



SCREE

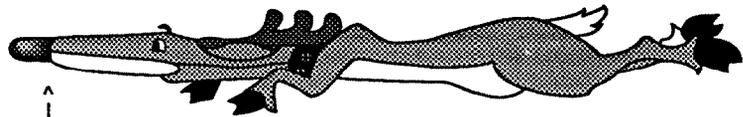
Newsletter of the Peak Climbing Section, Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter

Yo, Ho, Ho Come One, Come All to the PCS Christmas Party..

Thanks to a friend of Eugene Miya who works at Silicon Graphics we have the Cafe Iris for our party again this year. This will be held from 7:30 pm to 10:30 pm on Tuesday December 13. Directions to the cafe follow. Members can bring a maximum of 10 slides to show at the party. Bring your most exciting or most embarrassing slides and let's see who gets the most gasps or giggles.

To get to Silicon Graphics, take the Shoreline Blvd exit from US-101 in Mountain View. From either the northbound or southbound directions, make a right exit, then turn left at the top of the ramp, heading north through the industrial park.

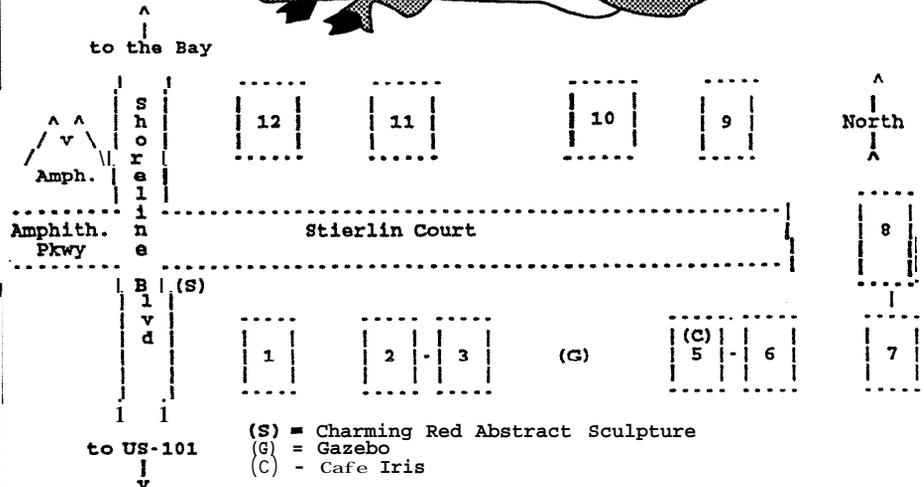
1.3 miles from the top of the ramp, there'll be the unmistakable Shoreline Amphitheater on your left - a giant two poled white tent. Another landmark at the same corner is the charming red abstract sculpture on your right. Turn right at that corner, onto Stierlin Court. You're on the SGI campus. Park anywhere that isn't a fire lane, a handicapped space, or a loading dock. Building 5 is the fourth building on the right, the one immediately after the gazebo.



Food assignments are based
on your last name:



- AF Desserts
- G-L Snacks, appetizers or salads
- M-Q Drinks
- R-Z Main course



Official PCS Trips



The Beginners Snow Camping Seminar

Which PCS and STS have sponsored since it began, is now in its 22nd year. This is a golden opportunity for anyone interested in a cooler camping situation.

Classes (evenings):

Jan. 9, 10, 11, 1995

field trips:

Jan 28-29 and Feb 4-5 1995

Leaders:

Chris Macintosh (415)563-5870,
Marj Ottenberg (408)867-4576,
Dave Kutty, Sheldon Fiith, Tom
Wolfe, Jim Macrander

Pyramid Peak 9,983' elevation Class 2

Dates: January 14-16

Leader: Palmer Dyal

415/604-6545(w), 415/941-5321(h)

Co-leader: Wanted

This will be a moderately-paced 3 mile snowshoe trip to climb a relatively easy peak in the Desolation Wilderness area southwest of Lake Tahoe. The elevation gain is about 1000' per mile and we plan to camp at tree line. By using three days we will have time to build snow caves and view the marvelous scenery. This will be a good trip for beginning winter climbers

Freel Fine

*"It was a dark and stormy night... *
No, it wasn't.*

*It was a dark and cold morning... *
More like it, but still melodramatic.*

On Nov. 22, 1994, Jeff Fisher and Steve Eckert set out from the intersection of Oneidas and Chibcha in Meyers (SE corner of Lake Tahoe). It was 6am and 0 and they wondered if there could be any finer way to spend a Tuesday morning."

All of the over-night trip participants cancelled, so we decided to try Freel Peak as a day hike.

The first 4 miles of the route are open to 4WDs and bikes in the summer, and snowmobiles in the winter. The racks the snowmobiles left on previous days meant we did not need the snowshoes for the two hours it took to get from 6400' up to 8000' just past Fountain Place).

We decided to angle across a broad face rather than attain the ridge, hoping that the snow would be drifted or melted due to a western exposure. No way - it was some of the finest powder I have ever snowshoed in. The face rises 2500' in about a mile, so it was pretty steep. We found some deep holes around bushes and logs and rocks, but most of the ground had 2-3 feet of cover.

As we got higher, the snow firmed up a little due to the wind. That meant you could ALMOST step on the drifts before breaking through. Drifts or not, we sank between 6 and 12 inches for a true aerobic workout.

Somewhere around 10,000' we noticed that our SNOWshoes were being used as TREEshoes, and we decided to stop punishing the scrubby trees (limber pine?). We rockhopped,

plowed, and kicked steps over to the peak at 10881', where there is an old radio relay station (now abandoned but with the door left open) built like an oil tank. Not pretty, but you could sure get in out of a storm.

The view was great, with no clouds and snow on the desert floor around Reno. The last climber before us reached the peak on 11/4, and prayed (in the register) for snow. No problem. We got it. Last year no one climbed the peak between September and July, but the register only goes back two years due to the number of people who make it in summer.

We had some problems with the RedFeather rental snowshoes on the steep return route (GO Sherpa!), but still managed to get out by 6pm. It was back down to 10 degrees by then, so this would have been a brutal night to bivvy. This was the longest day (14 miles, 5100' gain/loss either of us had ever done on snowshoes, and one of the more varied due to the powder and drifts.

If you are buying snowshoes, make sure they hinge easily, that the toe does not catch when pivoting steeply, and that you can control the sideways angle of the shoe if the tail gets caught or if you are on a side slope. Bindings must not have plastic buckles which break and slip, and must hold your boot firmly. If you plan to do any climbing (vs. flat walking), make sure there is traction both on icy and powder snow. The only way to get powder traction is to have lacing between the fabric footbed and the frame, so the snow can push up between them and get caught. Trust me, the RedFeathers don't have traction!

— Steve Eckert

Waterfall of Rock

his mid-July trip gave new meaning to the terms "easy approach" and loose rock." Eight of us — leader John Ingvaldstad, Larry Sasscer, Phyllis Olrich, Debbie Bulger, Paul Magliocco, Karl Pedersen, Steve King and myself (Jim Ramaker) — met at the Rock Creek trailhead near Bishop at 8:30am. We hiked long a nearly flat trail past a series of beautiful lakes, and stopped at 10am to camp for the weekend.

After a snack, we headed off for Mt. Mills (13,468), though it turned out we were the ones who got assaulted. We hiked up through a series of beautiful grassy alpine basins, then traversed on slabs above a small chasm just northeast of Mills. By 1:30 we were clambering over the jumbled moraine below Mills, reading our photocopied route descriptions and staring up at the grey, steep, and shattered wall above us.

We located the couloir blocked by a chockstone mentioned in Secor, and John, Larry, and Steve headed up that while I led the other five of us up a snow couloir to the left that looked much easier. A few hundred feet up this couloir, the snow ended and gave way to steep, horrendously loose rock and gravel — so loose that cascades of it streamed down from every footstep, sometimes even when we were standing still. A baseball-sized rock hit Debbie Bulger on the head, drawing blood, and a bigger one landed on her daypack just behind her head. Luckily she wasn't seriously hurt, but obviously it was time to retreat.

On the way down, Phyllis had trouble downclimbing a short ver-

tical section, so I rushed over, extended both hands upward, and helped her down with a firm but well-padded "butt belay," thoroughly enjoyed by both parties.

Meanwhile, John, Larry, and Steve were doing a bit better in the other couloir, which was equally loose but less steep. The rest of us traversed over and followed them up, until we finally reached some beautifully solid white granite slabs on our left and climbed up them onto the huge nearly flat summit plateau. An easy scramble across the plateau brought us to the summit at 4pm.

To descend the couloir, we broke into three groups, and each group waited until the preceding one was almost down to the moraine before starting down. A safe strategy, but as you can imagine very slow, and at 8pm with the sun sinking, two of our three groups were still staggering across boulders far from camp. With some helpful navigation from Phyllis and Paul, we all got into camp by 9, just as the last light faded from the sky.

Needless to say, we were all very happy to return to our camp in one piece, and we stayed up till 11 cooking, talking, and joking about the events of the day. Debbie told us about the time she couldn't find her camp on a previous trip and had to biwy in the woods, only to discover in the morning that she was about 50 feet from her tent and sleeping bag.

On Sunday, everyone except Paul and I were too done in to contemplate our scheduled climb up Mt. Abbot (13,715). Besides her head wound, Debbie had a twisted ankle, while Steve King had a deep gash in

his hand from a fall he took on the moraine, and he in fact hiked out to see about getting stitches. After a leisurely breakfast in the sun, we all packed our gear, and then Paul and I headed up while everyone else left to hike out.

Since the peak is less than a mile from Miis, our approach was exactly the same as the day before. Clouds were already gathering over the mountain, so it looked like we'd have to race thunderstorms to the summit. We climbed a wide, easy snow couloir and exited onto some class 3 rock, which was loose and ugly like the day before. But with just two of us, we could spread out horizontally and avoid the aerial bombs, so it was no problem.

We were stymied for awhile at an apparent dead-end cliff, but Paul eventually found a way around it to the right and we arrived on the summit ridge, where the rock was beautifully solid and the vantage point awesome. Cliffi dropped away on both sides of the ridge for hundreds of feet, and the ridge extended to the left about a quarter mile, at first almost level, then rising gently toward the summit.

Luckily, the ridge crest was a few feet wide and very solid, and we traversed carefully along it for hundreds of feet as the clouds grew darker and darker. Once or twice we dropped down to avoid knife-edge sections with hairy dropoffs.

Mercifully, the thunder gods stayed silent, and we topped out about **1:30**. A few brief photos, an entry in the summit register (where we

(Continued on page 7)

Private Trips

Desert Survivors

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

Mt. Ralston Skiing/Snow Camping

Late March 5&6
Organizer: Eugene Miya
(415) 961-6772 (W)

Lead with ski touring section. Beginner snow campers welcome.

Big Basin to the Sea (and back) Conditioning Hike 5-20 mi.

Date: Sunday, January 22, 1995
Organizer: Phyllis Olrich
Home: (415) 322-0323
Work: (415) 725-1541
E-mail:

PhyllisO@Forsythe.Stanford.Edu
There's no NFL football scheduled so *whadya gonna* do? Meet at 8:00am at the Page Mill and 280 park and Ride to carpool or at 9:00am at Big Basin Redwoods State Park Headquarters for this dayhike through the redwoods. Route to be determined day of hike. Elevation gain moderate. Ram cancels.

Truckee Peak Skiing

Date: Jan. 21-22
Organizer: Butch Suits
(415) 325-4116 (H)

Saturday we ski up Pole Creek and attempt Silver Peak, possibly Tinker's Knob. Sunday we ski Castle Peak via the southeast ridge. You must be a strong crosscountry downhill skier with good endurance. Avalanche transceivers recommended. Lodging in Truckee TBD.

Anza-Borrego Desert State Park Carcamp

Date: Dec 22-25 (Thurs-Sun)
Contact Leader: Lucy DuPertuis
Phone: (510) 685-4836

Forget drizzly Yule tide frenzy. Enjoy balmy (not icy) nights and warm days in low, occotillo-studded southern Anza-Borrego located over the mountains east of San Diego. Explorations of Rock House Canyon, Chuckwalla Wash, and Inner Pasture will average 6-8 miles daily, leaving time to kick back in hidden native Californian palm groves or Agua Caliente's hot pool. The long scramble up Whale Peak (2000' gain) will demand more oomph. Sign up before Dec. 8. Limit 15.

Marble Canyon/Death Valley Backpack Easy

Date: Dec 24-26 (Sat-Mon)
Contact Leader: Steve Tabor
Phone: (510) 357-6585

My holiday gift to you: easy backpacking in a well-decorated canyon on Death Valley's west side. Marble and Cottonwood Canyons are known for their beautiful rock and petroglyphs. We'll backpack in one day, explore without packs on the second, and backpack out on the third. Water shows on the map as do tight, twisting canyons and side canyons. Expect some cold, short days, plus brilliant stars. Rain enhances.



Orocopia/Mecca Hills Carcamp

Easy/Strenuous

Date: Dec 31-Jan 2 (Sat-Mon)
Contact Leader: Steve Tabor
Phone: (510) 357-6585

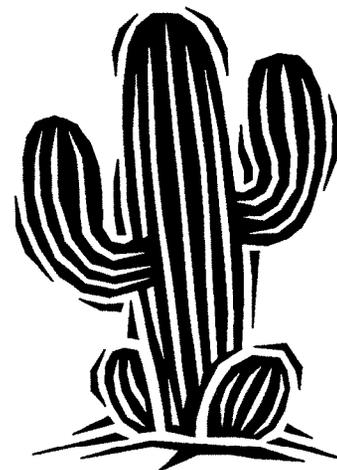
Features of this desert carcamp include an exploration of the twisting sandstones of Mecca Hills, a climb of Orocopia Mountain (3815') with its excellent long views, and a visit to the fabled Salton Sea, below sea level at -234'. Hiking will be easy, except for the peak, which may be quite demanding (hikers need not climb the entire distance). Enjoy the desert's clear air and low, photogenic shadows. Days will be short & nights long - our campfires will be welcome beneath starlit skies.

Covington Flat Backpack Camp

(Joshua Tree National Park)
Date: Jan 28-30
Contact Leader: David Holten
Phone: (916) 583-2021

Covington Flat, lying at a some-

(Cont inued on next page)



(Continued from previous page)

what higher elevation in the western side of the Park, is a remote area of isolated mountains and valleys containing some of the largest Joshua trees known. Best of all, it's an area of no paved roads. On this carcamp without cars, we will backpack in the required one mile minimum off-road. From here, we'll do three dayhikes-to Smith Water Canyon, Eureka Peak, and the Covington Loop (largest known Joshua Trees on this route). Trip specifically designed to straighten out your head from the previous Super Bowl Weekend! Limit 16.

Granite Mountain/ Cadiz Valley Carcamp Easy/Strenuous

Date: Feb 18-20 (Sat-Mon)
Contact Leader: Steve Tabor
Phone: (510) 357-6585

Granite Mountain rises high above Cadiz Valley's sandy floor. We'll spend a couple of days in the valley and its dunes and bordering ranges, and one day climbing the peak. This range is at the breakoff point between Mojave and Sonoran vegetation, which should make for some interesting botanizing. Days are short but sweet this time of year, but temperatures should be warming up, and good rains may have already leafed out the brush. Hikes on days one and three will be easy. The Peak (4353') is strenuous, but hikers need not go to the top.

This article is somewhat technical, but should be of interest to all who have recently purchased Casio or Avocet altimeters

While in Nepal recently, we climbed Mera Peak.. whose altitude was listed on one map as 21,200', on another map as 21,800', and in a guide book as "my altimeter was wildly off and I cannot confirm either of the maps". We had 6 Avocet wristwatch altimeters in the group, all of which agreed within +/- 100' for most of the trip. The Avocets indicated the peak was 20,300' - quite a large error from the map

I got airport elevations in Kathmandu (4000') and Lukla (9,000') and there was only 50' of error in the Avocet in that range. It seems unlikely that there was 1500' of error in the next 10,000' so I called Avocet for a sanity check.

Avocet referred me to the booklet "The Sportsman's Altimeter/ Barometer" by William J. Peet II. This little orange book is \$4, and covers sources of error inherent in ALL altimeters, mechanical or electronics. Good reading...

Altimeters measure air pressure, nothing more. The pressure is related to the weight of the "air column" from where you are up into space. The weight of that air is greater when it is cold, and less when it is hot. All altimeters are calibrated to a standard temperature curve. If the air is not the expected temperature AT ALL ELEVATIONS, the altimeter will make mistakes.

Even if you adjust the altitude at a known point, the amount of gain/

loss shown on the altimeter will be wrong if the air is the wrong temperature, since you are measuring CHANGES in pressure, not the absolute pressure.

All of this is background: The "standard temperature" charts in the book show 0 degrees at 17000', 16 deg at 12k, 23 deg at 10k, 30 deg at 8k, and 59 deg at sealevel (Fahrenheit). We were running temperatures well above the standards near 10k, but about right near the peak. The prediction would be that our altimeters would measure TOO LITTLE elevation gain due to the warm (less dense) air, which matches the observation.

As for the AMOUNT of the error, another table predicts about 1% error per 5 degree temperature variation. To get the 10% error we observed would require 50 degrees difference! Since we saw overnight low temps near the standard temperature, maybe 5 degrees higher at a 17k pass, I have to believe the map showing **21,200'** is closer to the truth than the 21,800'. Guessing at a max error of 5%, we could add 550 feet for the climb from 9000 to 20000... but we would still be well below the lowest map elevation.

If anyone goes to Nepal with a handheld GPS, I would like to compare notes.

— **Steven R. Eckert**

Thank you all very much for giving me the opportunity to work on the Scree this year. I have enjoyed the newsletter and have learned a great deal about the group, hiking/climbing and the internet. Who could ask for more. I also would like to apologize to those people who submitted entries, and for whatever reason were not completely satisfied.

I would also like to thank Dixie and here faithful crew for handling the mailing and Kelly for helping with the proofing (when there was time).

Please note the deadline for January issue of Scree is early-December 21-because the new editor will be out of town over the holidays. Please send material to John Flinn at 133 Promethean Way, Mountain View, CA94043. e-mail:jnflinn@aol.com. Phone: 415 968-2050.

Patt Baenen

11 Climbers Found Dead In Nepal

Kathmandu, Nepal- A rescue team found the bodies of all 11 members of a German expedition huddled together on a Himalayan mountain yesterday.

They were lying on a snowfield high on 20,100-foot Mount Pisang "like a big ball," said Gottfried Huber, who arrived by helicopter. The hikers apparently died November 13, perhaps after falling from a ridge, he said.

Huber, a professional guide from Fridolfing, said the hikers might have slipped on a ridge while descending and fallen about 1,650 feet.

-SF Cronicle, 11/21/94

Diamox is a potent carbonic anhydrase inhibitor, effective in the control of fluid secretion (e.g. some types of glaucoma in the treatment of certain convulsive disorders (e.g. epilepsy), and in the promotion of diuresis in instances of abnormal fluid retention (e.g. cardiac edema).

Diamox is an enzyme inhibitor that acts specifically on the hydration of carbon dioxide and the dehydration of carbonic acid. The diuretic effect of Diamox is due to its action in the kidney on the reversible reaction involving hydration of carbon dioxide and dehydration of carbonic acid.

Diamox Sequels sustained-release capsules provide prolonged action to inhibit aqueous humor secretion for 18 to 24 hours after each dose, whereas tablets act for only 8 to 12 hours. Blood concentrations of Diamox peak between 3 to 6 hours after administration of Sequels, compared to 1 to 4 hours with tablets.

Placebo-controlled clinical trials have shown that prophylactic administration of Diamox at a dose of 250mg every 8 to 12 hours (or 500mg Sequels once daily) before and during rapid ascent to altitude results in fewer and/or less severe symptoms (such as headache, nausea, shortness of breath, dizziness, drowsiness, and fatigue) of acute mountain sickness (AMS). Pulmonary function is greater in the Diamox treated group, both in subjects with AMS and asymptomatic subjects. The Diamox treated climbers also had less difficulty in sleeping.

Increasing the dose does not increase the diuresis, and may increase the incidence of drowsiness and/or paresthesia.

Gradual ascent is desirable to try to avoid acute mountain sickness. If rapid ascent is undertaken and Diamox is used, it should be noted that such use does not obviate the need for prompt

descent if severe forms of high altitude sickness occur, i.e. pulmonary edema or cerebral edema.

The drug had no effect on fertility when administered in the diet to male and female rats at a daily intake of up to four times the maximum recommended human dose. Diamox has been shown to produce birth defects of the limbs in mice, rats, hamsters, and rabbits. There are no adequate and well-controlled studies in pregnant women. EE should be used in pregnancy only if the potential benefit justifies the potential risk to the fetus. Because of the potential for serious adverse reactions in nursing infants from EE, a decision should be made whether to discontinue nursing or to discontinue the drug, taking into account the importance of the drug to the mother.

The safety and effectiveness of Diamox in children have not been established.

Adverse reactions include a "tingling" feeling in the extremities, hearing dysfunction or tinnitus, loss of appetite, taste alteration and gastrointestinal disturbances such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and occasional instances of drowsiness and confusion.

No data are available regarding Diamox overdosage in humans as no cases of acute poisoning with this drug have been reported. Animal data suggest that Diamox is remarkably non-toxic.

Dosage is 500mg to 1000mg daily, in divided doses using tablets or Sequels as appropriate. In circumstances of rapid ascent, such as in rescue or military operations, the higher dose level of 1000mg is recommended. It is preferable to initiate dosing 24 to 48 hours before ascent and to continue for 48 hours while at high altitude, or longer as necessary to control symptoms.

Store at controlled room temperature (59 to 86 deg F).

Inexpensive email

Victor Anderson sent me (Steve Eckert) a FAX that indicates a new Internet provider is buying into the market. If you want to get a personal account (instead of using your company's mail system, which may not be private) or if you just want to save money, you might be interested in the following:

SLIP.NET claims to be offering FREE email for life. They are selling other services, and this is the hook to get you interested. It is probably limited to 40 hours per month, but their add would make Publisher's Clearinghouse proud of uncertain wording.

You can dial 415-512-3781 with a modem, **or 415 281-3196** to speak with a human.

I have *NOT checked this out, since I need FTP and all! the **other** stuff that they want to charge for (and which I get flat rate \$17/month with netcom). If anyone tries it out, I would like to get a note about how it goes.

Waterfall of Rock

(Continued from page 3)

saw an old entry from Kai, Butch, and company), and then we headed down. We recrossed the ridge, descended the gnarly rock, and got onto the snow couloir before the thunder started booming. At that point we could enjoy being inside a mountain thunderstorm on safe terrain. It was actually a friendly storm, with just a few lightning flashes and a half hour or so of big soft snowflakes, followed by a cool, grey afternoon that was perfect for hiking out.

Energized by our success, Paul and I descended to our camp, collected the rest of our gear, and hiked out through the beautiful, flower-filled meadows of Little Lakes Valley. Yes it was a late night driving home to the Bay Area — supper in Lee Viiing at 830 and home at 2 am. but who cares about such details after a great weekend in the mountains?

-Jim Ramaker

Woman to Lead Yosemite—A First in Park's History

Barbara J. Griffin a veteran National Park Service executive, has been appointed superintendent of Yosemite Nat'l Park, effective in January. Griffin 53, is the first woman to be appointed superintendent in the 104 years



Yosemite has been a national park. She replaces Michael Fiiey, who has been appointed superintendent of Yellowstone National Park

Griffin has been with the park service 31 years and is currently director of the service's Mid-Adantic Region, which includes Independence National Historical Park, Gettysburg National Military Park and Shenandoah National Park

Griffin began her park service career in the Southwest region, in a Job Corps program and later as a program and budget analyst.

She is no stranger to Yosemite. Starting in 1987, she was assistant superintendent to Finley there for three years and was the No. 2 park official during Yosemite's centennial celebrations in 1990 and the big forest fires that same year.

In appointing her to the Yosemite job, park service director Roger Kennedy praised her "strong leadership qualities."

—By Carl Nolte, SF Chronicle, Nov. '94

4 Sale...4 Sale...4 Sale...4 Sale...4 Sale...

Koflach Ultras

Size 12 plastic boots for sale, best offer will be accepted no matter how crazy it is. I have a "mature" pair that were kept for spares, and a "younger" pair that I grew out of last year. The older pair would be great for someone who wanted to try plastic boots without a big investment. These are rigid climbing boots with hinges at the ankle.

Contact Steve Eckert at (415).508-0500, or send email to eckert@netcom.com

Sleeping Bag

North Face Down Sleeping Bag for Winter Camping

Clean, Excellent Condition

\$100 or Make Offer

Contact Stan Vejtasa
(41.5)494-8308



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For change of address, contact Paul Vlasveld, 789 Daffodil Way, San Jose, CA 95117; (H) 4081247-6472, (W) 408/257-7910x3613

VICE CHAIR/SCHEDULER:

Debbie Benham
1722 Via Street, #2
Mountain View, CA 94041
(415) 964-0558 (H)

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.

TREASURER:

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Scree articles and contributions must be received by the editor no later than noon on the second to the last Friday of the month: email, 3 1/2" diskettes (Mac preferred), fax, or U.S. mail okay.

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Deadline for the next issue is December 21,1994. Please send materials to the new editor-John Flynn at 133 Promethean Way, Mountain View, 94043. email is Jnflinn@aol.com. Phone: (415) 9682050.



Please recycle.



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Dated Material!