

World Wide Web Address: <http://www.sierraclub.org/chapters/lomaprieta/pcs/>

Next General Meeting

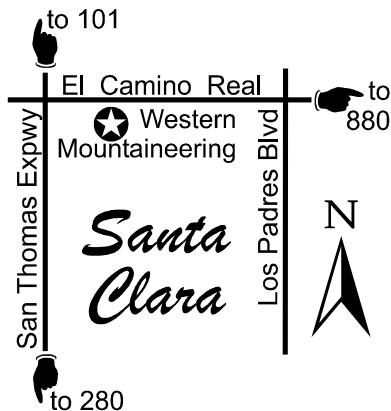
Date: Tuesday, October 13, 1998

Time: 8:00 PM

Program: "Triumph and Despair" - Alpine Climbing in Washington's North Cascades

See Kai and Cecil's climbing trip to the North Cascades, including climbs of Mt. Triumph, Liberty Bell, and rock climbing at the Peshastin Pinnacles. With the big air sucking at her feet, watch Cecil walk the tightrope of the wickedly exposed Northeast Ridge of Mt. Triumph. Believing it to be much harder, see Kai try to avoid the crux crack until Cecil (slightly annoyed) reminded him that it was only 5.5!!

Location: Western Mountaineering, Santa Clara 2344 El Camino Real, Santa Clara (between San Thomas and Los Padres), parking in the rear. From 101: Exit at San Thomas Expressway, Go South to El Camino Real. Turn left and the Western Mountaineering will be immediately to your right.



Deadline for submissions to the next Scree is Sunday 10/25/98. Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month.

Nominations Of Officers

A friendly note from the PCS Nominating Committee! If you are interested in becoming an officer, or you know of someone who may be interested, please let us know by October 24.

Contact any one of us for a full and complete description of each officers' duties, or, visit the PCS website

<<http://www.sierraclub.org/chapters/lomaprieta/pcs/>> to view a full description. Thank you! We are:

Jim Ramaker 408-463-4873, ramaker@VNET.IBM.COM

Bob Suzuki 510-657-7555, bobszk@bigfoot.com

Arun Mahajan 650-327-8598, arun@tollbridgetech.com

NOTE: As per the bylaws, the nominating committee is formally announced at the October meeting.

-- PCS Nominating Committee

Wilderness First Aid

To help trip leaders and would-be leaders get the required First Aid certificate, the Chapter sponsors a First Aid class each quarter, based on a nationally recognized first aid text, but with added material and emphasis on wilderness situations with no phone to dial 911. The next First Aid classes will be Saturday, November 14 and Sunday, November 15 at the Peninsula Conservation Center in Palo Alto (from Bayshore/Hwy. 101 at San Antonio, turn toward the Bay; turn left at 1st stoplight, then right at Corporation Way to park behind PCC). Class is 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (1 hour for your bag lunch) and is limited to 12 people. To sign up, send choice of day, and a check for \$38 with a stamped, self-addressed business-sized envelope to: Health Education Services, 200 Waverly, Menlo Park, CA 94025. Cancellations get partial refund if a substitute attends (you get to keep the Wilderness First Aid book). For more information, call 650-321-6500.

-- Marg Ottenberg

Check the washing instructions before purchasing any apparel to be worn camping. Buy only those that read, "Beat on a rock in a stream."

1998 Advance Trip List

The trips listed below were proposed at the Peak Climbing Section winter trip planning meeting on Tuesday, September 22 at the home of the Trip Scheduler. This list is intended to prevent trip scheduling conflicts and to help you plan your winter climbing schedule.

PLEASE DO NOT CONTACT THE LEADERS TO SIGN UP FOR THESE TRIPS. The time to sign up is after the trip is formally announced in the Scree or on the PCS email broadcast with a full description and a designation as a private or as an official PCS trip.

If you are planning a trip, or if your plans for a trip on this list change, please contact the Trip Scheduler to keep this list up to date.

Thanks to all for coming and proposing trips. As you can see, the trip distribution is rather sparse with the inter-trip delay approaching a month at times. So, if you want to lead trips and would like to see them in the advance schedule, please contact me.

-- Arun Mahajan, PCS Trip Scheduler

10	Junipero Serra Peak		Ron Karpel, Arun Mahajan
DATES	PEAKS	CLASS	LEADERS
FEB			
13/14/15	Pyramid Peak		Palmer Dyal
13/14/15	Any Mountain		Aaron Schuman
MAR			
14	Roundtop		George Van Gordon, Arun Mahajan
APR			
3/4/5(?)	Shasta		George Van Gordon
16/17/18	Black Mountain, Diamond Peak		Steve Eckert, Aaron Schuman
MAY			
29/30/31	Mt Shasta (via Bolam Glacier)		George Van Gordon.

DATES	PEAKS	CLASS	LEADERS
OCT			
3/4	Humphreys	4	?
3/4	Independence, Kearsarge	3/1	Bob Suzuki, Ron Karpel
9/10/11	Tyndall	2	?
17/18	Rockhouse, Siretta, Taylor	2/1/2	Aaron Schuman
9/10/11	Marble Mnt	?	Kelly Maas
10/11/12	Mineral King Region		Steve Eckert
17/18	Clyde Minaret		Steve Eckert, Jeff Fisher
23/24/25	Mt Whitney		George Van Gordon
NOV			
13/14/15	Telescope Peak		Bill Kirkpatrick
21	Henry Coe State Park		Bob Suzuki, Landa Robillard
DEC			
12/13	Freel Peak		Kelly Maas, Aaron Schuman
13	The Pinnacles		Roger Crawley
19/20/21/22	Mt Whitney		George Van Gordon
28/29/30	Mt Davis		Steve Eckert, Craig Taylor
JAN			
9	Cone Peak		Ron Karpel

Official (PCS) Trips

PCS trips must be submitted through the Scheduler (see back cover for details). Trips not received from the Scheduler will be listed as PRIVATE, without recourse.

Kearsarge and Independence

Peaks: Kearsarge Peak (12,598') class 1, Independence Peak (11,744') class 3
 Dates: October 3-4, Sat-Sun
 Map: Kearsarge Peak 7.5"
 Contacts: Ron Karpel, ronny@luxsonor.com (W) 510-683-4668 X231, (H) 650-594-0211
 Bob Suzuki, bobszk@bigfoot.com (W) 510-657-7555, (H) 408-259-0772

Why think the peak climbing season has to end with summer? Try these 2 fall day hikes from the Onion Valley campground at 9,200', and enjoy the company of your fellow PCSers in the quieter eastern Sierra.

Marble Mountains

Peaks: Kings Castle 7405', Black Marble Mtn ~7500', class 2
 Dates: Oct 9-11 Fri-Sun
 Maps: Marble Mountain Wilderness topo from Wilderness Press
 Leader: Kelly Maas H(408) 279-2054, W(408) 944-2078, maas@idt.com, Co-Leader: wanted

This is a 2 1/2 day backpack and peak climb through the Marble Mountain Wilderness, the little brother to the north of the Trinity Alps. If that clue doesn't help to locate it, it's northwest of Mt. Shasta off Hwy 5. The peaks aren't high and most of the trip is on trail (including the Pacific Crest Trail), but it should be a great new area to explore, with many pretty lakes, and mountains that don't look like the Sierra. If we have time we can climb Boulder Pk which would put us at almost 8300 feet!

Rockhouse Jail

Peaks: Rockhouse Peak, Taylor Dome, Sirretta Peak; class 2

Dates: Oct 17-18, Sat-Sun

Maps: Lamont Peak and Kernville 15 min.

Leader: Aaron Schuman H 650-968-9184
W 650-943-7532,

aaron_schuman@yahoo.com

Details: <http://sj.znet.com/~cynthiam/rockhouse.html>

Car camp in the scenic Rockhouse Valley, in the Domelands Wilderness of the Sequoia National Forest. Day hike to Rockhouse Peak (8383 feet), Taylor Dome (8802 feet), and Sirretta Peak (9977 feet). Savor the experience; it might be our last snow-free trip of 1998.

Mt. Whitney

Peak: Mt. Whitney, class 1

Dates: Oct. 23-25

Leader: George Van Gorden H 408 779 2320 before 9:00 PM

After permits, the good old easy trail although summit day (Sat.) from 10,300 ft. is rather long, but ah, the brisk Oct. air, intimations of winter if it hasn't already arrived, that last glorious ascent into the light before the dark descends make the mundanity of such a slovenly slog all worth it.

Death Valley In Summer

If I wanted to climb Telescope Peak in winter, I would have no trouble recruiting a few people to come along. But I had almost no luck convincing anybody to join Warren Storkman, my wife Joy and I on our planned trek in Death Valley this summer. Eventually, I did recruit a couple of gullible souls. Our trials and tribulations of that trip along with pictures and some funny comments can be found at

<http://home.att.net/~ladesai>

-- Dinesh Desai

Happy Campers Go With The Flo

September 4, 5, 6, 1998

Skies were partly cloudy as six weary travelers gathered at the Mineral King Ranger Station in the morning hours of Friday, September 4. There was Debbie Benham, trip leader; Scree Editor Bob Bynum; Desert Peak Survivor Brad Mayer; newcomers Don Hobler and Noriko Sekikawa; and your reporter, Phyllis Olrich. The night before, Debbie, Noriko, and I had found a first-class campground just west of Three Rivers called Horse Creek Campground on the shores of Lake Kaweah. The steep entrance fee (\$14) was worth it as far as I was concerned due to the excellent shower facilities. We breakfasted at the quaint Noisy Waters Restaurant in Three Rivers, entertained by the activity surrounding a string of hummingbird feeders outside our window.

In the interest of scouting out the local accommodations, Bob had treated himself to a cabin in Silver City, which he subsequently dubbed the "Unibomber's Cabin," due to its many fine amenities, no doubt.

Following a lecture on minimum-impact backcountry travel and camping techniques, we headed for the trailhead for our last-

minute packing. After a short while a large group of young to middle-aged men arrived and began preparing their packs also; my curiosity was peaked. Turns out they were headed for Franklin Lakes also, to hold a somewhat unusual bachelor party. We vowed to arrive at the lake before them in order to nab the best campsite next to one of the three bearboxes that have been placed there.

The trail up to the lake is lovely and gradual, not like the barren, hot, exposed, steep slogs you see on the east side; several uneventful stream crossings accentuated our journey. From the 7,800' trailhead at Mineral King, we climbed to about 10,000' to lower Franklin Lake. As we ascended into the mist, visibility lessened and raingear was unpacked. Moisture from a very unusual semitropical storm kept us cool. I hurried ahead, fearing the approaching bachelor party, and eventually spied a sign by the trail declaring "no camping within 100 feet of lake." But where was the lake? I looked down and all I could see was a white shroud covering what could possibly be a lake. As the others arrived, the fog began to lift and lo and behold, we saw our beautiful alpine lake and a perfect campsite about 100 yards away.

We set up our tents and went down for what would become our traditional afternoon nap. The weather was very unstable and we weren't sure what the weekend would hold for us. Saturday morning dawned bright and promising however, so we all hit the trail by 7:30 am. There was only one problem. We could not see the top of Florence Peak, our destination; again, mist enveloped our goal.

The trail to 11,400' Franklin Pass featured more of the same gradual wide switchbacks. In no time, we sat resting atop the pass, admiring the top of the peak, which we could now see clearly. I have observed that PCS can turn any class 2 mountain into a class 3 climb and this trip proved no exception. We chose to cling to the ridgeline, its large granite rocks affording us ample opportunities to practice our bouldering and route finding skills. Everyone enjoyed the climb immensely; we reached the summit of 12,432' Florence Peak before 11:00 am. The view was stunning. Brad describes the weather as "less than perfect, even though it was at its 'most perfect' at the summit. There was no wind, but a huge bank of clouds, moving in an unusual northwest direction, was pouring over the Sierra crest about 50 miles to the east."

We descended on a more southeasterly slope, which proved to be the true class 2 route. The distant roll of thunder forced us to abandon Debbie's original plan to descend to Silver Lake, catch the trail that approaches Farewell gap from the south, bag Vandever Mountain, descend into Farewell Canyon, then head back to camp on the same trail we had come in on the day before, completing a big loop. Instead we took the conservative route and headed back to camp. Our timing was perfect; we crawled into our bags just as the afternoon sprinkles hit.

Saturday evening provided an inspiring red-hued sunset as we all spontaneously gathered on a large granite slab overlooking the lake. Good conversation flowed and I must say we were more rowdy than the bachelor party camped behind the ledge above us; the peculiar scent of their "campfire" wafting by us was, no doubt, nothing more than a traditional herbal remedy for what they had assured us would be a hard night of high-altitude revelry.

Brad was hot to try for Vandever the next morning, but the rest of us were fixated on brunch at the We Three Bakery in Three Rivers, a restaurant that had been recommended to us by a local camping nearby. Brad eventually succumbed to temptation and hiked out with us. Noriko stayed behind to enjoy another day in the mountains. I was very impressed by her determination. She just moved to the Bay Area from New York about two months ago and has already climbed Mt. Shasta! Florence was her first Sierra peak and I'm sure not her last.

Hiking out was a totally different experience than the hike in. We could see from whence we came! I could have been on a completely different trail, for all I knew. But clouds were gathering and I wouldn't be surprised if it did shower again that afternoon.

We Three Bakery did not disappoint -- breakfast is served all day. The five of us proved that we live to eat, not the other way around. All commended Debbie on her excellent planning and leadership skills. This was a glorious trip; it may sound trite, but everyone had a wonderful time. We laughed, we shared ourselves, we bonded, we experienced the awe-inspiring beauty of the wilderness, we bagged a peak.

-- Phyllis Olrich

Bob Bynum Adds: Silver City Resort & Thursday Evening Hike

This was my first PCS trip of the season and first trip to Mineral King. I wanted to spend Thursday night at as high an elevation as possible to acclimate, and I wanted to know where I would stay rather than take a hit or miss shot at finding a campground. Furthermore, I didn't want a long drive on the day of the trip. My first thought was to spend the night at the Cold Springs campground. After discovering this campground operates on a first come first serve basis, I decided to stay at the Silver City Resort which is about 2 miles from the trailhead and is at 6935 FT.

Their accommodations consist of varying sizes of cabins which range from one double bed to a two bedroom, four bed, with kitchen. Also they have a store and restaurant. My cabin had one double bed, a sink, a wood stove, three oil lanterns, and no electricity. These cabins are rustic, yet comfortable. It was especially nice to have when a thunderstorm hit shortly after my 3:40 PM arrival. After napping through the storm, I drove up to the trailhead for scouting purposes and then went for an evening hike on the Timber Gap trail. This lasted for about an hour and half when the rain started again. At this point I returned to Silver City, had dinner, and then went to bed to rest up for the next day's trip. For a future trip, we could rent a few of the large cabins and go on various day hikes.

-- Bob Bynum, Scree Editor

Warren Peace

September 12, 1998

"Well, Prince!" We set out Saturday morning for the summit of Warren Mtn, just east of Tioga Pass. We were ten hikers among the thirty campers at the third annual PCS Tuolumne Family Camp: Scott Kreider, Marilyn Kreider, Mark Woolbright, Tony Stegman, Chris Cramer, Ahmed Zandi, Jeff West, Wade Larsen (with his 8 month old Chow-Aikido puppy Chloe), Bob Bynum, and me, trip leader Aaron Schuman.

We parked our cars at Camp 9K, crossed highway 120 and headed up Warren Creek. (It's well known that the Forest Service has closed down Camp 9K, but it was news to us that they have opened a pleasant, uncrowded, free, primitive walk-in campground right across the road alongside Warren Creek.)

We followed the muddy trail northwest up Warren Creek for about ten minutes, passed the first south flowing tributary, then turned north to make our way cross country towards the peak. For an hour we beat our way up a loose, sandy face, then crossed a bump and entered a shallow scree bowl. Continuing along a north compass bearing, we crossed the second south flowing year-round

tributary, up a sparsely wooded scree slope to timberline, and over the right flank of Peak 12160. We didn't like the look of the ridge from this peak to our destination, so we dropped down 100 feet into the snow filled basin below the south slopes, then walked up to the 12327 foot summit of Warren Mountain.

The summit afforded us an unequalled view of Mono Lake, with a desert cloud bank reflected eerily off its saline waters.

We varied our descent route, going down the second drainage until we reached timberline, cutting east to the first drainage, and following it to the beginning of the Warren Creek trail. We were slowed down by the rocky footing above high and dense willows below. We spent 5-1/2 hours on the ascent and 3-1/2 on the descent. Last year's PCS group made a considerably faster trip to Warren Mountain. A couple of our trip-mates were learning how to keep their balance on scree, and needed some extra time. We returned to camp in the daylight, so our slowness was really no problem. Warren is actually a good mountain on which to practice scree surfing technique, because it's a short enough climb that the group can spend the time it needs but still not need headlamps.

Back at camp, we had a festive supper with much better fare than we usually encounter on PCS outings, and good campfire conversation about the President's troubles and the home run race.

I must have worn everybody out in a big way on Saturday, because almost nobody wanted to follow through with the original Sunday plan of climbing Mt Gibbs. Instead, a group of us took a much easier walk to Gaylor Peak. We followed the lead of Jim Ramaker, who had led a group of five people to the same destination on Saturday.

Camp organizer Cecil Ann, her children Joseph and Johanna, Kai Weidman, Joan Marshall, her grown daughters Laura and Claire, Dennis and Judy Severson and their son Matthew, Jeff West, Tony Stegman and I lit out from Tioga Pass up 500 feet to the spectacular granite rimmed Gaylor Lakes. Dennis and Judy rested at the lake with the young children, while the rest of us (Cecil Ann, Kai, Joan, Laura, Claire, Jeff, Tony and I) hiked east up the remaining 600 feet from the lakes trail to the 11004 foot summit of Gaylor Peak. Kai wanted to make the trip into a traverse, so we continued eastward down into the basin, then sauntered back along a use trail to rejoin the younger generation at the lakeshore. The whole leisurely outing took about 3-1/2 hours, including a long lunch break, a perfect day and a perfect length hike for the younger set.

Larry Sokolsky led a party on a technical climb of Cathedral Peak on Sunday, Peter Maxwell and Anouchka Gaillard took their babies to Tuolumne Meadow, Chris read his novel beside Tenaya Lake, and I'm afraid I've lost track of everybody else's activities. That's the beauty of the Tuolumne family camp; everybody finds the level of challenge they want, and somebody to share it with them.

-- Aaron Schuman

Mt Hoffman

September 19, 1998

Gretchen Luepke summited Mt. Hoffman after a 2 1/2 hour hike from Snow Flat. Although this peak is easy relative to other PCS climbs, it is a major accomplishment for Gretchen. Almost two years ago, she had hip replacement surgery and is slowly getting back in shape.

It was a perfect day for a peak climb. There wasn't a cloud in the sky, a very slight breeze, and a temperature of 70 degrees. The views were spectacular! I pointed other peaks that we PCSers have climbed. On this hike a climber experiences all aspects of a typical PCS trip. Congratulations Gretchen!

-- Bob Bynum

Peak 12,123

This obscure peak was the subject of a posting by Tom Kenney several weeks ago. It's located near Muriel Lake, just beyond Piute Pass.

In late August my two older sons (ages 14 and 12) and I set up camp near Muriel Lake and day-hiked Peak 12,123. The bottom line is that this is a great peak for kids. The approach hike over Piute Pass is not arduous, and the peak itself is easy, enjoyable third class.

The climb takes you south from Muriel Lake over second class terrain to the base of a prow-like rock formation maybe 300 feet in elevation. To the untrained eye, it looks difficult to climb, and my 14 year old son (Andrew) announced that he didn't think we would be able to climb it, so he was going to sit right where he was and wait for me and James (the 12 year old) to return after our climbing attempt failed.

Undaunted by this pessimism, James and I set off and soon made our way up diagonally upward-sloping ledges that required a few third class moves (but were mostly second class). We gained the ridge and scrambled up to the summit. Meanwhile, Andrew, seeing our success, set off on his own, climbed the ledges and joined us on the summit. There were spectacular views of the Wahoo Lakes, Goethe Lake, Muriel Peak, Mt. Goethe and vast, open country to the northwest.

We descended the way we came and reached our camp about four hours after we started.

Consider Peak 12,123 if you are ever taking kids up to the mountains and want to give them a taste of real mountain climbing.

-- Mark Wallace

Work Parties

The following list of trips are work party trips for the purpose of maintaining the Sierra Clubs huts. These are listed separately from peak climbs and are considered to be private trips.

Dick Simpson, a PCS leader, is organizing the following work parties where the participants help to build backcountry ski and snowshoe huts. People of all skills are needed. Optional peak climbs (class-1 and class-2) are possible. Car camping nearby (or a simple backpack in some cases). Tools and supplies and food will be provided.

Please contact Dick at 650-494-9272 or rsimpson@magellan.stanford.edu if you are interested.

New Bradley Hut Work Party

Dates: October 10-11, Sat.-Sun.

Dates: October 17-18, Sat.-Sun.

Dates: October 24-25, Sat.-Sun.

Dates: October 31 - November 1, Sat.-Sun.

Unofficial (Private) Trips

Private trips may be submitted directly to the Scree Editor, but are not insured, sponsored, or supervised by the Sierra Club. They are listed here because they may be of interest to PCS members, not because they are endorsed by the PCS.

Mount Tyndall from Anvil Camp

Peaks: Tyndall, 14,018'

Dates: October 10, 11, 12

Maps: Mt. Williamson 7.5

Contact: Bill Kirkpatrick, W (408) 279-3450; H (408) 293-2447, Wmkirk@earthlink.net

Tyndall is a class-2 peak, but we may need ice axes and crampons to get over Shepherd Pass.

Mineral King Trip

Peaks: Needham(12467), Sawtooth(12343), Eisen(12160), Lippincott(12260) Class 2

Dates: October 10-12 (Sat-Mon)

Contact: Steve Eckert (eckert@netcom.com)

Co-Contact: WANTED

Help me finish off the Mineral King area peaks while the marmots are sated on the late-summer salt bush. (You don't want to be at this trailhead in June, trust me!) We'll dayhike over Sawtooth to pick up Needham on the way out, but the first objectives will be two peaks overlooking Big Arroyo and the famed Kaweah peaks. Lower altitude peaks go well with crisp fall air! Moderately difficult climbing: no rope or crampons will be needed if you take the longer route over Timber Gap, but those with ice axe and crampon skills will go over Glacier Pass so we can bag Needham. Everyone can climb Eisen and Lippincott without ice axes. You should be in good shape and prepared for packing cross country.

Clyde Minaret

Peak: Clyde Minaret (12281') Class 3-4

Dates: October 17-18 (Sat-Sun)

Contact: Steve Eckert (eckert@netcom.com)

Co-Contact: Jeff Fisher (han1cannae@aol.com)

This will be a 2-day private fall trip, where shorter days mean we'll keep moving to avoid using headlamps. Not a beginner trip! Recent trip reports indicate it's more like class 3 than the class 4 rating in the SPS list, but we'll take a rope and some pro anyway. Ice axe and crampons required for the approach.

Telescope Peak via Surprise Canyon

Peaks: Telescope Peak

Dates: November 13, 14, 15

Maps: Telescope Peak

Contact: Bill Kirkpatrick, W (408) 279-3450; H (408) 293-2447, Wmkirk@earthlink.net

Contact leader for more details.

Dana In Snow

September 26-27, 1998: Five of us journeyed to Tioga Pass last weekend to attempt the Dana Couloir. After a restful night at the campground by the road into Saddlebag Lake, trip leader George Van Gorden, George's friend Larry, Ted Raczek, and myself (Jim Ramaker) awoke Saturday morning to steadily falling snow and a beautiful winter landscape. As the euphoria of this unexpected scene wore off, we had breakfast and drove to Tioga Pass to meet Ron Karpel, who'd left home at 2 a.m. and driven up in the wee hours. Ron arrived right on schedule at 7:15, and the five of us stood around talking in the snowstorm. We discussed various options ranging from driving straight home to doing a low-elevation dayhike or climb. Since George and Ron had brought lots of ice-climbing gear, we decided to at least hike over to the couloir and do a couple of practice pitches. We had no thought of summiting, as the blowing snow was bad enough at the pass and was sure to be worse up on the peak.

Larry decided to bail, and the other four of us geared up and started hiking. After about two hours of cross-country through the woods and over snow-covered boulders, we spotted a snow slope on the flank of Dana to our right and decided to do our practice climbing there, instead of in the actual couloir an hour further on. The angle was moderate -- less than 40 degrees -- but there was good quality ice underneath the new powder. George and Ron each had a rope, so they each climbed a pitch parallel to each other, placing a couple of screws and pickets along the way. Then they belayed Ted and me up, and we all downclimbed and pulled the gear. Screws and pickets both worked well, though placing pickets required a lot of pounding with an ice hammer.

Conditions got no better as the morning wore on -- light snow off and on, and lots of wind that occasionally blew sharp snow pellets into our eyes. We donned sunglasses to shield our eyes, though the day was too dark to require them. Visibility was only a few hundred feet at times, though occasionally the gloom lifted and we could see parts of the mountain above us. Down in the snow-dusted canyon below us, we were surprised to see a party of six backpackers heading up into the storm.

Around noon, we reclimbed the snowfield to get to a higher, steeper snowfield that we'd spotted during one of the breaks in the weather. Ron led a pitch up this snowfield, the rest of us followed on ascenders and then rapelled, and then Ron downclimbed. By the way, Ron and George are both pretty skilled with screws, pickets, and their new-age ice tools. (Ron mentioned that his 12-inch long plastic job from Charlet-Moser cost over \$200!)

As we took a lunch break and sorted gear, the storm showed no signs of letting up, so we decided to bail. George, Ron, and Ted had to be home that night, but I didn't, and I had a sudden inspiration to try for the summit. So I signed out from the trip and decided to try to get to the top of the ridge to our right. Though it was hard to orient oneself in the weather, my intuition told me the top of that ridge was probably the edge of the large plateau where the normal route up Dana goes. A 100-foot cliff that appeared to be class-3 (visible from the road by Tioga Lake) separated me from the top of the ridge.

First I traversed upward toward the bottom of the cliff, but ended up an icefield with nearly a foot of fresh powder on top of it. Doable, but not by me without a rope. I dropped down a few hundred feet and found a way to traverse over to the bottom of the cliff on snow-covered rocks. I worked my way up ledges and ramps covered with fluffy snow, and soon gained the top of the ridge. It was the plateau. It was almost 4 p.m. and I couldn't see the summit in the blowing snow, but I decided to go for it anyway.

I know heading up a peak at 4 p.m. in a snowstorm is not standard procedure, but many years in the PCS have changed my opinion of what's reasonable. If I could summit by 5:30, I'd still have two hours of daylight for the 3000-foot descent. Also, it was all easy terrain that I'd been on before, and I was warm and dry, including my feet -- one benefit of dry powder snow.

For some reason, the climbing felt exhausting, I guess because of the snow and the occasional ice patches on the familiar boulders. (Or maybe I'm just getting old.) But the snow stopped after awhile and a window of blue sky opened up right above the summit, which boosted my spirits. I topped out at 5:15, and was rewarded with spectacular views of wild-looking snow-dusted peaks underneath huge roiling grey clouds that covered all of Yosemite. Even the east-side humps like Dunderberg and Excelsior looked impressive streaked with fresh snow under the forbidding grey skies. Mono Lake appeared, reflecting blue sky out toward Nevada. The wind picked up, swirling snow in my face, and I started down.

The wind stopped once I was off the summit, but it started snowing again, a steady fall of large snowflakes. As visibility declined, I took a compass bearing on the descent route. George had told me to do this, pointing out that the descent from Dana is not north as intuition might indicate, but almost due west (the Tioga Road here runs almost north-south). It was a wonderful experience to be descending a peak at dusk in a gentle, silent snowfall. Memories of walking in the snow in the winter as a boy back in New England drifted through my addled mind.

After a long trudge across the rocky plateau, I spotted some cairns and picked up the use trail, still mostly visible under the snow. I managed to stay on it all the way down the slope below the plateau, helped in no small part by the orange blazes painted on the rocks by the late Carl Sharsmith about 40 years ago. (For those who don't know of him, he was a Yosemite ranger and botanist for over 60 years.) Down the switchbacks into the forest, and finally over to my car at 7:15.

I spent another comfortable night in my car at the same campground, disturbed only by a mouse who'd snuck inside the car and kept scratching around in my cartons of gear. Attempts to hunt him down with a flashlight failed, so I resigned myself to sharing my refuge with my tiny companion, calling to him to keep the noise down when his scratching and scurrying got out of hand.

As I drove west, I entered a cloud bank and the temperature plummeted. Down in Yosemite Valley it was about 20 degrees colder than at Tioga Pass, 6000 feet above! The next cold front and set of snow flurries was on the way. It looks like summer and winter will be battling it out in the high country for a few more weeks before winter arrives for good.

Jim Ramaker

Center Basin Bear(s)

About two months ago Steve Eckert posted a Center Basin report (to Keith, Center and Bradley) about a trip that took place in mid July. Those of us on the trip encountered an unusually aggressive black bear. We actually had encounters on two nights, and it might have been two bears.

After Barbara's SPS list finish this weekend, we stopped at the Mt. Whitney ranger station in Lone Pine to look into getting a dayhike permit for Mt. Whitney in the next month or so. We chatted with the ranger at the counter for awhile, and we mentioned the aggressive bear we had encountered in Center Basin. She immediately handed us a special bear warning page that had been recently printed concerning areas around and including Center

Basin titled "Bear Warning and Emergency Food Storage Restrictions!!" It included phrases such as, "Due to local uncharacteristic aggressive black bear behavior..." and "For your safety, sleep well away (100 yards if possible) from food canisters and boxes. Do not try to harass females with cubs or two adult bears travelling together. Several campers have been charged, scratched or bitten recently when they tried to defend food not stored in bear-proof boxes or canisters." The area of concern was "Bubbs Creek drainage upstream of Sphinx Creek..."

I'd say we got off pretty easy on the Center Basin trip, since we were not "charged, scratched or bitten", but the bear did not immediately back off from Steve standing up in front of it and yelling. It looks like the bear or bears have become even more aggressive since mid July. I don't see how this isn't going to come to a tragic ending for either the humans or bears, or both.

Dave Sholle

Mr Rodgers Neighborhood

The clouds built as we hiked from Clover Meadow, and the temperature dropped sharply around the McClure Lake junction. We donned rain gear and headed for Isberg Pass anyway. I threw in my trailhead tarp at the last minute, and wound up using it as both a poncho (over me and my pack) and rain fly (over my bivy bag). This was rain, not sprinkles! It lasted about 8 hours, until well after dark, with no complete breaks but also no thunder.

Day 2 dawned mostly cloudy, but we started for Forester around 7:30 anyway. For a time it was sunlit dewey perfection (Erik waxed poetic about pixies gamboling amongst the flowers and trees), but as we neared the peak the clouds came and the temperature dropped again. The chute we chose was somewhat loose, and in the middle of a discussion about what to do if a rock slips the whole area around me moved... these were apparently stable rocks of 2 or 3 food diameters, but a couple of them went over the edge and broke up while I scrambled to stay on top and Mike scrambled out of the way.

We placed a new register and cannister on Foerster, then darted off to beat the weather. At the base of the chute, I signed off the SPS trip and headed north for Electra and Rodgers while the others headed back to camp. I think they made it before the rain hit. I went over the west shoulder of Foerster and down a boulder field into the Lyell Fork drainage, stopping at the 10000' lake due north of Foerster for a short nap in the sun. I awoke to raindrops and spent the next hour huddled under my tarp wondering if I should abort the trip. It rained about 15 minutes out of every hour the rest of the day, while I made my way up the drainage to the west face of Electra. The rock here is completely different than the Yosemite slabs/tundra where the pixies play: it's sharp dark slate that looks like the Chugach range where I grew up.

I camped at the 11000' lake NW of Electra, watching the peaks play hide and seek in the cotton candy clouds. The clouds won, and fog smothered the sound of my little stream just as it got dark. Dew ruled the night, but the clouds cleared a few hours before dawn. The morning of Day 3 I was walking as soon as I could see, lugging my pack up to the ridge just north of Electra (which is not in the guide books, but is a 12000' class 2 pass between the Lyell Fork of the Merced and the North Fork of the San Joaquin). From here it was a quick scramble to the summit of Electra, topping out at 7:30 am just as the sun was losing its battle with the clouds. There is a register box, but no register!

Dropping into the NE cirque from Electra, I traversed to the SE face of Rodgers but didn't like the snow and loose steep rock above them. Being alone and with monsoon clouds above me, I

took a defensive route down to the drainage east of Rodgers with my full pack, then climbed the north side of the east ridge. Back at my pack, and with improving weather, I headed to the 10200' lakes SW of Davis. Could I get all three today? It was 2pm and I was less than a mile and only 2000' from the summit. Time to eat and scope out the route, but the now-familiar cold wind hit the back of my neck and curtains of rain pulled across the valley behind me. I ran. Actually I hiked on down to Hemlock Crossing in heavy bugs just as it got dark. This place has one of the most amazing (short) waterfall and diving pools in the Sierra.

Overnight a crazy plan formed: I would try dayhiking Iron Mtn from Hemlock Crossing instead of just hiking out. Leaving at first light on Day 4, I followed the trail across Iron Creek toward Corral Meadow but cut off at the second high point (about 8300') where I could head due east and bypass the west shoulder of Iron, which turned out to be a GREAT route, with open walking and occasional water. Be sure to stay on the vague ridge NORTH of Naked Lady Meadow for the easiest walking. I went past Straube Lk and back onto the trail just south of Alstot Lk.

From Alstot the 15' map shows a trail heading up the south face of Iron, ending east of the peak. Imagine my surprise when I found the trail went all the way to a saddle! Imagine my FURTHER surprise when I found the trail went west of the peak, leaving me with close to a mile of ridgeline to run. It's not good footing after the saddle, but a good trail goes right over the saddle to a lake on the north side of the ridge. On the ridge I found a mine shaft which has been filled in but would serve as a great bivy site for 3 or 4 people.

On the summit of Iron Mtn around noon, the clouds headed my way and I headed back to Alstot Lake by dropping directly south of the summit. Much easier walking! It was raining by 4pm, but I sat it out under a tree and still made it back to Hemlock around 6pm. The clouds did not clear, and I could see distant lightning starting, so I packed up after dinner and headed for the car at 8pm. It didn't rain again until almost 9pm, but then it was continuous thunder and occasional showers all the way to the car at 2am (25 miles and over 6000' of gain for the day), continuing until I drove to lower elevation by around 4am.

The last 2 hours of hiking were biblical. Thunder and lightning, periods of cold wind interspersed with warm calm and the occasional shaft of moonlight poking through. Near the end it wasn't a shower, it wasn't driving rain like we had at Isberg Pass, it was time to build an ark - this was God's Vengeance On Man, and I alone was the target. I could not see the trail because there was so much rain that my headlamp glared back at me like high beams in the fog. I sat under a tree, which worked for about 2 minutes until the branches were saturated. I sat under my tarp under a tree, which worked for about 10 minutes until the ground became saturated. I put on a sweater and gritted my teeth, falling asleep under the tarp only to wake when the noise abated half an hour later. I finished the hike in what would normally be considered hard rain, and drove to Oakhurst in fog and rain for breakfast. Four peaks in four days, with many incredibly varied drainages, and weather from dozing in the sun by a tarn to dozing in the rain under a tarp - tramping describes the trip better than climbing, but mountaineering is about overcoming obstacles (even the weather).

Steve Eckert

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Rock Climbing Classifications

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, rope may be used.
- Class 4: Requires rope belays.
- Class 5: Technical rock climbing.

Deadline for submissions to the next Scree is Sunday 10/25/98. Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month.



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"Vy can't ve chust climb?" - John Salathe

First Class Mail - Dated Material