



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

November, 1993

Vol. 26. No. 11

Next Meeting

Date: Tues., Nov. 9, 1993

Time: 7:30 PM

Place: Pacific Mountaineer
200 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto

Program:

Manaslu Trek

Last year some of your friends went to Nepal and trekked around Manaslu, the eighth highest mountain in the world. This was an expensive trip and I endured considerable discomfort to take these pictures (so be there..).

-Roger Crawley



Elections are Coming!! Elections are Coming!!

As the year winds to a close, so to do the terms of the PCS officers. We'll hold elections at the November meeting, and transfer of power will occur at the end of the year. Thanks to Warren Storkman, Kai Wiedman, and Ron Lingelbach for acting as this year's Nomination Committee. After wading through millions of potential candidates, they have come up with the following nominees:

Chairperson	Peter Maxwell
Vice Chair/Scheduler	Debbie Benham
Treasurer	Bob Suzuki

These people are only nominees. Any qualified (i.e. breathing) Sierra Club member may run against them, and additional nominations can be made at the time of the elections. Following are brief descriptions of the offices:

Chairperson - Overall operational responsibility for the PCS. Chair meeting and ensure that we have places to meet and programs at meetings. Represents the section at the Chapter level as required. Run elections. Talk with potential members.

Vice Chair/Scheduler - **Arrange** trip planning meetings. Solicit and schedule trips, communicating with the newsletter editor. Approve trips. Talk with potential members.

Treasurer - Collect Screes subscription money. Maintain the PCS bank account. Produce annual financial report. Pay bills such as Screes printing costs. Talk with potential members.

This is the month for exercising your right as a citizen in a democratic society, so come out and vote on November 9!

Official PCS Trips

Thanksgiving Weekend Pinnacles Outing Chalone Peak (3,303')

Date: Sunday, November 28

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

A 2,150' ascent, 10-mile round-trip hike on the caves trail (BRING FLASHLIGHT!)

starting from the east entrance. Meet at the Hyatt Hotel parking lot at North 1st Street and Highway 101 at 8:00 AM (join the leader for a waffle in the restaurant at 7:00 AM. After the hike we'll stop at the micro brewery in Hollister and a Mexican place in Morgan Hill for dinner. Co-listed with the Dayhiking Section.

Mt. Diablo (3,849') Class 1

Date: Sunday, December 5

Leader: Kai Wiedman
Home: (415) 347-5234

A rigorous 15-mile loop up the direct north face followed by dinner at Chevys.

Christmas Desert PeakBagging Class 2-3

Date: December 27-31

Leader: Bill Hauser
Home: (408) 243-4566

Let's climb these desert peaks at the best time of the year. This

year we will climb Edgar, Mitchell, Stepladder, Turtle, Mopah, Granite #2 (second attempt) and, as a grand finale, Rosa Point high above the Salton Sea. We will also visit "Oh My God" hot springs deep in the desert. We will be getting up early and moving fast due to the short days of winter. Be prepared for temperatures in the 20's at night. No mountain bikers allowed. Fill up your gas tank in Barstow, CA and drive east on I-40 116 miles to Essex Road. Meet at 7 AM, December 27 at the junction of Essex Road and I-40. These peak are all class 2 except for Mopah which is class 3. Call Bill to sign up.

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.

Panamint Paradox Class 2

Date: November 13-15

Leader: Victor Anderson
Home: (415) 851-1090
Co-Leader: Steve Eckert
Home: (415) 508-0500

Saturday: Tucki, 6,000' elevation gain up through Mosaic Canyon

Sunday: Optional peak bags: Tin & Dry; otherwise: photography, dune skiing, Scotty's Castle, hot springs, moonlight dancing.

Monday: Attempt Telescope Peak (11,000'+) 7,000' elevation gain. If snow or roads are bad, will do Pyramid or Corkscrew. All peaks class 2. Call co-leader for details.

Desert Survivors Fall 1993 Trips

DESERT SURVIVORS is an affiliation of desert lovers committed to experiencing,

sharing, and protecting desert wilderness wherever they find it. Their trip schedule is listed here as a courtesy for interested PCSers.

Coxcomb Mts. – Pinto Basin Backpack Joshua Tree National Monument (Moderate)

Date: November 5-7
Leader: Dave Halligan
(510) 528-3360

(continued on page 7)

Trip Reports

TWO, TWO, TWO TRIPS IN ONE Dana or Excelsior – Castle and Dunderberg August 28-29

Friday. August 27. Dennis Hiipakka was the first to arrive at the Trumbull Lake campground. About an hour later, 6:00 PM, Eric Newman and Victor Anderson (your humble scrivener) arrived. Next, came Kevin “Hollywood” Koenig. Sporting camouflage long pants, a studly stud earring, and smoking an elegantly long, thin cigar, Hollywood strolled over to our campsite (#16) from his adjoining site. It turned out he had driven up from LA, but his fishing buddies had stood him up, so he ambled over to chat with us. Hollywood contemplatively blew smoke into the tepid night air, as we told him about the PCS and our many feats of daring do. He made sympathetic noises but one sensed that he thought us somewhat strange to partake in such a pastime.

At about 10:30 PM John (trip leader) and Kate Ingvaldstad arrived, followed at midnight by Mike Johnson.

The group doing Dana (originally scheduled to do Conness) spent the night near Tioga Pass: Judith Yarborough (trip leader) and Phyllis Olrich bedded at Camp 9, while Linda Yazelle and Bill Kirkpatrick roughed it at a motel.

Saturday. August 28. Excelsior group. We met at Virginia Lakes trailhead (9,500') at 8:30 AM, and were greeted by Larry Hester, who had arrived in the mountains a few days earlier, and was leaving immediately after today's climb for a wedding. Off at 8:45 AM, we sauntered up past the Virginia Lakes: Trumbull, Virginia #1 and #2, Blue, Red, Cooney, and Frog Lakes while making the gentle climb up to self-dubbed “Virginia Lakes Pass” (10,120' not to be confused with Virginia Pass 2 miles NW). At this point we left the trail and headed up and over “Red Peak” (-11,700') and climbed up to the low point above the tiny glacier immediately north of Peak 12,126'. Once making this ridge, it is an easy traverse (with impressive views) south to Excelsior Mountain (12,446' class 2 via North Ridge). The summit register was completely full, with no spare paper.

Excelsior is 8 miles RT from Virginia Lakes Trailhead with 3,000' elevation gain and loss. Mike, Eric, and I elected to descend via a chute on the Northeast Face, calling our route “Burro Cirque.” Though not in the guidebook it could be rated high class 2 for rather loose

scree/talus and a steep but glissadable 1,000' snow tongue. Once down in the bowl, but still above Burro Lake, we climbed up 500' and out via “Monkey Pass” (~11,300'). Consisting of unrelenting tiny, loose scree, one must resort to tedious crawling on all fours (like a monkey) to have even a prayer at achieving sufficient traction to make the ascent.

From Monkey Pass, Mike and I made a quick scramble up “Thumble” (-11,700'), a small pinnacle on the west side of the Black Mountain ridge. From there we dropped back down onto Virginia Lakes Pass, and soon caught up with Eric, color-photoed wildflower guidebook in hand, leisurely examining the fecund floral splendor. Once back in camp, we waited for the Dana group to arrive.

Meanwhile.. Saturday. August 28. Dana group. After rendezvousing at the Tioga Pass entrance station parking lot, Judith, Phyllis, Linda, and Bill started up the use trail that leads up the NW slopes to the summit of Dana (13,057' class 1). As usual it was quite a popular climb and there were in excess of a dozen other people on the summit at the same time. There was even one party who had ascended the Dana Couloir. During their lunchtime repast, those in the Excelsior group were able, with the aid of binoculars, to just make out the

crowd of people atop Dana. After a brief time on the summit, the Dana group returned to Tioga Pass, and then drove to Trumbull Lake campground to meet up with the Excelsior group.

At 4:30 PM the Dana group merged with the Excelsior group, by homesteading the adjoining campsite. From 5-6 PM, John, Kate, Dennis, and Mike drove a quarter mile over to the Virginia Lakes resort and bought showers. Wimps. The more hearty among us (Judith, Phyllis, Linda, Bill and myself), opted to partake in a preprandial dip in the soothing waters of the Travertine Hot Springs near Bridgeport. Alas, we fell phlegmily short of our goal. Without further explication, let me just say that the only bathing done by the hearty group that night was by paper towels in the bathroom of a roadside Mexican restaurant. Speaking of which, we all managed to meet at and consume vast quantities of south of the border specialties. Ole'.

When we returned to our campsite, Hollywood tempted us to his *vicinal* campsite with beer and a campfire. He told us of his day spent catching a pair o' fish. We told him this was sissy stuff, and that if he were a real man, he'd be climbing mountains the next day with us. Soothingly sudsed, and warmed by the flames and fickle smoke, he consented to join us.

Sunday August 29. Sometime in the wee hours of the morning, Phyllis snuck over to Hollywood's tent and gave him

some... food. Homemade sweet bread. Phyllis' schoolgirl-with-a-crush antics were hard to stomach at altitude. However, it may well be that nothing happened between the two, for at about 6:00 AM Hollywood came over to borrow some aspirin from me, complaining of a headache (Yay Hollywood. And next time she makes a pass at you, tell her you're busy washing your hair. Shot down in flames Phyl).

..we did debate the following: If you won the lottery, would you move to the mountains and send a limo to chauffeur your friends up for climbs, or would you live in the flats and helicopter up?

Following rather extended matutinal rituals, we gathered at our picnic table at 8:35 AM to start out for Dunderberg (12,374'). Linda stayed back at camp to do some fishing, while Kate, Dermis and Judith accompanied us part way up the SE slope before returning to camp. According to Secor, the SE ridge is class 2; it is not. The SE *ridge* is class 3 (near the top), while the SE *slope* or SE chutes are class 2. After traversing off the ridge, we all met up again at the top of Castle Peak (12,300') just east of Dunderberg. A shallow talus saddle separates the two peaks and soon we were atop Dunderberg (12,374') where someone had erected a 25' high

flagpole (made from a machined tree trunk) that was flying two raggedy pieces of cloth of unknown origin or significance.

The summit register contained the usual interesting farrago of entries, among which were: two guys who had ridden their dirt bike motorcycles part way up (from Bridgeport), several entries from South African climbers, one from Switzerland, one *from* France, and even PCS' own Paul Magliocco who had summited with his 2-year-old. The register box also contained a rotting, smelly big horn sheep horn, and a photo of a bunch of military personnel who, in full uniforms and combat boots, had summited, took a Polaroid shot of themselves and left it in the box (most likely they were the ones who erected the flagpole).

With a spectacular view in all directions, we partook in the usual peak-top munching and chatter. As Hollywood and Phyllis dined on her homemade bread, he revealed to *her* that *he* (factotum) was a carpenter... and an actor. Perhaps it was the altitude, but Phyllis Sarita Olrich all but swooned. And she wasn't the least bit put off when I quietly reminded her that all Angelinos claim to be actors. Without even looking in my direction, she just waved her hand at me absentmindedly, and continued to stare into Hollywood's eyes (which one couldn't do directly on account of his rakish Thespian shades). Perhaps it was the altitude, but I immediately felt ill.

We descended via the far SE scree slopes, hoping for some skiing, but the rocks were too large and well set. So we angled down to a south face defile, which sported dirt and rock in just the right proportion for scree skiing. We whooped and hollered all the way down to Trumbull Lake (including Hollywood, who, on his first major peak bag, exhibited no signs of anomie and descended with insouciant sangfroid), and were back in camp shortly after 3:00 PM. Heading variously north, south, and east we nearly boxed the compass in our return trips to civilization.

Although the terrain didn't lend itself to deep intellectual discussion (such as the schism and internecine inciting topic of feminism), we did debate the following: If you won the lottery, would you move to the mountains and send a limo to chauffeur your friends up for climbs, or would you live in the flats and helicopter up? Hollywood said he would read Somerset Maugham and take us all to Nepal. We were shocked to discover that someone from LA was able to make a credible literary reference. Oh, that's right, he's an artiste.

Thanks to John and Judith for leading such a fun trip.

- **Victor Anderson**

(Any references to school-girl crushes and clandestine tent visits are merely the jealous ravings of the author and were left in for comic effect only. - editor. P.S. Eat your heart out, Victor)

PCS Initiation on Clouds Rest, Oct. 2-3

This beginners trip turned into a tough trip by anyone's standards. Class 1-2 it may have been, but it was a good length with large altitude changes. The trip was lead by Debbie "Runner fan" Benham and Judith "Spaghetti queen" Yarborough. The members of the trip were Janet "Burnt eyebrows" Coudius and three new members - Keith "Trip optimist" Amidon, Bi "My butt hurts" Oliveras, and John "What if the car doesn't start" Neave.

The plan on the first day was to ascend from Tenaya lake to Clouds Rest and descend back into Yosemite Valley. Two minutes into the hike came the first sign that all was not well. Runners, in numbers not dissimilar to clouds of locusts, joined us. They did however follow strict country code: They have right of way under all circumstances. If the path is narrow, no matter, the advantage of surprise is theirs. Our responsible leader, Debbie, suggested tripping a few to put them off being quite so confident of a successful passing maneuver. This was tempting at the time.

Putting this irritation aside, the visibility was astounding. Once we had attained the top of Clouds Rest via a ridge we could see to the far comers of the National Park. In front the Yosemite Valley spread - a green lake amidst the hard granite walls, its entrance guarded on either side by the

massive stone gateposts of Half dome and North Dome. One could sense a feeling of awe that came over the group. To the left was the Clark range, daunting, stark, and tall. Behind was Echo peak, Mount Lyell and many others of which I knew not the name. I certainly had an education of the sheer size of Yosemite Park and my mouth watered looking at some of the spiky profiles. One day they will be mine. (Well maybe.)

That this insignificant lump I was sitting on was actually higher than Half Dome really surprised me. At this point Keith remarked, "I am really looking forward to the decent." He retracted the comment but the "trip optimist" tag stuck. I was thinking at this point that I might break away from the others and have a go at Half Dome. I'm glad I didn't say anything. Looking at Half Dome from the top is quite different than from the base. I was exhausted at the appropriate fork in the trails.

After 6,000' of decent the team became a bit ragged. We came into camp in drips and drabs. Tired. It was a long day; but although muscles and joints had been left behind the sense of humor came through. Beautiful views, a bus back to the campsite and a recovery were the order of the day. PCS gossip around the campfire was rife - I am looking forward to meeting some of these people now. The Meal, Spaghetti, was good.

PCS continued its ongoing education program with the more experienced members demon-

strating how to light a wood fire with cooker fuel. Janet was elected to throw the match on the fire while every sensible person retreated to a safe distance. Much to my surprise she only lost her eyebrows.

On the second day a few unnamed members of what was now a team were in no physical shape to take on any large decent and the rest of us were looking for a good excuse due to aching muscles. The gift shop was good. After that we drove to Glacier Point and did a short

Much to my surprise she only lost her eyebrows.

walk to Sentinel Dome. The view was good but, (and this was the sad point of the trip) the coyotes were tame. Is there no end to the corruption of Nature? Isn't the world big enough for **man**? After a group photo we made our way home, sadness gone.

I was just finishing the drive home when I said "Wouldn't it be bad if Keith's car didn't start?" (I was lift-sharing with him) and, of course, it didn't. I take the blame totally. Still he got home. The trip was a success in my mind. I know five people much better than before the weekend, I've made some new friends. I know some of the High Sierra better and I formulated some goals - peaks I want to climb.

A personal perspective with artistic license taken - John Neave.

Rebuttal on Mt. Lyell

I'm sure that we were all amused and entertained by Victor Anderson's account of our group's mid August Climb of Mt. Lyell (see "Graduation on Lyell," September '93 Scree). To Victor must surely go the **silver** quill award for this year's best written and entertaining piece. I found his florid descriptions of the scenery, and the convivial repartee within the group to be both amusing and well done. What needs clarification however is the fact that Victor used a bit too much poetic license and selective interpretation of events for the sake of making an interesting story (or grinding an ax as the case may be) to suit my taste or reputation. In the interest of preserving the right of redress in a free and open press I present this rebuttal.

For the 12 years I have been climbing with the PCS, I have always thought that one of the club's strengths was the manner in which it promoted teamwork in the mountains. Victor did harm to this tradition in a couple of important ways. First, the tardiness issue. Victor writes that Tim was nowhere to be seen until 10 AM and spends at least a quarter of the article describing his feelings on being slighted by the leader (me) showing up late. What he didn't tell the reader was that I was in line at the Toulumne Permit Kiosk at 7:30 AM long before he showed up, and that he did indeed see me at 8:00 waiting in an unusually long line for our reserved permit,

while he cruised the full parking lot for a parking slot (I was parked illegally) and repacked his pack. What wasn't mentioned was that all the parking lots were filled and I had to find a spot half a mile away. What also wasn't mentioned was that I had brought a friend, John Kigkosi, along who had never gone backpacking before, let alone been in the mountains. As many of you know who have taken beginners, I had to spend time repacking his pack. All that extra time spent doing unplanned things meant we were unable to start off at 8 o'clock, but then I never said we were going to start off at 8. Just to be there by then. In the best team spirit however, most members of the group, with a couple of notable exceptions, seemed to understand and took it in stride, and we got off smartly at 10. Had we set a time for 10, we may have gotten off badly at noon? one? two? who knows. That would have been fine for the able hikers in the group, like Victor, but for the good of the team it would have been disastrous.

Another notion that I wish to dispel is that the group "split up" as we climbed the mountain. This is simply not true. I believe it is both bad form and dangerous to split up a group when on a climb. I don't condone it and don't want the membership left with the impression that I do. What is true is that Victor and another chose to sprint on ahead for the last 500 feet, following nearly the same route as the rest of us took (within sight of the

rest of us). What wasn't mentioned was that the climbing was 3rd class and that some of the members of the group had trouble negotiating the rocks, then the steep snow section above. The group split because Victor did not see fit that he should stay behind to assist the others who were less able than he, while others worked as a team to ensure that everyone on the trip made it to the top. A writer with a stronger sense of group accomplishment, instead of self-enlargement, would have recognized this.

Lastly, I wish to thank the whole group (with one exception) including Victor who went beyond the call of duty, for pulling together as a team and helping out by making sacrifices when John got a mild case of AMS. Your kindness has given John a memory of the Sierras and the Sierra Club that he will never forget.

Overall, it was a fine trip, one that was uplifting for all. A couple of last words of philosophy. Individuals who are interested only in how many peaks they climb, not in who they climb them with, quickly find they have few partners who are willing to share their peak experiences with them. Or, the spirit of mountaineering is in who you go with and the times you have, not in how many peaks you do or how fast you climb them. The devil is in the details, Victor. Watch which devil you ignore.

-Tim Hult

Scree Needs Volunteer(s)

SCREE, that most important of PCS institutions, is made possible only through the selfless contributions of three volunteers. While Paul Vlasveld continues to maintain the data base and print mailing labels, and Patt Baenen has volunteered to be the next editor (yeh Patt!), we still need someone to do the mailing. Marcia McCord has been quietly performing this function for over a year now, but will be stepping down at the end of the year. To put it simply, there will be no Scree if we don't get someone to take her place.

The responsibilities involve picking up Scree from the printer, folding, stapling, stamping, labeling, and mailing it. We have a stamping machine which eliminates the need for a wet tongue. We will probably continue to use a printer in the Palo Alto area, so someone working or living in that area would have the easiest time of it. If we can get two or three volunteers, then the actual work load per person is minimal. If you're even remotely interested, contact Kelly.

-Kelly Maas



(continued from page 2)

Red Rock Canyon Quiet Weekend (near Mojave)

(EASY)

Date: November 6-7

Leader: Rochelle Garratt
(510) 769-1706

Cottonwood Mountains Traverse Dry Bone Canyon to Sand Flat, Death Valley **(Strenuous)**

Date: November 11-14

Leader: Bob Ellis
(510) 526-3788

Grapevine Peak/Death Valley Backpack **(Strenuous)**

Date: November 25-28

Leader: Steve Tabor
(510) 357-6585

Bighorn Sheep Watch Clark Mountain, East Mojave Scenic Area **(Moderate)**

Date: December 3-5

Leader: Bob Ellis
(510) 526-3788

Fremont Peak/Inscription Canyon Carcamp **(Easy/Moderate)**

Date: December 24-26

Leader: Steve Tabor
(510) 357-6585

100-Mile Desert Crossing Bristol Lake to the Colorado **(Strenuous)**

Date: January 3-17

Leader: Steve Tabor
(510) 357-6585

Mountain Notes

Point – Counterpoint

Risky Climbers

A NATIONAL PARK SERVICE proposal to force daring mountain climbers and others who court the risks of nature to foot the bills for their rescue may sound a little hard-hearted, but it is a sensible solution to a mammoth government problem.

The park service alone spent \$3 million last year on search and rescues, and untold sums were also expended by other government agencies on costly rescue efforts that included the use of helicopters and Coast Guard craft.

The new policy may require the mountaineers to buy insurance before their sorties, with the insurer paying for the search and rescue. The individual climber would be responsible for the reimbursement if he fails to obtain the insurance.

A REMARKABLE DIFFERENCE exists between the park service program and the rescue of a victim from a burning building or from an overturned automobile. The policy will apply only to the rescue of bold adventurers who knowingly risk their lives in death-defying assaults on mountain peaks or in other forays. The government is fully entitled to make an attempt to recover these expenditures.

**-editorial reprinted from 9/7/93
San Francisco Chronicle**

Pre-paid Deliverance

Seattle

“High mountains are a feeling; the hum of human cities torture,” wrote Byron. Feelings do not pay bills, though. So the National Park Service, in an effort to recoup money spent saving climbers, wants to charge for rescue services. Under a new proposal, mountaineers in Alaska’s Denali National Park (home of Mount McKinley, the tallest peak in North America) and one other park (probably Mount Rainier, near Seattle) will find themselves paying up if their trip goes awry.

Last year the Park Service spent \$3m prising people out of crevasses or fishing them from turbulent rivers. Henceforth, climbers registering for a trip will probably have to pay a fee that will go into an insurance pool, which in turn will reimburse the Park Service and outside contractors (such as helicopter pilots) for rescue work. If the scheme is a success, other risk-takers, such as kayakers and hanggliders, may face similar charges in the 50 national parks.

Such tolls, common in many countries, would be new in America. Some see the rescue fee as a hidden tax, aimed only at climbers. Many rescue groups think the fee runs counter to their

volunteer ethic. Indeed, most rescue work in the lower 48 states is performed by volunteers, with supervision from park or other regional authorities.



Will the new policy actually accomplish much? Probably not. Twelve people died last year on Mount McKinley; the rescue bill, \$206,000, was only a small dent in the service’s \$1.2 billion annual budget. If the scheme involves more paperwork, new staff may have to be hired. Worst of all, rescue decisions might now be subject to second-guessing by mean-minded insurance adjusters.

Nor is it clear that climbers need rescuing more than other people. In Alaska, last year’s biggest search was for a lone hiker who drowned while fording a river in St Elias-Wrangell National Park. It cost \$90,000. Hikers, however, are unlikely ever to be charged a rescue fee. Putting a price tag on danger may not be as easy as the Park Service thinks.

**-reprinted from 9/11/93 issue of
The Economist**

Wilderness Etiquette

Three rules of backpacking revealed

by *Emily Postpile*

Dear Emily: I've heard that there are three rules of backpacking. What are they?

- *Baffled in Bishop*

Dear Baffled: The three rules of backpacking are (1) Don't look at it, (2) Don't smell it, and (3) If you break rules 1 or 2, don't talk about it

**Have a question? Write to
Emily, c/o Scree Editor.**

Hike for Open Space

Two hikes are being planned to benefit Friends of Open Space. Neither is very hard, at about 6 or 7 miles. Led by a member of Friends of Open Space, you can learn about the struggle to preserve local hiking areas near our homes. You may have received one of the yellow fliers already. Forms should be in by Nov. 5, but you can register late by calling Kristi at the Chapter Office at (415) 390-8494. Almaden Quicksilver County Park (November 13) and Los Alamitos Creek (November 20). Cost for either hike is \$10. Have you hiked in your backyard lately? See you there.

-Kelly Maas

Axes axed

Sierra Club insurance and liability are probably not everyone's favorite topics, but they're worth reviewing from time to time, considering the activities we engage in. The following should clear up most questions.

First, "The Club has no domestic accident policies to insure members or non-members against loss from injuries. The liability policy insures the Club against liability (suit) for Club negligence and provides a defense against a claim of liability."

As you may know, liability insurance for mountaineering activities became prohibitively expensive a few years ago. Thus, the Sierra Club cannot engage in the following: "All climbs, hikes, expeditions, including instruction courses, schools and similar training which require the use of ropes or any such activity where pitons, jam nuts, runners, bolts, ice axes, carabiners or belaying techniques are recommended." We can assume that crampons should also be included in this list. Notice the word "recommended."

Several people have wondered aloud whether a rope may be taken as a back-up. "Ropes and ice axes MAY be carried BY THE LEADER AND ASSISTANT LEADER ONLY to ensure the safety of an outing in unexpected situations; examples are stream crossings and rescues. Ropes or ice axes may NOT be

used as climbing aids or on any outing where their use is recommended by the opinion of experienced local climbers and leaders; the insurance restrictions require that such outings NOT be conducted by Sierra Club."

If you aren't sure whether a trip you wish to lead can be official, give the Vice Chair/Scheduler a call.

And just what is the difference between a PCS trip and a private trip? Basically, the Sierra Club probably has deeper pockets than your climbing partners, should you choose to sue because of an accident. Also, you may have more faith in a Sierra Club leader than in someone putting together his own trip.

Regarding car-pooling: Car-pooling is encouraged by the Club, "but car-pooling to and from the trailhead is at the sole risk of the participants, both driver and passengers." The trip begins and ends at the trailhead.

-*Kelly Maas*

(One wonders what John Muir would think of all this.. *-editor*)

Caltrans Road Information

Caltrans has an 800 number that lets you instantly check the conditions on any highway in the state using a touch-tone phone. Dial (800) 427-7623, then punch in the number of the highway you're interested in. You'll get the latest recording for that highway. It should prove useful in the coming winter months.

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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:

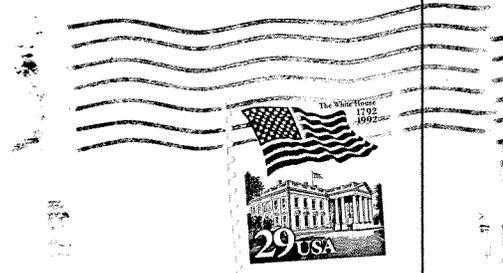
- Class 1:** Walking on a trail.
- Class 2:** Walking cross-country, using hands for balance.
- Class 3:** Requires use of hands for climbing. A rope may be used occasionally.
- Class 4:** Requires rope belays.
- Class 5:** Technical rock climbing.

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. Photos welcome.

Headline for the next issue is November 30!



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94/02
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