



Newsletter of the Peak Climbing Section, Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter

November 1990

Vol. 23, No. 11

Next Meeting

Date: TUES. Nov. 13

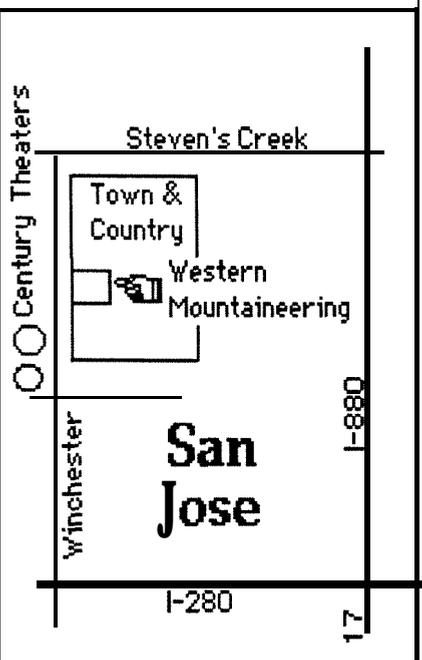
Time: 8:00 PM

Location:

Western Mountaineering
Town & Country Shopping Ctr
San Jose

Kai tells us how he spent his summer vacation with the fabulous boulder babes and how they leveled the high peaks of the Evolution region.

Let's see if Kai is really a 'rapper.' (See trip report, Page 3)



Haiku from Henry

Ray Stafford, judge of the **Scree** Haiku contest, sent along a few of the entries from Henry Bugato. Presumably Ray needs a bit more time (and perhaps entries) before he is ready to offer his opinion on the winner.

Although not all of the following haiku follow the 5-7-5 rule, they are all in the spirit of the style: simple and evocative of the natural world around us.

skillful feet balance
on gray-white tipping boulders.
Wind dies in a cirque.

Blue line crosses black on a map.
The creek cascades
into our base camp lake.

Summit wind chills cheeks.
Descending noses are filled
with warm whiffs of mint.

We climb, we eat lunch.
A pica squeaks as we leave
pink steps in the snow.

Max, Center For the Rest of Us

If you are not in the elite (independently wealthy, retired, goof-off, etc) group of people who can patronize places open only on weekdays between 8AM and 4PM (such as USGS in Menlo Park) then the recently opened Map Center in Santa Clara will definitely be of interest to you. The Map Center is at 63 Washington St., Santa Clara, CA 95050. Its phone number is 408-296-MAPS. It's open from 8AM to 6PM on weekdays and 10AM to 4PM on Saturdays.

The Center stocks almost all California 7.5", 15" and 1:250,000 topo maps as well as the Forest Service maps. It also has maps for many regions of the world and a good selection of outdoor books from Wilderness Press and others.

They can ship you the maps if you know what you want. Phone orders with credit cards are accepted, and Manager Angel Ventura assured me that orders received before noon are shipped the same day via U.P.S.

--Dinesh Desai

Upcoming PCS Trips

Dec 1-2

Junipero Serra Peak (5862')

Class 1

Ventana Wilderness

Leader: Aaron Schuman

415-494-3299H (before 9 PM)

415-335-1901W

Obsessed with variety, I rarely repeat a trip, but Junipero Serra is an exception. As the highest height in Ventana, JS Peak sometimes bears winter snow and often offers a huge vista from the ocean to the Sierra Nevada. Car camp at Waterless Memorial Park, just outside of beautiful Hunter Liggett Military Preserve on Saturday, and day hike the peak on Sunday. Rain postpones this trip because the roads in Hunter Liggett are prone to washing out.

Dec 8-9

Pt Reyes Backpack to Coast Camp

Class 1

Leader: Anita Stewart

415-965-2293

Needs coleader.

Dec. 15 (Saturday)

Mt. Tamalpais

Class 1

Leader: Debbie Benham

409-945-8030

A holiday hike of about 10 miles. Leaves at 9:30 AM from Mt. Home parking area, towards East Peak, then round to Potrero Meadow. Bring water, lunch, and dessert to share. Call for carp001 information.

Desert Trips

Steve Tabor sent along a schedule of trips sponsored by a group called *Desert Survivors*. Described as: an *affiliation of desert lovers committed to experiencing, sharing, and protecting desert wilderness wherever we find it, they have an extensive schedule of winter trips planned. For instance:*

Nov. **10-12**, Stepladder Mtns. Backpack (Class 2 peak)

Nov. **9-11**, Cosos Petroglyphs and Red Rock Canyon (Class 1)

Nov. 22-25, Little Chuckwalla Mtns Backpack Loop (Class 3 for Chuckwalla Peak)

Dec. 7-9, Traverse of Cima Dome (Class 1)

Dec. 22-25, Anza Borrego Car camp (Class 2 for peak)

Membership dues are \$10/year. Members receive a quarterly newsletter, *The Survivor*, plus seasonal trip schedules. Dues also support wilderness preservation efforts. Steve can be reached at 415-357-6585. The club address is P.O. Box 20991, Oakland, CA 94620-0991.

The trip schedule is exemplary. Along with the usual information, it also gives length of hike and driving distance from Bay Area to trail head.

Upcoming Private Trios

Nov 18

Pinnacles

Class 1

Leader: Greg Schaffer

408-996-3637

Dec 26-30

Central Oregon Ski

Mountaineering

Leader: Eugene Miya

415-961-6772

Lost and Found

Looking for a Route

Jim Mulherin is looking for someone who knows the Class 2 route up the southwest slope to Mt. Henry on Le Conte Divide from Fleming Creek. He says he couldn't find a way that wasn't either exposed (Class 3+) or prey to falling rock. If you can help him, he can be reached at 408-427-2219.

Looking for a Partner:

Emmet Valentine is looking for a mountaineering partner for intermediate level Class 4-5 routes in the Sierra. He lives in Modesto and can be reached at 209-526-0422.

Found a Co-Leader

Kai Wiedman wishes to announce that Larry Sassler has risen to the challenge and will be the co-leader for Kai's February 16-18 bid for Mt. Shasta's summit.

Trip Reports

Evolution Basin Base Camp, July 7-15, 1990

Participants: Kai Wiedman, Debbie Bulger, Dody Domish, Vereni Amsbaug, Kate Ingvoldstad, and Kris Shural-eff.

Saturday morning we grouped at North Lake and Kai announced that John Rollings would not be joining us. As he was the other 4th+ class leader, the climbing party logistics were altered and Vereni, Kate and Kris left their harnesses in the car.

The group photo taken and the weights of the packs with the week's supply of food compared, we headed off to and finally over La Marc Col. The route was laced with Shooting Star, Lupine, Columbine, and Heather. We set up camp about 100' above the lake at the base of Mendel. Kai and Vereni, suffering from 'altitude,' turned in early.

Kai, Kate, Debbie and I headed for Darwin early the next morning via the northeast ridge. After the approach we were immediately met with a Class 4 chimney. Kate, not having her harness, returned to camp. The loose rock proved to be the introduction to a day's climbing, repeatedly described as 'iffy and dicey.' Humming birds occasionally buzzed at multicolor poly pro. We proceeded on the circuitous and tedious route to the second major wide chute

which was to lead us the last 200' to the summit. It had been slow going and now was 3 PM. Unsure of which route we would be taking back and not wanting to do any rappelling or retracing of the long approach in the dark, we decided to scrap the summit. Throughout the day there had been continued reference to the 'death rap' to be conquered in descending our first pitch. Rap, rap?? When we arrived and peered down, Kai was the first to get the beat:

"Come now, ladies, let's get on down.

We've done enough of this fussin' around.

Back at camp is a meal by Vereni.

If we don't keep movin', we won't get any.

Flake that rope. Give me those slings.

Woudn't it be great if we had wings?

I'll set the anchor and toss the rope.

We'll Class 4 rap, off this slope.

Back on off. You're on rapel.

When you get down, give a yell."

To the right of the chimney is the route we sought,

To keep Kai's rope from getting caught.

First went Deb and then went Dode,

Then descended Kai in a cruisin' mode.

Kate, Kris and Vereni spent the day in camp resting and philosophizing and hearing about failed attempts by other climbers to Mendel via the northeast and east routes. Our visual inspections told us we were apt to have the same experience.

The next morning started with a long discussion of an anticipated fuel shortage. The resulting plan was to only use Debbie's Whisper Light stove which is more fuel efficient than my Sevea. Some questions were, 'Why had Kai given his pint fuel bottle to Kate?' and, 'Why was Dody's pint fuel bottle back in the car?' The issue did not stand in the way of the enjoyment of the breakfast of blueberry and cornmeal pancakes provided by Kai.

We descended the Darwin Canyon along the stairs and cascades of water. At Evolution Lake a solo backpacker gave us two ounces of fuel. An hour of showers turned the dry and dusty trail to one of lush and fragrant smells. Our campsite was just above 11,000' at the base of Huxley and Fiske.

On Tuesday, Kai, Debbie and I were off to Huxley via the north northeast buttress. The rocks were loose and the ledges sandy and 4th Class pitches made for a challenging day. Frequently wondering if

Trip Reports (Continued)

we were on route, there didn't seem to be an answer to 'what if we reach a point where we can't go ahead.' Down climbing our route didn't seem to be an option. The exhilaration we felt at the summit was only slightly lessened by the fact that there was no register. A loose scree slope which lead down to Sapphire Lake was our route back. Kate and Vereni had ascended this to precede our summiting by a couple of hours.

The next day Kris and Kate left us to leisurely hike their way down Evolution Basin. Heading for the Hermit, Kai, Debbie, Vereni and I left the saddle above Sapphire Lake and wound our way around the west sides of the false summits.

Finally at the top, Kai and Debbit attacked the summit block by crux and crack--alas, without success. Debbie was the head, yelling and hooting, "Yippie Kai 0 Kai Eh," as she attempted to lasso the block. It didn't work so off we scooted down through sand and scree again. Vereni and I returned to the first saddle to pick up the glasses I had left there. We met Kai at Sapphire Lake. Debbie ambled into camp later with perilous tales of 4th Class cliffs above the John Muir Trail.

On Thursday, it was Kai and I--trying to get started up Waslow from the northeast saddle. It was just a no-go from there, so we recoiled the rope,

stashed the climbing gear under a rock and decided to 'Fiske-it.' This was the all time enjoyable jungle gym of 3rd Class climbing. Then, 50 feet from the top, it was raining. We gave a 'whoop' at the summit in hail. Then the race began. Thunder, lightning, and slippery boulders--Kai was ahead and I struggled to watch my footing and keep track of the elusive yellow parka ahead. The thunder clapped, and I jumped into a huddle of boulders as I heard Kai yell and saw lightning flash closely ahead. Kai later described being surrounded by 'an aura of golden light.' At the saddle we wrapped the gear in our extra polypro, stuffed it into our packs and continued our swift descent. The storm cleared and we had our first early and leisurely dinner of the trip. Vereni and Debbie had spent the day at the bathing lake. Our campsite additionally provided a tarn for our dishwashing and a lake for our water supply. Kai booked ahead for this one!

The next day Kai and Debbie summited Haeckel via the southeast saddle and a ridge on the northeast by 10:30 AM. Vereni made it 'almost to the top' of Fiske when the storm broke. I had spent the morning sipping iced tea, Without Feathers, with Woody Allen before it was necessary to give

up my sunbathing. The three climbers met in the talus field and were back at camp by 2:30. We all snoozed for a few hours in the tents until the storm cleared.

Saturday morning we packed up and left our campsite, following Kai's and Debbie's route to the saddle between Haeckel and Wallace. We avoided the drop to Echo Lake by contouring north. We met two day hikers making their way up to the saddle. We warned them of the storm pattern. Later we wondered how they fared when again the sky lashed out with hail and lightning. Kai and I forged ahead. At Lake Sabrina, Kai hitched a ride to get the car and the beers while I took a nap on a rock. Vereni and Debbie arrived and we zipped off to look for accommodations (bed and bath). Finding none, we settled for a Mexican dinner and a sleep in the desert. Just prior to leaving Bishop, Debbie and Kai were seen climbing the south wall of a bank building.

See us at the November meeting!

--Dody Domish

SIERRA ODYSSEY: THE PERILOUS TREK TO TEDDY BEAR LAKE (with no apologies whatsoever to PA or PWW)
Day One: July 29, 1990

It was with greatest trepidation that the six members of the 1990 Sierra Club High Sierra Trip destined for Teddy Bear

Trip Reports (Continued)

Lake met in the parking lot at the Big Pine Creek Campground on the afternoon of July 29. The leaders, Ray Stafford and Dave Dorer, supposedly among the best that the Sierra Club rejected, piled mounds of food and other gear (like enough toilet paper to keep the U.S. Army supplied for three weeks) on the ground around us. We wondered, would we have enough food, enough supplies to keep us going for eight long days? Would we have need of the rejected ice axe? Would we have need of those flimsy ropes that Dave said we were going to use to hang the food from bears? Ha! We complained about the three stoves and extra fuel pump we were being forced to carry, we complained about the weight of the food (25 pounds each! I swear to God!)

We started off at 5 PM, not complaining about missing the afternoon heat. Soon we had climbed out of the immense bowl of the canyon and come into the trees and soggy meadows, full of flowers and the dreaded mozzies. We made camp at 7 PM. Before we could blink three times, three stoves were blasting at us, cooking dinner. Charlotte Williamson had supplied the wine from the family vineyards, and she and Don Weiss were beginning a week long battle with the instructions for cooking dinner.

The other two members of the trek, Rob Rolands and Phyllis Weiss, drank all the wine while watching the dinner cooks struggle.

Day Two: July 30, 1990

Monday morning, while we thought of all the busy bee workers in stuffy offices, we ate breakfast and headed out, uphill. Our goal was up past a bunch of lakes with totally uninspiring names of Lake One, Lake Two etc. and past Lake Five on a **nonpath** to a **nonpass** named Jigsaw Pass. Fearless Leader Ray claimed he had been there and filled us with horror stories of his descent. All went well, including a delicious lunch of cheese, fresh bread from Schats' Bakery in Bishop and Dave's homemade cookies.

By one in the afternoon, we had run out of trail and began to boulder hop. This boulder hopping nonsense lasted off and on all week. The altitude and previous night's wine began to get to us, not to mention our packs, which began to feel as if they had been packed with rocks instead of with freeze-dried food.

By three, Phyllis was complaining of blisters, Charlotte of being just plain tired and Dave was lagging behind, saying he was out of shape. We camped. A high altitude tarn marked our camping site, surrounded by boulders hiding

multitudes of little beasties that Dave assured us would eat the leftover food. We celebrated Phyllis' birthday with balloons and a chocolate cake that had been packed in.

Day Three: August 1, 1990

Brilliant blue skies greeted us in the morning. Much of breakfast was distributed to the beasties. Then we began to boulder hop again. By eleven we had reached the pass, marked by a wooden pole, conveniently spotted by Don.

We looked over the edge. We cringed, we tried not to winge, instead we ate our lunch of cheese, pita bread and Dave's homemade cookies and rested, preparing ourselves for the descent. We asked Fearless Leader Ray if he was sure this was the easiest way to go down. He looked over the edge. He said "yes." While scrounging in the rocks we found a series of tin cans with plastic lids stuffed with tiny scraps of paper, the kind the guide-books always say backpackers should carry in case they have to write their last will and testament. It was a f*****g summit register! On Jigsaw Pass! Fortified by lunch, we began our descent. Dave, Charlotte and Rob went first, followed by Don Phyllis and Ray. Nobody

Trip Reports (Continued)

died, nobody slipped, but it wasn't easy. There was a faint trail to begin with, but that quickly faded. Rock conglomerate, like crumbling oatmeal cookies, disintegrating underneath our feet. Don, the photographer, took pictures of all this, until the third traverse, when he found his camera was beginning to get dusty.

Charlotte, the least experienced of all, proved her bravery by not whining or complaining, until we got to the bottom. It was only upon looking back up, that she lost her cool. "You mean, we came down that?" Actually, the rest of us felt the same way, but were too embarrassed to say so.

A few hours later we were at camp. Another superb campsite with a view across Upper Dusy Basin. That evening, due to using too much fuel during the previous two days, only one stove was used for making dinner, and even that didn't work too well. Would we starve to death for lack of one decent stove?

Day Four. August 1.1990

Stiff muscles greeted the intrepid travelers in the morning, but on this fourth day, it was mostly down. Down into Lower Dusy Basin to the junction with the John Muir Trail at the Le Conte Canyon Ranger Station. It was here

that we ran into a young hiker with a friend with an injured knee and another man who claimed to have altitude sickness. Sadly, they were helicoptered out.

It was here that for the first time, we began to run into some people. Up until that time, we felt quite alone, or at least not crowded.

Down in Le Conte Canyon, the air felt syrupy thick in our lungs at only about 8500ft. We continued trudging up the trail, Fearless Leaders lagging far, far behind. We camped at Lake 12,800, just below Helen Lake.

This was the least nice campsite we had the whole trip. The view was so-so and it was crowded. It was also haunted by a deer, who insisted upon wandering through in the middle of the night, waking up poor Dave. The experience was saved from disaster by an overabundance of food, especially of an apricot cheese cake.

Day 5. August 2.1990

Again we were greeted by brilliant blue sky and by eleven o'clock, we had reached the funny conical button the hut of Muir Pass. (I shall stop briefly here to comment of the history of a few place names. Helen Lake is named for John Muir's daughter Helen, the lake on the north side of the pass is named for his daughter Wanda. The Pass belongs to the grandfather of the modern Wilderness

Movement, good ole Muir himself. If you are wondering why there aren't any lakes, passes mountains or other landmarks named for Muir's wife, Louie, it was because she didn't like the mountains. Maybe they would name a pear orchard in Martinez after her. End of digression.)

It was at Muir Hut that we encountered the largest number of humans we had seen thus far. There was a group of twenty plus teenagers on a long back pack trip. One woman of about fifty with a sixty pound pack, of which she was inordinately proud, a guy wearing a wierd red hat that Don recognized from his trip on the John Muir Trail the year before, four middle-aged men hiking in bizarre uniform fashion, practically stepping on one another's heels. Too many people. After a delicious lunch of crackers, salame and Dave's homemade cookies (yes, they were still going strong, those cookies of Dave's), we headed down past Wanda Lake and Evolution Lake.

As the afternoon wore on, the clouds began to gather. We headed off the trail, just about the time the first heavy drops began to fall. Ray, Dave and Rob convinced they knew where they were going (after all, they were the only ones with maps), headed off cross country, looking for the non-maintained

Trip Reports (Continued)

trail to Darwin Bench. Charlotte, Don and Phyllis, convinced they would soon lose themselves if they tried to follow, sat in the rain and ate chocolate bars to cheer themselves up.

Soon the welcome shouts of, "here's the trail." greeted the ears of the three whimps, and they set out, eventually arriving at the magnificent campsite on the edge of Evolution Valley, with a superb sunset display and lots of room to spread out so a certain married couple could get some privacy. That night we hung food over an immense boulder, to keep it from the bears. We did.

Day 6: August 3, 1990

Today we were to attempt our second pass, Alpine Col. The original plan called for an even more difficult crossing, but due to the difficulty the group had on Jigsaw Pass, Fearless Leaders took the more prudent course. This time we had some company up the canyon and past two small lakes. At the head of the second lake, the small semblance of a trail disappeared and Don, Rob and Ray went to reconnoiter. Don faced a cliff, Rob went over the top of the hill, but Ray managed to locate a "possible."

At a small tarn at the base of Alpine Col, we stopped for lunch, cheese, crackers and Dave's homemade cookies. Snow was in evidence still this late in the season. The Col

loomed above us, but do-able, or so we convinced ourselves. It was. It was a steep scramble up, but a semblance of a trail and a number of ducks showed the way. On top we found a proper summit register from the American Alpine Club and we posed for a group picture. Golden Bear played naughty tricks for the cameras, posing in the buff. We looked out across Humphrey's Basin to the mountains looming beyond. Would we make it as far as Teddy Bear Lake? Would our food last until then? Would Rob make it back to work by Monday morning?

With little or no hesitation, we began the descent. A trail appeared and disappeared. Rob lead Charlotte and Phyllis on a merry scramble over giant boulders of a talus slope, while Don, Ray and Dave took another route. Soon Don and Ray found themselves stranded on a lip of a short cliff face. With tense excitement, they took off their packs and began the descent. Slowly Ray backed down, no ropes or climbing gear. With tired arms, he cautiously made his way down. Don lowered the packs to the narrow ledge below. Then Don followed, uneasily, his stomach churning, his hands spasmodically clenching mechanical claws. Within minutes, however, they were once more skipping merrily over the boulders. Meanwhile,

put off by the rock cliff, Dave found the best way down.

On the other side, Rob and Charlotte, stepping carefully down a scree slope that threatened to go at any minute, found Phyllis behind them, stepping clumsily on rocks not impacted in the earth. She stepped heavily on one, sending buckets of dust and rocks sliding down the slope, inches from Charlotte's feet. At her cry, Rob and Charlotte realized she had hurt herself and with quick response, came to her rescue. She wasn't hurt very badly, but there was no other excitement that day. Rob carried her pack down the slope across his shoulders on top of his own. Phyllis took a couple of Advil, gritted her teeth and slowly made her way down.

At the bottom, the entire group reformed and parcelled out Phyllis' excess gear. They went off for another two hours to Lower Goethe Lake where they set up camp at The Dead Pika Campground. This was a name given to the campsite due to the presence of a forlorn dead animal, his soft gray fur matted and half eaten away by the other beasties. Phyllis, whose turn it was to cook, stayed confined to her tent, while the rest of the group discussed at endless length the saga of the Dead Pika.

(To be continued next month)

CHAIRPERSON:

Kai Wiedman
927 S. Delaware St.
San Mateo, CA 94402
(415) 347-2843 h

VICE CHAIR/SCHEDULER:

Aaron Schuman
3875 Park Blvd. #22
Palo Alto, CA 94306
(415) 494-3299 h
(415) 3351901 w

TREASURER:

Dinesh Desai
444 Castro St. #917
Mt. View, CA 94041
(415) 969-2695 h
(415) 9645760 w

SCREE EDITOR:

Judith Yarborough
2070 Mills Ave.
Menlo Park, CA 94025
(415) 854-9288 h
(415) 725-1773 w

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PCS meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month. See SCREE for meeting location and program information.

Trip classifications:

- Class 1: **Walking** on a trail.
- Class 2: Walking cross-country, using hands for balance.
- Class 3: Requires use of hands for climbing. A rope may be used **occasionally**.
- Class 4: Requires rope belays.
- Class 5: Technical rock climbing.

Deadline for SCREE contributions is two weeks before the next meeting. Mail your contributions to the SCREE editor.

For change of address or address corrections, write or call Paul Vlasveld, 157 Kellogg Way, Santa Clara 95051. (408) 241-1144 h / (408) 257-7910 w.



**Peak Climbing Section
2070 Mills Ave.
Menlo Park, CA 94025**



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