



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

July, 1993

Vol. 26, No. 7

Next Meeting Summertime Means Picnic Time!

Bring the whole family to the annual PCS July Picnic at Serra Park in Sunnyvale, on Hollenbeck near Homestead.

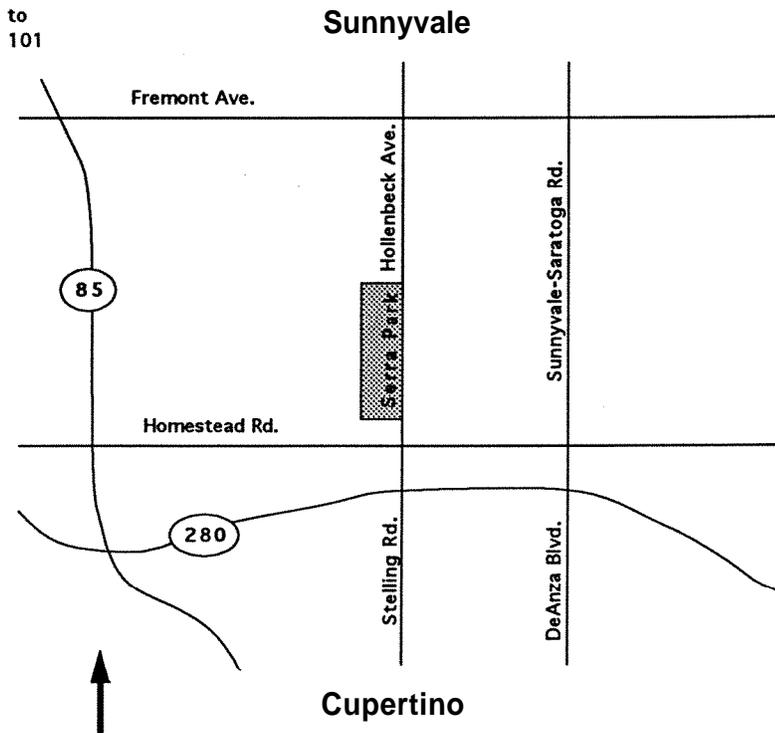
Date: Tuesday, July 13

DIRECTIONS:

*From I-280 turn north on DeAnza Blvd./ Sunnyvale-Saratoga Rd. in Cupertino, then left on Homestead, then right on Hollenbeck. The park is on your left.

*From I-85 turn east on Fremont, then South on Hollenbeck. The park is on your right.

We will be in group picnic site #4, next to the tennis courts. The best parking is at the tennis courts, but is limited. There is additional parking to the north, at Safeway to the south, and to the west.



AGENDA:

6:15 - 7:30 Barbecue, swap meet and social hour - Bring a side dish for the pot luck. Bring your own main course to BBQ, drink (alcohol is OK), and utensils. A community grill is provided. Tennis courts, playground, and open grass areas for recreation. The swap meet is informal. Bring your extra equipment and tag items with your name and a price.

7:30 - 8:15 Suzanna Moran from Trimble Navigation will demonstrate their new low-cost GPS (Global Positioning System) unit.

8:15 - dark Brief meeting

Official PCS Trips

Mt. Dana (13,053') **Class 1-2**

Date: July 17-18

Leader: Debbie Benham
Home: (415) 964-0558
Co-leader: Phyllis Olrich
Home: (415) 322-0323

Hike up Yosemite's most accessible peak for panoramic views of the Sierra high country. Dana is the second highest summit in Yosemite, second only to Mt. Lyell. We'll hike from Tioga Pass due east on a well-worn, but unofficially maintained, trail. This is a good climb for beginners (welcome!). A \$5 deposit is required to cover campsite cost at Tuolumne Meadows Campgrounds for two nights (Fri./Sat.). We are open to suggestions for the hike on Sunday.

Gale & Sing Peaks **(10,700' & 10,500,)** **Class 2**

Date: July 17-18

Leader: Charles Schafer
Work (408) 943-7488

We'll start at the Chiquito Pass trailhead just south of Yosemite National Park, and hike in about 6 1/2 miles with 2,000' elevation gain to camp at Chain Lakes. We should be able to bag Gale Peak that afternoon, then climb Sing Peak the next morning before hiking back out. These are the tallest peaks in that

general vicinity and the country should be beautiful – so I'm looking forward to a very scenic trip

Merced Peak (11,726') **Class 2**

Date: July 24-25

Leader: Kai Wiedman
Home: (415) 347-2843
Co-leader: Pete Davison
Home: (408) 245-3759

From the Glacier Point trailhead, we'll assemble a strong fast team of mountain commandos for this one-day blitz of Merced Peak. A vast, sweeping panorama of dashing cascades, beautiful lakes, and many granite peaks make this one of Yosemite's special places. Don't worry, be happy. We'll make it! With a steady yet moderate pace, we will celebrate sunset in camp. Yeah, don't forget, no alpine start on Sunday. This trip involves a 32-mile round trip with a 5,700' elevation gain; **95%** of this is on trail

Flatiron Butte (11,486') **Class 2**

Date: July 24-25

Leader: Roger Crawley
Home: (415) 321-8602

This is a pretty darned easy trip, Buckaroos, and it's a real nice place! We saw a bobcat there last time. After breakfast in

Bridgeport, we'll rendezvous at the junction of Hwy 395 and Hwy 108 – the Sonora Pass road at 9 AM on Saturday. Then we'll drive about 4 miles to the Burt Canyon trailhead at 7,600'. The trail follows the Little Walker River for 8 miles rising 1,200' to our campsite. Sunday we'll amble up the Flatiron and gaze at Buckeye and the Sawtooths. The permit is for eight peak climbers.

Humphreys Basin Base Camp **Class 2-3**

Date: Sunday, July 25 - Friday, July 30

Leader: Debbie Bulger
Home: (408) 457-1036

We'll hike in over Piute Pass. Plans include Four Gables (12,720'), Merriam Peak (13,077'), Royce Peak (13,253') and Pilot Knob #2 (12,245'). Emerson is also a possibility. Pertinent quads are Mt. Tom, Mt. Goddard, and Mt. Abbot. ***Because of the heavy snow year, this may be a private tri) with ice axes just in case.***

Loma Prieta Chapter Car Camping Weekend **Outing to Loon Lake**

Date: August 6-8

Leaders: Libby Vincent
Chris Macintosh

Loon Lake lies at 6,378', just outside the spectacular Desolation Wilderness in the Sierra Nevada west of Lake Tahoe. Join us for a car camping weekend in a group campsite by the lake. We'll lead hikes into the nearby wilderness; you can also relax by the lake, try some fishing, enjoy beautiful mountain scenery, or just contemplate the infinite. Cost of \$35 includes fees, group breakfasts on Saturday and Sunday plus Saturday dinner, and a donation to the Loma Prieta Chapter. Limit of

25 people. For more information, send an SASE to Chris MacIntosh at P.O. Box 802, Menlo Park, CA 94026-0802.

**Royce Pk. and Merriam Pk.
(13,253' and 13,077')
Class 2-3**

Date: September 11-12

Leader: Kelly Maas
Home: (408) 279-2054
Work: (408) 944-2078
Co-Leader: wanted

Mt. Tom and Mt. Abbot 15' or Mt. Tom and Mt. Hilgard 7.5' maps

Views of these peaks from the Rock Creek area got me interested. Gain 4,200' in 7 miles from the Pine Creek trailhead to base camp at Royce Lakes. Should be beautiful country once we get past the Union Carbide tungsten mine. Expect great views of Humphreys Basin and Mt. Humphreys and Seven Gables and.. .

Private Trips

Private trips are not insured, sponsored, or supervised by the Sierra Club or the PCS. They are listed here because they may be of interest to PCS climbers.

**Adams Minaret (12,000+')
via Adams-Michael Notch
Volcanic Ridge (11,501')
Class 3**

Date: July 9-11

Leader: Daniel Lord
Home: (408) 977- 1176

Entry and exit through Devil's Postpile with camp at Minaret Lake. Experienced mountaineers only - will need ice axes for crossing South Notch and we will possibly be camping in snow. Limit 5 persons including leader.

**Mt. Ranier
Ingraham Glacier (tourist)
Route**

Date: July 9-July 12

Leader: Jon Penn
Work: (408) 862-7673
Home: (415) 9494035

July 9 - depart Bay Area and arrive in Seattle by 7:30 PM (I will help coordinate travel plans and such, but travel arrangements are an individual responsibility). Assemble at Sea-Tat, rent cars as needed and drive to Mt. Ranier. Camp at a campground in the park on Friday night.

July 10 - Leave Paradise Lodge early (no later than 7:30 AM) and climb to Ingraham Glacier flats at 11,000' to camp. This is a long day but we will go fairly slowly and there are no technical difficulties.

July 11 - Depending on group condition and the weather, this may be either a summit day or rest day. If we go for the summit we can descend back to camp for another night or get off the mountain completely (descending Ranier is a much simpler proposition than climbing it.. .as you've no doubt seen on other mountains).

July 12 - Slack day as indicated above. If this is our summit attempt we will leave camp very early AM, summit at dawn and descend off mountain. Drive to Sea-Tat and return to Bay area follow immediately.

Party max: six people. Previous glacier experience and appropriate equipment are needed. Ranier's weather is completely unpredictable; it's generally better in summer, but not by a whole heck of a lot. Forewarned is forearmed.. . Questions are welcome - please call!

Mount Conness (12,590')
Class 3

Date: July 17-18

Leader: John Flinn

Home: (415) 968-2050

Will need ice axes for the ascent of the Glacier Route, a moderate snow slog. Maybe we'll climb North Peak Sunday. Carcamp or short backpack Co-leader wanted.

Mount Gardiner (12,907')
Class 4

Date: July 24-25

Leaders: Mike Meredith

Home (415) 969-6773

Chris Kramar

Home: (5 10) 796-665 1

Work: (415) 926-6861

On Saturday we'll hike west from Rings Canyon along the Bubbs Creek trail for about five miles. Then we'll go cross-country up Charlotte Creek for a mile and a half before camping at about 10,000'. We'll summit and return to Rings Canyon on Sunday. According to Roper, the climb is class 3 except for a "short, class 4, me-edge ridge" just before the main summit. However, technical climbing experience is a must.

Graduation on Mt. Lyell
Class 3

Date: August 14-15

Leader: Tim Hult

Phone: (408) 970-0760

Email:

tim_hult@qm.is.lmsc.lockheed.com

Come celebrate the end of Tim's academic career with the ascent of one of Yosemite's most sought-after peaks. Permit is for five people only and a waiting list will be used. The hike in is a long one through the scenic Lyell canyon (about 10 miles) and the return will take place immediately after the climb on Sunday. Participants must be in good shape, able to carry themselves on snow and ice using crampons and an ice ax (prior experience a must); be capable of scrambling over moderate class 3 rock and move fast and light. I will not be bringing a rope for protection. This is not a beginners trip !!!

Palisades Loop Trip
Temple Crag (12,999') via
South-East Face

Class 3

Mount Gayley (13,510') via
Glacier Notch

Class 3

over Contact Pass (11,760')
Class 2

Date: September 10-12

Leader: Daniel Lord

Home: (408) 977-1 176

Entry through North Fork Big Pine Creek cross the crest at Contact Pass, and exit down the South Fork; beginning and ending at Glacier Lodge. Experienced mountaineers only - may need ice axes for crossing the pass, ascending the chute on the South-East face, and climbing Glacier Notch to ascend Gayley. Both Roper and Secor call the summit of Gayley a superb

viewpoint of the Palisade Crest. Limit 6 persons including leader. \$3 deposit per person.

Bear Creek Spire
Class 3

Date: September 11-12

Leader: Tim Hult

Phone: (408) 970-0760

Email:

tim_hult@qm.is.lmsc.lockheed.com

Little Lakes Basin, aka beneath Bear Creek Spire. I have a permit for up to six people to visit what Galen Rowell calls his favorite place in all the Sierras. The current plan is to climb Bear Creek Spire via one of the 3rd class routes, but I could be convinced to do something else, if the group wishes. Experienced 3rd class climbers only!

Climbing
Partner
Wanted



PCSer David Hohl would like to find people interested in rock climbing in the Bay Area on weekends. Locations would be Castle Rock, Mt. Diablo, and other locations. He has climbing equipment. You can contact Dave at 2256 Wigan Ct., San Jose, 95 127, (408) 259- 1249

Trip Reports

Olancha Peak

I first saw Olancha Peak from the summit of Pilot Knob #1 in April. Snow clad and cone shaped, Olancha looked mighty interesting that day. Now it is Memorial Day Weekend, and Richard Stover and I are on our way to Olancha. Situated south of Lone Pine, Olancha is supposed to be 12,123 feet high and sports not one, but two stars on the SPS list. (That means it's an emblem peak, which I think is meant to be notable.) Because of the heavy snow year, we are equipped with ice axes and crampons, just in case.

We are approaching from Sage Flat Road off 395 and will hike over Olancha Pass (9,220') ultimately joining the Pacific Crest Trail. The beavertail cacti are outrageously clad in hot pink bloomers as we begin the backpack. Our plan is to hike to somewhere about 10,500' to camp and then do the peak on the second day. The trailhead is at 5,790'. Wildflowers are everywhere: lupine, New Mexico thistle, Indian paintbrush, poppies, and many others I am not familiar with. As we climb, the flowers change until we encounter ground phlox near the pass.

Not yet at the pass, we hear horses behind us. Three men and two pack animals on their way to fish in the Kern, or so they tell us. One man and one horse are

flatlanders. They are breathing hard and must stop often. It's the first time I have ever passed a horse (going in the same direction, that is) and beat the pack train to the pass! I can't resist. "Get a horse!" I advise as we power by. (Those of you who have hiked with me know what a "fast" backpacker I am.)

Olancha Pass is broad and sweeping. There is a limited view, so we move on a short way to get a view of Summit Meadow for our lunch break. From here the trail is fairly level until we reach the Bear Trap

It's the first time I have ever passed a horse (going in the same direction, that is) and beat the pack train to the pass!

Meadow use trail when we begin to climb again. At the juncture we meet a San Diego Sierra Club member who is waiting for the rest of his group to return from climbing Olancha. In Bear Trap Meadow there are two empty tube tents which we later discover belong to an older couple and their teenage daughter, also on Olancha. The use trail peters out and we continue toward the peak, wondering where the heck the PCT is. By now there are patches of snow in the shade.

Finally, we discover the PCT and the San Diego group on their

way down. They inform us that the snow is avoidable for the most part or easy to navigate in just our boots when it covers the trail. About a half mile farther the couple and their daughter pass us. We admire their vintage ice axes with ash shafts.

At 4:30 we reach a saddle of sorts sheltered by a fantastic stand of foxtail pines. Because of the snow melt, we have no shortage of water, although normally this would be a dry camp. As we are setting up our tent, a trotting coyote tops the rise from the opposite direction, does a double take as he spots us and makes an abrupt U-turn. It is like a comedy segment.

Our campsite is perfect. Both morning and evening sun, on dry ground nestled between snow banks. Huge foxtail pines all around.

We are in no hurry the next morning, since we want the snow to soften a bit. We leave ice ax, crampons and gaiters in camp. At the high point on the PCT, we head for the summit. Although the use trail heads to the west, we opt for the third class variation more to the south. On top, we spend a leisurely hour and a half looking at Whitney, Langley, the Kaweah massif and other peaks. Chris Yager signed the register on 10/7/84. Both Richard's and my altimeter indicate Olancha is just under 12,000'. Since the benchmarks are from the 50s I think

the official 12,123' height may be a little high. The view is great, and Olancho is fun, but the two star designation may also be a little high.

On the backpack out we spot a distant golden eagle. The next day we decide to take the dirt Canebrake road to Highway 178 and are rewarded with a close encounter with two golden eagles trying to pick up a newly dead hare from the road. Whether one of the eagles killed the hare or it met death in a traffic accident, we'll never know. Naturally the camera is inaccessible. It was a memorable Memorial Day.

-Debbie Bulger

May 29-30 Shasta Summit Attempt

VALIANT, BUT VAIN

OK, enough about me. George Van Gordon lead a hardy group of PCSers (pronounced "pissers") to accompany him on a character building, but ultimately unsuccessful, summit attempt on the snow covered slopes of Shasta. Oh Boy-George - 60 mile per hour wind-driven hoary rime. whoopee! !

Perhaps this write-up should have been titled

IN POOR TENTS

(say it fast, as one word); or **WHEN YOU CAN'T GET UP** (to the top)

Can you say, "Gale force blizzard"? Sure you can, if you were one of the Unlucky 13 who

accompanied George on Memorial Day weekend's Shasta summit attempt. You can probably also say, "Last one down, freezes off your extremities." On day one, after being forced to pitch our tents at Camp 9,600' in a frosty hurricane, we endured 15 nonstop hours of shrieking winds and bone chilling sleet and snow. So at 5 AM the next morning, George made the call to beat a hasty retreat off the mountain, and down to the rain soaked North Gate trailhead (5" of rain fell during this weekend). Those who had already summited Shasta on previous trips were philosophical about being denied the zenith; those who were attempting it for the first time pouted and cried all the way home.

-Victor Anderson

Lost Coast Backpack June 19-21

The Ring Range Conservation Area is a little known, but magnificent, coastal mountain range in the southwest corner of Humboldt County. The "Lost Coast" received its name because the infamous Highway 1 sweeps around it, rather than through it. The weather was hot, very hot, on the ridge, and cool with a breeze when we walked the coast. There were five of us on the trip - Judith Yarborough, Debbie Benham, Bill Kirkpatrick, Cecilia, and Andrew. We met in the little town of Shelter Cove to eat breakfast and figure out

which car to take to the trailhead of Rings Crest for our shuttle. I rather think Cecilia and Andrew, new to the PCS milieu, expected a trip similar to those one pays for, and, this not being the case, there were a few surprises in store. I learned that you don't know a hiker 'til you hike with 'em! (Okay, lecture over now).

The sunset was beautiful as we descended to the shore, and, the cool, salty air that touched our faces as we rounded a corner was a certain marker that we had truly crossed from the mountains to the beach.

We got a late start at the trailhead, but start we did. A quarter mile up the fireroad, Judith and I thought we heard cicadas humming loudly. With a shout from Bill, "It's a snake!", I, in the face of danger, screamed and ran right into Judith. He was coiled and ready to strike, and, only 3-4 feet from us. While we waited to warn the other two in our party, Judith reviewed the directions on the snake-bite kit. As we continued on our way, we were now a little more cautious. It turned out that we saw a couple more snakes, the harmless kind. It was a long first day, with 4,000' elevation gain total, 5,000' loss, and 13 3/4 miles behind us. The sunset was beautiful as we descended to the shore, and, the cool, salty air that

touched our faces as we rounded a corner was a certain marker that we had truly crossed from the mountains to the beach. An important note – take plenty of water if on the ridge. We each had two large bottles with us, and that was not enough. Luckily, there were two possible water sources. However, one had to descend at least 1,000' (Bill K. that is! And thank you very much for doing that!!) to get to the water.

Early in the morning we were greeted with cool fog and bird cries. The mist was hanging in the canyon and we all welcomed this climatic change from

the day before. Cecilia and Andrew remained about two to three hours behind us the entire trip, which accounted for some worried brows. This may have been the first time they had walked so far with full pack and blisters. As we headed south, we saw deer, blue heron, and birds looking similar to pelicans. Thanks to Judith for bringing her bird book and binoculars. The cliffs contained waterfalls, colorful algae of yellow and orange, and red-stemmed flowers that looked like those found at the bottom of the sea. We passed a group of seals barking loudly. There were several

stream crossings that we changed shoes for. At one rugged point, we waited about an hour for the tide to go down.

An honorable mention here for "Rocky Raccoon" who visited our campsite the second night and seemed to like Judith's pack the best! Bill was persistent in scaring Mr. Rocky; and "R" only got our trash, and, maybe, some indigestion.

On the last day out, we were ready for a wash-up, then lunch at The Pelican's Landing in Shelter Cove. It was quite a trip, and I'd heartily recommend it for the stout of foot!

-Debbie Benham

Renowned Climber Killed in Fall In Yosemite Park

The body of a world-renowned rock climber has been found in Yosemite National Park after he suffered a fatal fall, officials said yesterday.

Derek Hersey, 36, of Boulder, Colo., fell while attempting to climb Sentinel Rock near Yosemite Valley Friday, park officials said. His body was found Saturday near the base of the climbing route.

Melissa Swan of the park's search and rescue team said the Sentinel climb should have been relatively simple for someone with Hersey's advanced skills. She saw him shortly before he departed for the climb.

'When he didn't return, everybody said, 'Don't worry.

Derek's fine. You can't kill Derek,'" Swan said.

Park rangers had not determined the location or cause of the fall but speculated that Hersey fell several hundred feet.

Hersey, a native of England, was renowned for his skill in climbing mountains alone and without ropes, a technique known as free-solo climbing. He was regarded as one of the world's most daring free-solo climbers.

-reprinted from 5/31/93 San Francisco Chronicle

Sick Jokes Column

Why is it that mountaineers are so curious?

Because they always want to take a peak...

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For change of address, contact Paul Vlasveld, 157 Kellogg Way, Santa Clara, CA 95051; (408) 241-1144 H, (408) 257-7910 W.

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

The following trip classifications are to assist you in choosing trips for which you are qualified. No simple rating system can anticipate all possible conditions:

- 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.

Scree articles and contributions must be received by the editor no later than noon on the last Tuesday of the month: email, 3 1/2" diskettes (Mac or DOS), fax, or U.S. mail okay. Black and white photos welcome.

Deadline for the next issue is July 27!



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