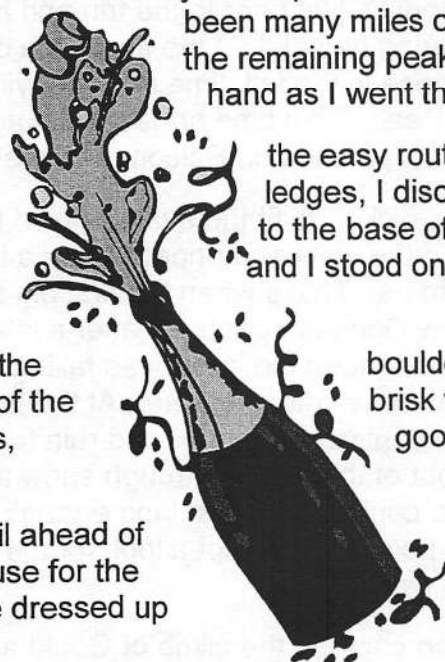
At the summit boulders I missed balancing on narrow snow covered the others the much easier way up summit block was soon mantled melting, icy patch on the top.

boulder we all retreated brisk wind. On the sheltered goodies and the

After congratulations at the base of the down a few hundred feet to get out of the side of the ridge we had our lunches, champagne.

the rest to finish major party and then feasted on

Tina and Tom scooted down the trail ahead of preparations at the Mary Austin House for the combined with Halloween. Here we dressed up a pot-luck dinner.





I had climbed my first SPS Peak, Mt. Whitney as a Boy Scout on the last day of a week-long backpack through the Sierra. Later, I took the Club's BMTC course, and joined the RCS. My first SPS trip was to Mounts Russell and Carrillon led by Bill T. Russell in about 1974.

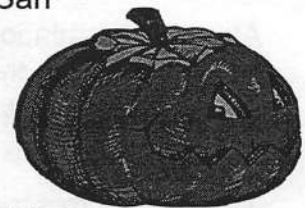
I became a BMTC leader and led some Sierra Peaks as BMTC outings, but was primarily a RCS climber through the late 1970's. During this period I climbed a number of the more difficult SPS peaks while on RCS outings. By the 1982 I was enjoying SPS peaks that weren't technically challenging. That August I participated on 2

outings with Ron Jones (Emerald and Henry, and LeConte and Corcoran). The great time I had on these trips convinced me to begin leading outings for the SPS. Starting with Mt. Williamson in April, from George Creek, for my Emblem Peak.

For the next 15 years I lead outings to the peaks I "needed." As I discovered, the "list" is a way to encourage us to visit places we would not have otherwise gone. Even if the far northern areas are a long drive, they are really different and interesting places. I had not ever planned on finishing the list, but these things have a way of creeping up on you while you are having fun. By the end of the 1996 season, I had 233 peaks and serious planning to save a peak for the finish was necessary. I hoped to have a fall list finish as I have always enjoyed the great Indian Summer days that often happen after an early storm has hit and then melted off.

1997 added only 6 peaks to my count but cleared up several strays and one of 2 real grudge peaks, Mt. Disappointment. I had tried to lead this peak 3 times previously. Once I had my wisdom teeth pulled just prior to the trip and had to cancel. Once on a spring attempt the snow covering had slid off the approach chute and left bare ice and verglas covered rocks. And, once in the fall, time ran out trying to find our way around the difficulties of Balcony Peak. This time armed with longer summer days, and carrying ice axes to bypass the snow patches on Balcony, we made it. 1998 left a few strays to pick up.

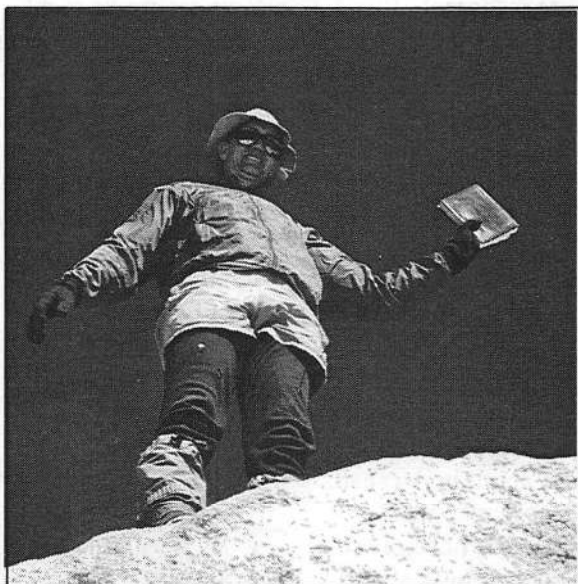
The list finish date was picked to fit the availability of the party site. The penultimate peak, Alta, was to be climbed the weekend prior to allow a long time friend visiting from Singapore to climb with us. That's when the first big storm hit. We were to do the hike of Alta on Sunday to allow Donna to get to us after a late arriving flight in San Francisco. Saturday afternoon the snow was falling rapidly. The road was closed, and Donna never did get there. At the Lodgepole Campground the storm continued to snow and rain for about 8 hours. Sunday we hiked up out of the clouds through snow all the way to the summit of Alta with the clouds lifting just long enough to see that we were truly on the high point and prompt a look for the register can. A fine way to set up the final peak.



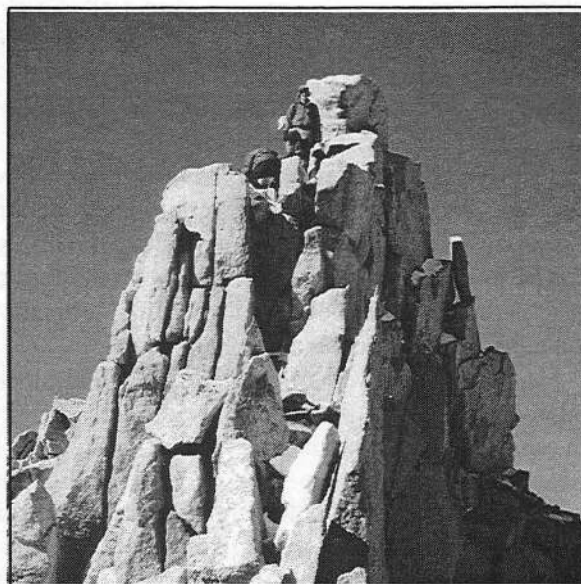
Thanks again to all who came to the climb of Gould and to all who have climbed with me on other days and other places.
Larry



The whole gang ready to hike...7:30 +/- AM Saturday. Photo by Jack Wickel
 Jack Wickel, Mary Sue Miller, Rayne Motheral, Barbara & Dave Sholle, Mary Motheral, Tom & Tina Bowman, Doug Mantle, Mirna & Greg Roach, Rich Gnagy, Larry & Barbee Tidball, Yvonne & Scot Jamison, R.J. Secor.



Larry on the summit of Gould.



The rocky summit of Mt. Gould.

Mt. Silliman - SPS trip Aug. 23-24, 1997

Leaders: Erick Schumacher, Gordon MacLeod

Seven participants (there were 3 no-shows) backpacked from Lodgepole in Sequoia National Park to Twin Lakes Sat. under partly cloudy skies. Original plans had been to camp before reaching the lakes but unfortunately the outlet stream was dry. All seven climbed Mt. Silliman on Sunday, a beautiful Sierra day. From Silliman Pass we proceeded south along the north ridge until the HIGH Class 3 section was reached and then rejected. We dropped down to the canyon to the west, climbed to an easy Class 3 notch above Little Lake and headed east up to the summit. Three newcomers—Scott Noel (who flew out from Chicago!), Stephanie Strobe, and Dave Whittaker—all proved well qualified for future SPS trips. Other participants were Ellen Lady and Barbara Lilley. It is recommended that participant information sheets for trips in Sequoia Park include an advisory to obtain campground reservations for Friday night as far in advance as possible. By Barbara Lilley

!!The List Alone!!

By Doug Mantle



In contravention of my normal punctuality (this took 28 years), I've just finished soloing the List. Our friend Vi would have said, "of course you soloed the List; nobody would climb with you, you've gotten so crabby."

I did it, battered and mashed, November 20th. Well, my car was battered and mashed, squashed between two high school girls' cars the night before in Three Rivers. It and I kept on, though, to an alternate road head for Homer's Nose, where I finished up (seven hours, seven locked gates, 10 "No Trespass" signs, and still much brush). Thanks to Mark Adrian for his (somewhat overly) enthusiastic description.

Now all this actually involved more than 1,000 lone ascents, including a few I'll mention.

Unlike our illustrious Chairman, I figure you have to get to the top to claim a peak. In cases like T-Bolt, the Hermit, and Clarence King that meant pitting modern gear and cunning against my own ineptness.

T-Bolt was the first of these to defend against my sweaty palms. I set the usual summit rope OK (a mesh bag with a pummeled apple within, tied to a string—four tosses). Plan "A" was up figure-of-eight loops. This was dropped as way too scary. I then demonstrated that prussik loops of the same diameter as the main rope (7mm, I cut them from the rope on the spot) do not hold when weighted. Kleimheist Shleimheist, what was that? I surprised myself at how fast I slipped the prussiks upward, faster than my weight forced them back down. Success!

The Hermit was a special challenge. It had chewed me up and sent me home by chopper in 1988, when I was still well below the summit block. Feeling a little like Bilbo Baggins, I buoyed myself with the assurance that, alone, no one would use me as a shoulder stand.

The block turned out to be a pretty simple toss-over-and-anchor-then-ascender-up affair. The only erosion of confidence came when, as I topped out, I noted the four foot rat's nest of rope, which fortunately, had not come undone above me.

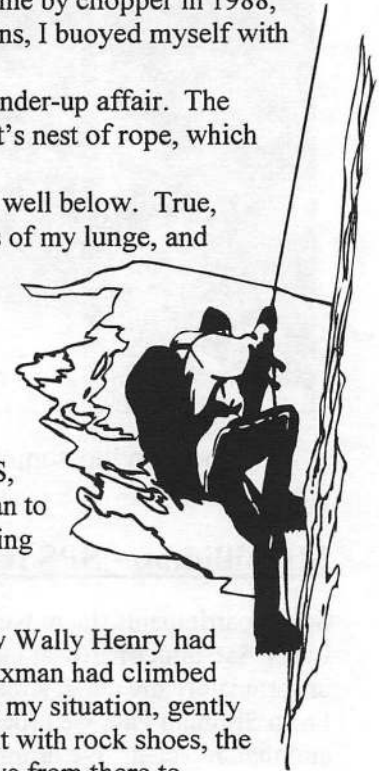
Mt. King was less memorable for the final block, as for the bit of 4th class well below. True, the descent from up top is hideous even with a fixed rope. But my flashback is of my lunge, and both arms groped about an outcrop, feet kicking freely, about five feet to the left of the correct chimney. I was worried most at that point about being seen.

As for the rest, I assume I prevailed out of attrition. The Range itself tired of hurling obstacles at me, like winter, Rangers Randy (I did not kill him) and Kamenchek (if I had the chance), until, by this October, only a few peaks remained.

By then, I had hovered around 240 for five years. Tina and the Bear (CBS, Wed PMs) were moving up fast, 170 or 180 each. The competitive juices began to surge (so long as I had a humongous lead). Barbara had finished the List, leaving me no reason to live (except Larry Tidballs List finish 10/31 and Tina's swell Halloween party).

I had hesitated to lead Starr King again, especially sans rope. Still, I knew Wally Henry had fallen on it and supposedly not slid far (but presumably not uphill), Ascher Waxman had climbed it barefoot (no, thanks). Most compelling of all, my buddy, Doug Bear, noting my situation, gently prodded, "you dummy, it's EASY." Shamed, I went for it. Sure enough, albeit with rock shoes, the peak was a test of steady nerve, more than talent. What was tough was the drive from there to Fresno, to Lake Edison for the next, down, up to Courtwright... well, obsession is a blessed thing.

I recall back in 1982 Greg Vernon grilled me even about finishing the List a second time ("why did you do that?") Then, this finish probably qualifies me for the asylum. Good, though.



In High Places: High Points and Elderhostels

Burton A. Falk

Note: This article is intended for those SPSers who have reached the golden age of fifty-five--and/or for those who someday hope to join our "dog-eared, but still dogged" legions.

It was fellow peakbaggers Rayne and Mary Motheral who, five or six years ago, first made my wife Jo and me aware of the Elderhostel concept. They had attended an EH session in Valdez, Alaska; another in Lafayette, LA, on Cajun culture, and a third in New Orleans, and had enjoyed them immensely. A year or two later, on a cruise, we met a retired Superior Court judge, who also extolled the virtues of Elderhostel, and who additionally presented us with several old catalogs, listing the enormous range of sites and courses of instruction available. Requesting inclusion on the Boston-based, non-profit organization's mailing list, Jo and I then spent the next two years studying the frequent publications, wondering just how much we could expect from a Sunday p.m through Friday p.m. course of instruction, with lodging and boarding included, for an average cost of \$375 per person.

Finally, in April of 1997, we decided to take the plunge by signing up for an Elderhostel session to be held in Branson, MO. To hedge our bets we also planned several other activities during our week in the Ozarks, including a climb of the high points of Missouri & Arkansas, and visits to several friends in the area.

The good news is that we need not have been concerned about any aspect of our Elderhostel experience. The six day session was filled with a series of interesting speakers, slide shows, field trips, an evening show at one of the numerous

Branson theaters, and even a descent into a local cave. We learned that the Ozarks are not mountains at all, but rather a large, uplifted plateau (formerly an ocean bed, accounting for the limestone in the area), now dissected, and that, although the region lies mainly in Missouri, it also extends into Kansas, Oklahoma and Arkansas before gradually sloping down to the surrounding plains. To the north, the boundary is generally considered to be the Missouri River.

The site of our Elderhostel was the Lakefront Resort on the banks of Lake Taneycomo (a couple of doors upshore from the mansion of romance writer--and plagerist--Janet Dailey), where we participants were housed in modest cabins scattered among spring green lawns, stands of budding trees and beds of flowers just beginning to blossom forth. The meals, served buffet style, were both hearty and tasty.

The following journal entries describe our high point ascents:

MISSOURI
Sunday, April 6.
This morning (prior to registering in Branson), we meander along scenic early spring back roads, via the

small town of Ironton, to the end of State Highway CC, trailhead for 1,772' Taum Sauk Mtn., the high point of Missouri. To our pleasant surprise we discover we aren't required to locate and ask permission of a local farmer, as suggested in our two Highpoint Guides, to cross his property to gain the summit. It seems that the State of Missouri has recently acquired some or all of the farmer's property, and has constructed a parking lot, a picnic area, complete with restrooms, and a 1,000 foot long concrete pathway leading to the boulder marking the state's highest point. This trailhead also provides access for the 33 mile long Taum Sauk section of the Ozark Trail, which looks as if it would make a beautiful hike either a bit later in tribe spring or in the fall. At this time of the year, and at this elevation, however, the trees, all of which are deciduous, have not as yet

This article includes a report on the following state high points:
Arkansas - 2753' Mt. Magazine
Missouri - 1772' Taum Sauk Mtn
North Carolina - 6684' Mt. Mitchell
Tennessee - 6643' Clingmans Dome
Virginia - 5729' Mt. Rogers

Highland State Park, it soon deteriorates into a miserable network of unsigned use trails, one of which, marked with dabs of white paint, is the Appalachian Trail. This excursion proves to be difficult going for Jo, who has a sore ankle, but we finally reach the summit and return to the car even though it takes us 6 hours to do so.

We enjoyed this North Carolina Elderhostel so much that I was inspired to write an article describing our experiences for friends, relatives and members of the excellent Junaluska Elderhostel staff. Recently, I was notified that my piece would be included (although shortened), as a forward to the Elderhostel Fall 1998 U.S.A. catalog. The cartoon illustration from that forward accompanies this article.

Postscript: Since the two EH sessions described above, Jo and I have attended a third in May 1998 in San Francisco, which consisted of a series of excellent lectures on the history, art and architecture of that city, two bus tours, and housing and meals at two older but well-maintained hotels, located only two blocks from Union Square. In addition, we attended a fourth in July 1998 in Mason City, IA, Jo's hometown, an absolutely delightful session, which included classes on favorite son Meredith Willson of "Music Man" fame, and Prairie School Architecture (M.C. has three Frank Lloyd Wright buildings). On the way back to CA we bagged the high points of IL, IA, ND, SD, NE and CO.

A SELECTED LIST OF OTHER U.S. ELDERHOSTEL PROGRAMS OF POSSIBLE INTEREST TO SPSers. (And keep in mind there are a multitude of International Programs as well)

The programs and their venues listed below were or will be presented in 1998. In most instances these programs will be repeated at approximately the same time each following year.

Site: Alaska Pacific University (Anchorage) and Denali National Park.
Time: July Cost: \$1140/person
Program: Thirteen day session covering: 1.) The Geology of South central Alaska, 2.) Alaska Natives: Their History and Their Culture, 3.) Traditional Uses of Alaska Plants, and 4.) The Wildlife and Natural History of Denali.

Site: Squaw Valley Academy, Lake Tahoe, CA
Time: June Cost: \$440/Person
Program: Six day session entitled, "The Sierra Nevada, John Muir's Range of Light"

Site: Episcopal Conference Center, Oakhurst, CA
Time: July Cost: \$390/person
Program: Six day session including: Geology of the Sierra Nevada; California's Mother Lode; Yosemite Educational Photo-op Trip

Site: Feather River College (Quincy, CA)
Time: July Cost: \$390/person
Program: Six day session covering: Fly Fishing and Water Ecology; Hiker's Geography of the Sierra Nevada; Wildlife Exploration

Site: Colorado State University, Pingree Park Campus (Bordering Rocky Mtn., N.P.)
Time: July Cost: \$390/person
Program: Six day session covering Adventure Hiking in the Colorado Rockies and Navigational Skills for Mountain Hiking and Orienteering

Site: YMCA of the Rockies, Estes Park, CO
Time: Sept. Cost: \$395/person
Program: Six day session on "Hike the Rockies: An Adventure in Natural History and Heritage"

Site: Volcano Art Center (Volcanoes N.P. & Kona, HI)
Time: Sept. Cost: \$1,075/person
Program: Thirteen day session, first half at the N.P., including: Volcanoes, Calderas, Craters and Cinder Cones; Our Hawaiian Rainforest, and Pele—A Living Goddess. Second half at Kona covering: A Cultural History of Kailua-Kona, In Harmony with the Land and the Sea (re: ancient Hawaiians), and Kamehameha

Site: Ricks College, Badger Creek, ID
Time: Aug. Cost: \$445/person
Program: Horse Packing on the West Slope of the Tetons

Site: Teton Science School, Grand Teton, N.P., WY
Time: Sept. Cost: \$445/person
Program: Day Hiking Adventure: Geology/Geothermal Features of the Tetons and Yellowstone

To be included on the EH Mailing List write:
Elderhostel, 75 Federal St., Boston, MA 02110-941

begun to leaf out.

Following our easy stroll to and from the high point, we drive on to Branson.

ARKANSAS, Tuesday, April 8 Jo and I play hooky from the EH session today (attendance is not mandatory; there are no tests, nor is there any academic credit) so that we can drive into neighboring Arkansas to bag Magazine Mountain, that state's 2,753' highpoint. We start off just after 9 a.m., driving south through Hollister (home of the College of the Ozarks), and reach the Arkansas border within 10 or 15 minutes. This morning the weather is cloudy and cool, and about an hour into the drive, it begins to rain. In Harrison, AK, we leave U.S. 65, and continue south on SR7, discovering that the road becomes more mountainous as we proceed. We pass through Dogpatch (where dogwood and red bud are in full bloom), and we are soon deep in the rolling hills of the Ozarks. Spotting stacks of canoes along the banks of the Buffalo River, we are reminded--with a shudder--of the film "Deliverance." At 12:30, reaching the town of Dardanelle, we turn west on SR22, a country road lined with poultry farms. Proceeding on to Paris, we turn south on SR309, heading once more into the mountains. Eighteen winding miles later we park at the entrance to the Cameron Bluff Campground, where, donning the ponchos we purchased earlier in the morning, we wend our way up the half-mile, switch-backed trail to the flat summit of Magazine Mtn. Pausing only a few minutes at the top, we are delighted to spot patches of violets springing up through the sodden ground cover of the still winter-bare forest.

Since this first Elderhostel turned out so well, and because it served as such a convenient base for bagging high points, we decided to do another in October 1997.

Our second session was convened at Lake Junaluska (Junaluska and Sequoia both being famous Cherokee chiefs) Assembly, a pleasant resort and convention center situated in a small valley in the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains, about 40 miles west of Asheville, NC. The three topics to be covered were: "Revelation--The Most Misunderstood Book of the Bible," "Dreams: Visions of the Night," and "The Flora and Fauna of the Great Smoky Mts." To our delight, the accommodations and the lecturers were even better than those in Branson, and the

meals were downright excellent--in fact, the best cafeteria style meals we've partaken anywhere.

Journal entries regarding our ascents:

NORTH CAROLINA, Sunday, October 5 After brunch on the outskirts of Asheville (NC), we make tracks for Mt. Mitchell, via the Blue Ridge Parkway. Leaving our car about a mile below the summit, we begin to walk along the road toward the peak (Oh yeah, we're exercise freaks). Even though we are over 6,000' in elevation (Mt. Mitchell, by the way, is the highest point in the U.S. east of the Mississippi River), the day is quite warm, and soon we have stripped off everything that is decent to strip off. On the 6,684' summit we find an observation tower, next to which lies the grave of Dr. Elisha Mitchell, for whom the peak was named, a professor from the University of North Carolina, involved in the early exploration of the area, who, unfortunately, fell to his death nearby in 1857. At the top of the tower we meet a local who explains that, although we can see for 10 or 15 miles today, usually the visibility is much less due to the region's natural haze.

After taking a trail back to our car, we leave for Lake Junaluska for a late afternoon registration.

TENNESSEE, Wednesday, Oct. 8 We devote our one free afternoon to driving, via the Blue Ridge Parkway, to Clingmans Dome, Tennessee's highest, located in the Great Smoky Mountain Nat'l Park. Pulling into the large parking lot below the peak, we join a continuum of tourists (This peak is reputed to be the most visited high point in all fifty states) in making the hike to the observation tower at the 6,643' summit and back (a mile in total), all of which takes about an hour. Unfortunately, many of the balsam firs in this area (relics of the Ice Age) have been killed by an infestation of moths, so the forest has a kind of burned over appearance.

VIRGINIA, Saturday, Oct. 11 This morning (following the session) we drive east from Abingdon, VA, though some of the most spectacular fall scenery I've ever seen (keep in mind I'm a native Southern Californian, now living in Palm Desert, where the primary natural vegetation is creosote bush). About 11:30 a.m., we begin our 8 mile round trip hike to the summit of Mt. Rogers, VA's 5,729' high point. Although the route starts out on a good trail in Grayson

Mt. Henry October 3-4, 1998

Doug Mantle and Tina Stough Bowman, Co-Leaders

Seven of us—John Jensen, Susan Loftus, Barbara and Dave Sholle, Erik Siering, and the two leaders—met Saturday morning at the trailhead on the southeast side of Courtwright Reservoir (about two hours from Fresno). Most were ready to go at 6:30 and ready to get moving in the 30 degree air. The plan had been to hike all the way to Lower Indian Lake, but we changed and camped at the crossing of Post Corral Creek instead a little ways back from the stream where there was a nice fire ring and log to sit on as well as good campsites. Having very quickly set up camp, we continued on the Hell-For-Sure Pass trail and onto the Indian Lakes trail, leaving camp about 10:15 and getting to Lower Indian Lake just before 1:00.

After a quick lunch, we left the now faint trail for Mt. Henry. Barbara, basking in the glory and lack of compulsion of having finished the list two weeks before, decided not to climb Henry and started back to camp. Dave soon decided to join her. The rest of us made good progress to the west ridge and slope of Henry, finding one or two easy class 3 moves working up to the ridge, which we avoided on the way down via a chute, dubbed John's chute because he had spotted it on the way in. We were on the summit by a little after 3:00, arriving sooner than projected. The clouds, which

had begun gathering about lunch time, lifted and drifted away so that we could enjoy outstanding views of Goddard, Darwin, Humphreys, Abbot, and many other peaks. Since we had a long way to go however, we did not linger on the summit after congratulating Susan on her sixth Sierra peak and eligibility to join the SPS. On our way back to Lower Indian Lake, we passed the Turf Lakes and Davis Lake for a little variation from our route up.

We made good time back to camp, arriving at about 6:45 and being delighted by the campfire Barbara and Dave had started. Not only did we share food goodies (or good foodies) around the campfire but also reports on various Henrys such as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (we booed his poetry) and Henry James. We estimated that we covered 22 miles on Saturday with 5600' gain—a lot, but we were pleased to have the prospect of an early return on Sunday. Once snuggled in our sleeping bags we were serenaded for a while by coyotes enjoying the nearly full moon, quite nearby.

Sunday morning we left camp a little after 7:30—luxury!--and got to the cars in about three hours. This was the last scheduled SPS climb of the season, a successful and pleasant finale with good hiking, good conversation, good friends.

Rockslide Closes Portion of Yosemite

Wednesday, November 18, 1998

A rockslide plummeted 3,000 feet from the Glacier Point Apron in Yosemite National Park to the valley floor Monday at 5:05 p.m. No one was injured, but 500 employees and visitors were evacuated from the area.

The Apron is a popular camping spot located just above Curry Village, a small lodging area in the east end of Yosemite Valley. Rangers immediately searched and evacuated the Curry Village. Everyone known to be in the area has been accounted for.

The visitors were relocated to other overnight accommodations.

The Curry Village area was expected to remain closed for 48 hours, or until technical advisors determine it is safe to reopen. Technical advisors were assessing the area Tuesday.

Rockfalls are common in the park, according to park officials, and are part of the natural processes of Yosemite. Injuries and damage from rockfalls are

rare. However in July 1996, near the Happy Isles Nature Center and bridge a more than 30,000-ton piece of rock fell from the Glacier Point Apron. The impact was enough to create an air blast that felled



nearly 200 trees. The falling trees killed one person and injured several others.

For more information, contact Yosemite Headquarters, (209)372-0200.

MT. ABBOT (13,704') AND MT. DADE (13,600+')

September 19 & 20, 1998

A Private Trip, by Mitch Miller

My unfinished business with Mt. Abbot dated back to 1984 when about 21 people turned back after a falling rock cut one participant's forehead. Three years later my friend and I turned back from the north couloir upon realizing we would later be downclimbing steep, hard snow without ice axe or crampons. The trickle of loose stones dropping provided ominous background to our decision. Ten minutes later, rockfall in that very same couloir sent dust flying hundreds of feet up the precipitous east face of the Sierra crest. We never knew if careless climbers were above. The previous day the party camped beside us successfully completed the southeast buttress route.

Thus it was I chose to not return to the couloir, but attempt the southeast buttress of Abbot. Two weeks before the trip there were two; Linda McDermott and myself. This would be Linda's 10th SPS emblem peak, and my 13th. Richard Whitcomb signed up and called to express a desire for Mt. Dade. I packed more E.R.G. Non-member Paul Sue enjoyed our August climb of Middle Palisade enough to join on. Saturday morning at Mosquito Flats Linda said she had spoken with Ron Bartel and Gary Craig who expressed an interest in joining the group. Ron had summited Abbot twice before, including by way of the north couloir. We set out at 8:15 and pitched camp at Treasure Lakes at 10:30.

Linda and Ron have climbed Mt. Dade. She fished while he scouted and compared Abbot's routes. Paul elected to rest up for Abbot and casually wandered about the landscape, including Dade Lake. At noon, Gary, Richard and I headed for the Hourglass route; 40 degrees of snow hardening with autumn's approach. Gary only learned Friday afternoon he was not going to climb Red Slate and Red and White when he arrived at Ron's. He borrowed crampons from Linda. Gary found the fit poor and stashed them in his pack. I stashed mine on some rocks and joined Gary in a traverse left to the less-sunlit snow, then right to a moat beside a towering pinnacle. We chopped steps as we went. Richard assuredly cramponed upward to the lowest rocks. Meanwhile, Gary and I invented routes over and around the loose crud between a six foot high wall of ice and a steep rock face.

It was nice to leave the ice axes at the saddle where we viewed a lake which was part newly-frozen and part Arctic; huge slabs of turquoise and

white ice tainted with pink algae, cracked and rising against one another. Skeletal shadows of chaotic gendarmes crept down a steep, bright wall of snow behind the lake. Westerly winds picked up just to the point where my nylon shirt was too cool and my thermals too warm. After a bit the boring scree turned to class 2 rock climbing and we got there. What a sweet view to Mt. Abbot. The jagged crest plummeted away from our feet then repeatedly soared and dropped on its course to Sunday's objective. Lake Italy sparkled in sunlight and the Coast Range pierced through Central Valley haze on the western horizon. Upon viewing the southeast buttress we three agreed the north couloir really couldn't be all that bad, and certainly not that vertical! I divorced my mind from the work ahead, wishing I'd carried my crampons higher.

The descent was notably more exciting, difficult and heart-stopping. Back at the top of the shadow-cast Hourglasses' snows Gary and Richard settled down to don crampons, and I began the work of downclimbing as safely as I could. This meant turning my face to the slope and alternately pinching suncups, kicking steps and slamming my pick into the ice, then lowering it. My whole world became the ten or so square feet of white before me. At the occasional generous foothold I'd peer down at the bottom that seemed to draw away rather than closer. The next event happened rather suddenly. I heard a commotion above and glanced up to see Richard sliding towards me and Gary shouting 'arrest!' Richard's course was more to my side than I realized at first. Nearly even with me, he managed to take control of his axe, turn and bury it into the snow coming to a safe stop, to everyone's relief.

We were back in camp at 5:15 p.m. where some of us enjoyed Linda's golden trout catch. A new moon September night brought the Milky Way seemingly closer and Jupiter burned a hole in the morning sky. High, variable winds and my altimeter's rising digits signaled something was meteorologically afoot. Morning brought Richard's announcement that his Hourglass slide pained him enough to pass on Abbot. We other five left late at 6:45 a.m. to allow sunlight to soften the north couloir snows. It was strange to view that icy gash in the crest again, having never wanted to return. At the final rocky rest stop Ron elected to sit this one out; he'd been there twice and was without crampons. Paul carried the rope to belay Gary while

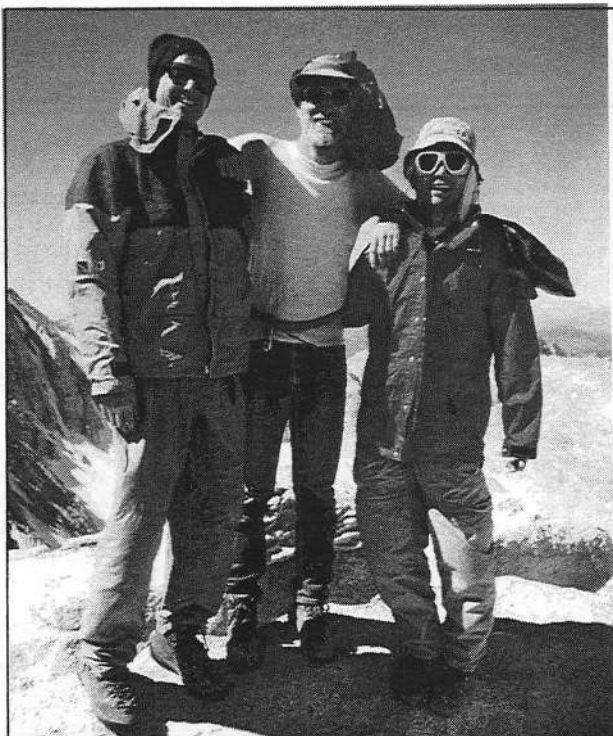
Linda and I crunched our boot nails into the hard stuff. I had created new holes in the crampon straps and enjoyed the added security. I also learned part of a leader's responsibility is to change the subject when the subject drops very steeply and far below.

It wasn't long and we were all four beyond the path hospitably cut across the couloir, and stashing crampons below the sifting rock ledges. Two climbers who had recently appeared several hundred feet below us on the snow field were by now at the base of the northeast buttress, apparently without crampons, ice axes or rope, and moving very slowly. Meanwhile, we four enjoyed the stable class 3 rock we found between the fidgety stuff. It was a good day to be 6'2" and enjoy long stretches. Route finding was easy with Ron directing traffic from below with arm signals, and plenty of cairns nicely leading the way. Up on the skyline we stashed helmets and the one axe we'd taken just in case. We celebrated a little prematurely. I soon noticed what appeared to be some challenging territory ahead.

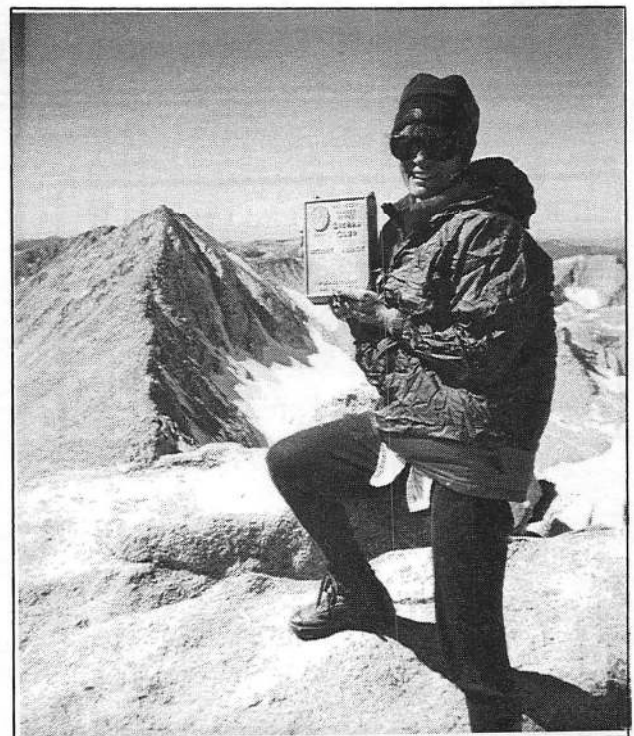
But from there it became really fun and thrilling. A brief class 1 walk-up transitioned to class 3 down and following cracks and slabs on the west side above big air over Upper Mills Creek Lake. Next came ledges up and over the crest and along the east side, just past the barrier at the top of our couloir. Then it was back to the ridgeline for

the final walk-up. It was really good to at long last see that steel case embossed "Mount Abbot". Views encompassed Mono Lake, Yosemite, Mt. Whitney, well into Nevada and generally lotsa great places. All were smiles and our camera shutters blazed. Linda passed out wonderful summit brownies which disappeared without problem. She commented she does not need any more Sierra peaks. I give her until June. I told Abbot goodbye and that I would not be back. Oh, maybe not this millenium.

The down-climb included a meeting with the other two climbers, one of whom looked really spent. The stronger one had the pack and pronounced his dizziness. The weaker individual asked about the peak's whereabouts. We pointed out it was the rather obvious hulk behind us. Paul broke the news they had another hour to summit. Very fast clouds jettisoned east above the peak. We departed and accomplished our descent of the scree-dappled ledges without incident, taking turns passing through the looser areas so not to bop anyone on the head. The remainder went well and all were back at the cars no later than 5:45, in blustery autumn-like air; clouds spilling through passes, and summits having disappeared in the fog. Next time, I carry SASE's for the strangers of whose fate we may forever wonder. But for now, many thanks to all who participated for their camaraderie and motivation!



Mitch Miller, Gary Craig, Paul Sue - Mt. Abbot
Photos submitted by Mitch Miller



Linda McDermott on her 10th SPS emblem peak.

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