

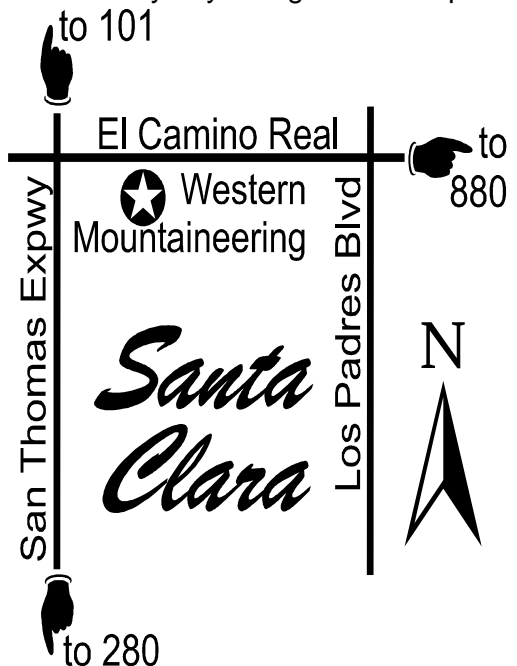
World Wide Web Address: <http://lomaprieta.sierraclub.org/pcs/>

**Date:** Tuesday, October 8  
**Time:** 8:00 PM  
**Program:** Hiking and Climbing in the Rockies: Glacier and Grand Teton National Parks by Kelly Maas

This show is a combination of two different trips to the Rockies. One was climbing in the Tetons, the other was mostly day hiking in Glacier. Expect a few bonus shots from north of the boarder as well.

**Location** Western Mountaineering 2344 El Camino Real, Santa Clara (between San Thomas and Los Padres)

**Directions:** 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. Limited parking back.



Deadline for submissions to the next Scree is Sunday 10/27/2002 Meetings are the 2nd Tuesday of each month.

## Trip Planning Meeting

**Date:** Thursday, October 10, 2002  
**Time:** 7:30 PM  
**Place:** Home of Arun Mahajan, 650-327-8598  
[arun.mahajan@att.net](mailto:arun.mahajan@att.net)  
**Contact:** Scott Kreider, [scott\\_kreider@yahoo.com](mailto:scott_kreider@yahoo.com)

Bring your ideas for winter trips to this trip planning meeting or email your ideas to Scott if you are unable to attend.

Arun has kindly offered to host this meeting at his home.

Directions From 101:

1. Take the Oregon Expressway exit in Palo Alto.
2. Go west, through a few lights. After Bryant is the Alma exit. It is a sharp right. If you miss it, you will go under an overpass.
3. After taking the exit, follow the exit road till it meets Alma.
4. Go north (right turn) on Alma for a few blocks passing roads like California, Santa Rita, Rinconada, Seale. These roads are on the right. The CalTrain tracks are on the left of Alma.
5. After Seale is Tennyson. My townhouse is in a 4-plex, 1745 Alma, the second unit from the road. It is north of Tennyson but south of the next road, Lowell. Off street parking on Tennyson or Lowell, there is none in the complex for guests, I am afraid.

Directions From 280:

1. Take the Page Mill Road exit in Palo Alto.
2. Drive east on Page Mill, go through El Camino
3. Alma (north) is a sharp right turn within half a mile of El Camino.
4. Follow the directions mentioned in 4 above.

## Galen & Barbara Rowell

There will be a Memorial service for Galen & Barbara Rowell: Sunday, October 13 - Public ceremony, Berkeley Community Theater, Berkeley, California, 3PM.

## Driven Crazy

### A Solo Traverse of the Towers of Paine

The Towers of Paine is a mountain group of three massive granite towers in the Patagonia region of Chile. In February, 2002, Steve Schneider made a complete traverse of the three towers in a total time of 51 hours.

Steve will present a slide show at Western Mountaineering on Thursday, October 24, 2002 at 8:00 PM. Call Western Mountaineering, 408-984-7611 for RSVP. There will be a charge of \$5.00.

• Rick Booth

## 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.

### Sawtooth and Needham

Peaks: Sawtooth Peak (12,343) and Needham Mountain (12,520), Class 2-3  
Maps: Mineral King 7.5  
Date: September 14-15, 2002  
Leader: Dee Booth [rdbooth@att.net](mailto:rdbooth@att.net)  
Coleader: Stephane Mouradian [smouradian@hotmail.com](mailto:smouradian@hotmail.com)

This is a class 2/3 trip and Secor writes that there is a "magnificent view from the summit of Sawtooth". Saturday, we will establish camp at Crystal Lake. Sunday, we will head for Needham first, then do the traverse over to Sawtooth Peak and descend back to camp via the South Ridge. The trip is limited to 8 people. This trip is suitable to beginners with backpacking experience. Please contact the leader or coleader to sign up.

### Mt Harrington

Peak: Mt Harrington (11,005'), class 3  
Date: Oct 5-6, 2002  
Location: Western Sierra; Kings Canyon  
Map: Marion Peak 15 minute quadrangle  
Leaders: Aaron Schuman, Charles Schafer ([c\\_g\\_schafer@yahoo.com](mailto:c_g_schafer@yahoo.com), 408-354-1545)

We'll tramp up the steep and dry Lewis Creek from Kings Canyon, make camp at Grizzly Lake, and summit on Sunday.

A previous climber wrote about the enjoyable class 3 summit spire, "The granite was solid, the ledges were wide, and millenia of erosion had produced lovely lumps, knobs, and other, more fanciful, shapes to serve as handholds." Though the summit is relatively low, the trailhead is even lower, and the trip overall is 7000 long vertical feet.

## Zoroaster Temple

### Grand Canyon, Arizona, Northeast Arête

April 23 to April 26, 2002

*This trip report is an edited version of the full trip report which is available at the PCS website at <http://lomapieta.sierraclub.org/pcs/>. The complete version includes logistics information and reference information*

I had been to the Grand Canyon several times over the years but never strayed far from the standard South Kaibab/Bright Angel corridor. The view from the south rim is fabulous, especially on a day when clouds throw long shadows into the canyon. Dominating the view from the south rim is the triangular summit of the Zoroaster Temple just to the right of the Bright Angel fault and is backed by the massive Brahma Temple. I had never thought of climbing anything in the canyon but for some reason ran into an article discussing the ascent of the Zoroaster. It started with a Sierra Club book entitled "Adventuring in Arizona", ran through an issue of "Arizona Highways", of all things, and ended with a topo of the Northeast Arête route in Rock and Ice some years back. Since then I had more or less plotted to accomplish the ascent of the Zoroaster Temple. An exploration of the Clear Creek area with Dee Booth and Dot Reilly some years ago ended

up with no new information since I had no real idea where the break in the Red Wall was.

The project was attempted several years ago with Jim Curl but got no further than a bad weather report which cancelled the effort. This time was different. For the last three and a half years I had been working at a wireless start-up and in the last several months several events precipitated a sharp "refocusing" of the company's direction. About half of the company was "refocused" right on out of there. I was one of them. My euphoria at the thoughts of being able to hit the road for some extended climbing trips was short lived: I found a new job immediately. I decided that I was going to at least have a few weeks off. One of the potential projects was to go to the Grand Canyon and make a genuine attempt on the Zoroaster Temple.

The first problem was to determine if the permit system would allow us to even get close. A few phone calls to the backcountry office were encouraging. It looked like a permit would allow us to camp in the Clear Creek region and then spend a few nights in the Cheyeva region. The weather looked promising. It was not too hot and not too cool. This is a double edged sword: the good weather was good for our attempt but it is also good for everyone else who was interested in backpacking in the canyon. The next step was to round up some companions for the trip. Jim Curl was easy. He had always been interested in this project and had also been "refocused" recently. The conversation with Maxym Runov went something like this:

"I think I am going to get laid off soon and with the time off I was thinking of going to the Grand Canyon..."

"I want to go."

"...and climb the Zoroaster Temple..."

"Cool. Even better. What's the Zoroaster Temple?"

"...which will require hauling a bunch of water around and climbing six pitches of 5.6 to 5.9..."

"Wow! Now I really want to go!"

"...which ends in a pitch of 5.9 offwidth."

"Whatever."

Hmmm. Maxym was not even remotely dissuaded so maybe I shouldn't try rounding up a lot of people. The conversation with my friend Bojan Silic, whom I climbed the Prow with and was also "refocused" with me at the same company went about the same as the conversation with Maxym. This meant there were four of us, which was about perfect since the strength and the climbing skills of the group were pretty good and four would allow for a good margin of safety. We decided to meet Monday night on April 22. I was going to be in Joshua Tree and would leave there Sunday evening and try and get the permit on Monday April 22.

I decided to arrive early at the backcountry office Monday morning. At 7:15 AM I was second in line and feeling confident. Eight AM arrives and the ranger announces that there were twelve holdovers from the previous day so those of us waiting would start with number 13. That meant I was number 14 and my confidence evaporated. The two rangers called out the first twelve numbers. About five failed to show. This was looking better. I finally got to the window and asked for the desired Clear Creek permit plus the two nights in the Cheyeva zone. The Cheyeva zone is easy. There is always room there since there is no water there and only nuts go up into that region. Nothing was available for the Clear Creek zone. I was outraged. The conversation with the ranger a week or two earlier indicated there would be permits open in that region. Now what? The ranger mentioned that there was a site open at the

Bright Angel campground at Phantom. It was the last one and the German lady behind me in line was also interested in going to Phantom. I took it. It turned out this is as good, if not better, than spending the first night in the Clear Creek zone. Armed with my permit I headed off to breakfast and a shower.

I spent the rest of the day goofing off. In the early evening Bojan showed up and about 12:30 in the morning Jim and Maxym showed up. This was sort of late and as a consequence we dawdled around Tuesday morning. At the stunning time of 11:35 AM we headed down the South Kaibab Trail. This is one of the most picturesque trails in the world. About 3 PM we all collected at a campsite at Bright Angel Campground near the Phantom Ranch. About 4 PM we decided to pack up our water and climbing gear and hike up the Clear Creek Trail and stash it in the Sumner wash. We took two and one half gallons apiece and chugged up the Clear Creek Trail. There is a small wash just before the Sumner Wash on the Clear Creek Trail and we stashed our water and gear behind a rock and raced back down the trail in order to be in camp by dark. We just made it. It turned out to be a long day and we celebrated with a beer at the Phantom Ranch dining room.

I slept solidly and so did everyone else. We got a pretty early start Wednesday morning and headed back up the Clear Creek Trail. We passed our stash of water and gear. Jim, Bojan, and myself decided to shuttle our water and gear to the base of the Red Wall. Maxym chose to lug it all in one pull, which amazed us all. We headed up Sumner wash and stayed to the west and went directly towards the obvious chimney or gap in the Red Wall. There is a faint climbers trail that shows up as soon as the hiking starts to go up hill steeply. This trail got more obvious the closer to the chimney we got. The Red Wall is limestone and has been apparently varnished red since the underlying limestone is the usual gray. The Red Wall is everywhere in the Canyon and is impenetrable in most areas. We chugged our gear up to the base of the chimney and hid from the sun for an hour or so before heading back down to lug up our remaining water and gear. We then shuttled our equipment and water to the top of the chimney. This chimney had been advertised as class four and I suppose it is but it is only in short sections. The bottom section is passed by climbing out to the east (right) on the broken limestone and then traversing back left into the chimney. A short section of class four on the west side (left) got us past a chockstone and the rest of the approximately 200 foot long chimney is loose class three. At the top of the chimney is a very nice flattish section just up to the right. It is a fabulous bivouac spot. It is flat, and the view is tremendous. The long buttress of red sandstone coming from the Zoroaster is right above the bivouac spot and the Red Wall drops off on both sides of the bivouac spot. The long Sumner ridge leads off to the west. At night the lights from the south rim are easily visible in the far distance from the campsite. The weather had been holding but Bojan's weather radio indicated the weather was going to change soon. The next day was climbing day and the prediction was for showers late in the day.

On Thursday we got most of an alpine start. At least it was dark when we fired up our stoves. About 6:30 we were moving up and east along the large cliff of red sandstone. We ran into ducks immediately and followed them fairly closely. The ducks brought us right up to an apparently impenetrable sandstone cliff. It looked like it could be ascended in several difficult ways but Jim noticed the ducks folded back towards the west. Following these ducks brought us to the base of a modestly troublesome chimney. At the top of the chimney was another nice shelf and the ducks headed back to the east towards another chimney. The second chimney was easy class 3 and at the top of the chimney was a long flat ridge heading back towards the summit of the Zoroaster. It is

very picturesque. The Brahma Temple is in clear view and the vast Grand Canyon itself drops away to the south. We followed this until we were blocked by another red sandstone cliff. The start to this requires another short chimney and then a long traverse on loose sand and sandstone above a fearsome looking drop off in some areas. This ends with a break in the red sandstone cliff, which is apparently the Supai band. Getting through the break requires two sections of class four. One section has a fixed rope in place but the other section does not. Above this is another section of loose class three red sandstone, which winds towards the main white Coconino sandstone which forms the main summit of the Zoroaster. We headed up through the red sandstone and eventually ended up at the base of the Northeast Arête. The saddle between the Zoroaster and the Brahma Temple is directly below the start. The start of the route is marked by an obvious red scar where the rock has recently fallen away.

After about 30 minutes of goofing off we started up the route. It is not particularly aesthetic looking and the topo is not very accurate. I lead the first pitch and linked the second pitch to the first pitch. Our 50 meter double ropes were plenty long enough to do this. The topo claims a point of aid is needed on the first pitch which none of us saw. This pitch was not any harder than 5.7. The end of the linked first and second pitch ends at a small tree with a bunch of slings and rappel rings. The next pitch is supposed to go up and right. If it does it isn't obvious. We ended up going left somewhat and ended on a nice flat ledge with more slings and rappel rings. This pitch was about 5.7 but was pretty scary. Exiting this shelf is a long pitch in a right leaning crack system which is not any harder than 5.6. This ended at a small alcove. Exiting directly above the alcove was an odd stemming section that turned into a short unprotectable section. This was about 5.7/5.8 and was also scary. It ended at another pile of slings, rappel rings and a bolt. This belay station was just to the left of the obvious overhanging roof above the route. Supposedly there was a two bolt traverse from this belay station to the west. There was only one weird bolt on this traverse which required going straight up past the bolt on 5.6/5.7 face and friction to get to a hole above a chimney and a move to the west to get on a shelf. The hole can be slung with a long sling. Bring a skinny carabiner or an old style oval without the tab, which identifies the gate opening to clip the bolt. This brought us to another nice shelf just to the right or west of the overhanging roof. This is where the final offwidth pitch is. It is about 5.9 in difficulty and we all thrashed on it except for Jim. The route descriptions indicate a #5 Camalot would be useful but it was not even close to being necessary. A #4 was useful. The offwidth section is fairly short and a hand or fist jam is available at the back of the offwidth. This ends on a sloping loose area. This is the end of the technical climbing but is not the summit. We stashed our ropes and gear and headed for the summit block. The summit block area is more limestone sitting on top of the white Coconino sandstone. There is a huge chimney on the east side of this block and that allows easy access to the very top of the Zoroaster. We climbed this and spent the next 30 minutes or so being amazed by the remoteness of the location and the views of the canyon. It was just amazing and I found it hard to leave. Near the south edge of the summit limestone we found a piece of pipe with a summit register of sorts. If the summit register was to be believed we were the second party on the summit in the year 2002.

We down climbed the limestone chimney and headed back across the white sandstone to the rappel station. We rappelled the route and in two hours or so we all ended up at the base of the route. There are rappel rings and slings at all the stations and they all looked to be in pretty good shape as of the date of our trip. Fifty meter ropes will allow you to rappel all the way to the deck on the

next to the last rappel avoiding the supposed last rappel from the small tree which is just thirty feet up above the red scar. We headed back down the loose sandstone and rappelled the fourth class sections. As we scooted across the sloping traverse it started to shower slightly. This was apparently the predicted late day showers. They were very light and did not last very long. We retraced our route, pausing only to take pictures, and returned to our bivouac site about an hour before sunset. Our plan was to pack up our camp and return to the Clear Creek trail where we had stashed about two liters of water apiece. We were too tired and the hour was getting late. We all had a liter and half apiece left over so the option of staying another night in our bivouac spot was easy to choose. The winds came up that night as the weather front moved through.

We slept in somewhat on Friday morning, packed up our gear, and headed back down the chimney in the Red Wall. The fourth class sections were bypassed with two rappels and in short order we were back in the Sumner Wash. We headed back to our stash of water near the Clear Creek trail and then headed back down to the Phantom Ranch. We took a short rest at the Phantom Ranch and then headed back up the Bright Angel Trail. It was very hot near the river and I was thankful for the breeze blowing down the Bright Angel fault. The hike out was uneventful and I pulled to the top near the Bright Angel Lodge at about 7 PM after stopping for some last minute pictures. I was greeted at the top by a stiff breeze and snow flurries! I headed back toward the backcountry parking lot and was not feeling too happy about the thoughts of spending another night in the Mather campground in the cold. As I was throwing my pack into my 4Runner, Maxym, Bojan and Jim pulled up and announced that they had rented a motel room! That was good news. The next day Bojan, Jim and Maxym headed for home and I started meandering around Arizona checking out the climbing areas.

This was a fabulous trip. It was a big treat to climb something in the Grand Canyon and get off the beaten path followed by everyone else. We just made it in terms of getting a permit and we just managed to fit the trip into a reasonable weather window. Thanks to Jim Curl, Bojan Silic, and Maxym Runov for sharing my enthusiasm for this project.

#### **Some Statistics:**

First day: Hike down 5000 feet in 7.1 miles. Hike up 1500 feet in 3.5 miles to Sumner Wash and then hike back 3.5 miles and back down 1500 feet. Total mileage is about 14 miles. Total elevation lost is about 6500 feet and total elevation gained is 1500 feet.

Second day: Hike up 3000 feet in about 4.7 miles (to the top of the Red Wall). Hike back down 1500 feet in 1.2 miles and back up 1500 feet in 1.2 miles. Total mileage is 7.1 miles. Total elevation gained is 4500 feet and total elevation lost is 1500 feet.

Third day: This is climbing day and the total mileage is about 1.5 miles in to the base and about 1.5 miles to return. The total elevation gained is about 2000 feet and the total elevation lost is about 2000 feet.

Fourth day: This is hike out day. Drop 3000 feet in about 4.7 miles to the Phantom Ranch. Sit on the front steps of the Phantom Ranch panting in the heat. Hike 9.5 miles back up the Bright Angel Trail gaining about 4800 feet.

Totals: About 38.2 miles of hiking, 13000 feet of elevation lost and 12800 feet of elevation gained. The elevation difference is because the trailhead for the South Kaibab Trail is about 200 feet higher than the trailhead for the Bright Angel Trail.

• Rick Booth

## **Cathedral Peak**

Date: 7 Aug 2002

Peaks: Cathedral Peak

Place: California

Difficulty: class 5, E Rated, helmet, rope used

Better late than never I suppose. Monday I drove to Bishop and stopped in at the Mountain Light Gallery. The displays are some of the best you will ever see anywhere. What a shame Rowell is gone. Just amazing photographs.

Tuesday morning Aug 6, I manage to get a campsite at Saddlebag Lake by being there about 07:30. My partner Jeff McGraw arrives from the bay area about 18:00. We had originally thought to do a hike of Dana for warm up but He was a bit short on time so we decided to go for Cathedral on Wednesday and if we had time do another peak on Thursday.

It is a pretty good place to camp and we had a late dinner at the Tioga Lodge so did not get out of camp until about 08:30. We parked at the Budd Creek trailhead and made our way to the S/E side of Cathedral. It took about two hours to make the hike to the base of the climb and by the time we got the ropes laid out and the pro sorted it was noon.

This section is rated 5.5-5.6. It is a good rough surface with lots of cups and holds and several cracks good for pro. We only took cams and a few stoppers. We had a 60mm rope. There was one section where I would have liked to have a hex or two but the route is easy to protect.

Jeff knows the route and took the first lead. I followed and only did about 40 meters on the follow, as it did not look like there was another good belay stance above it for quite a way. These two pitches were mostly face climbing. Jeff led the third pitch, which had a few more cracks and some layback on a dihedral. The fourth pitch has a chimney but there was another party in it and they were not moving too fast. I went to the left of the chimney and found a small crack that turned out to be a bit harder than it looked. It was a bit flared and I had a problem getting the pro in. Not having climbed extended class fives recently I got sewing machine leg and really struggled to get past this one. It also took some hard opposing pressure on the fingers to make the move and get my foot up on the next knob. Only one move but dicey for me. The easiest route I discovered later would have been to go right. Above the chimney was another good ledge for belay. Jeff led the next pitch to just below the summit block where there is another wide ledge. You have to climb over a small razor edged rock to get to the summit and then a class four crack to the summit. We were on the summit about 17:30 There was another party below the summit who had come up behind us. We went around to the left of the summit and into a small alcove that leads to the west gully. The other party a young couple went further to the left and did not follow us into the gully.

The descent is mostly third class for the first third or so and then levels out somewhat. We headed N/W toward the Cathedral Lakes trail. There is some forest for a quarter mile below the granite in the gully and we got to the trail just as the last light failed. We were almost to the bottom of the gully when we heard the other couple yelling to us. They were on the west ridge and it did not look promising. The light was failing fast and they would have to rap off. They wanted to know if it was possible to traverse to the gully and it seemed possible but it looked like pretty hard going. I suspect that they spent the night there. They did not seem to have much in the way of warm clothing with them and it got pretty cold

that night. We never did hear how they made out. We reported their plight to one of the rangers and asked around at the meadows on Thursday. It took longer to get back to the road from there than it did to get to the peak on the Budd Creek trail. We did not rap the climb, as we would have had to leave pro to do so. It seemed like the trail would never end and we finally got back to the truck at 22:00.

By the time we got back to camp, made dinner and got to bed it was 01:00.

We just slept late the next morning so did not get another climb in. This is a good moderate climb with good footing and hand holds.

• *David Underwood*

## Peaks With a View

**San Joaquin Mountain 11,600'**

**Carson Peak 10,909'**

**Mt. Davis 12,311'**

**Blacktop Peak 12,710'**

August 18-24, 2002

Since I had previously climbed Ritter and Banner, I decided to return to the June Lakes area and climb some peaks I had missed. Richard Stover and I ambled up the Rush Creek Trail after stuffing ourselves with pancakes at the Silver Lakes Resort. The first part of this trail is filled with day hikers, and the route crosses the interesting tramway which I assume is used by Southern California Edison to ferry supplies to their facilities at the reservoirs above. At the first dam, we turned off on the Agnew Pass Trail and continued past the lovely Clark Lakes over Agnew Pass to Summit Lake where we camped. It was the first day of the bow hunting season, and we met an empty-handed hunter on his way back to town. Luckily for the deer we are not hunters, because we came quite close to several deer during the trip.

From our campsite on the south side of Summit Lake we could see both San Joaquin Mountain and the Two Teats, a formation that looks as if it came out of a Wagnerian opera.

The next morning we followed the faint, old trail (on the 15 minute map) to the top of San Joaquin Ridge. This ridge is a marvel of botanical diversity and full of surprises. Our favorite was the tiny, pink dwarf monkey flower, but we also found Tolmie's saxifrage as well as several stickleaf and lovage that were not in our Peterson wildflower guide.

San Joaquin Mountain is easily climbed: It is an excellent choice for a beginning climber because of the spectacular view from its summit. From the register we discovered that several PCSers had approached from Deadman Summit as a day hike, but I prefer the enjoyment of a more leisurely backpack. We also climbed the easier teat. Secor describes the harder one as "exposed third class." He is correct. Without a rope, I decided to assess various routes from the bottom.

We spent the rest of the day botanizing and climbed Carson Peak as a dividend. From the ridge, it is barely a hill, but drops off sharply and is quite impressive from the June Lakes road.

Our trek over North Glacier Pass was a grunt with full packs. The trick is to keep to the left (east) going through the boulder field. Our campsite on a bench overlooking Lake Catherine was especially scenic with front row seats of the glacier between Ritter and Banner and nearby running water to boot.

The climb of Davis presents a few false summits to those who stray too far to the west. Richard said we climbed not only Davis but also Dave Junior and Little Dave as well. And yet another perspective on Ritter and Banner. From the summit of Davis we saw on the flat below a series of mini moraines, or so they seemed. The 7 1/2 minute map shows glaciers (now melted) but what remained were miniature valleys ranging from three to about eight feet wide with lateral and end moraines of stones. If there is a geologist out there with more information, I'd love to hear what caused them.

When we returned to camp, we packed out over North Glacier Pass again and camped well above Thousand Island Lake avoiding the multitudes. Descending the pass on the last remnants of snow, Richard did a beautiful standing glissade. "How come you can do that but can't ski?" I asked. Richard gave me one of those looks (duh!) and replied, "Maybe if skis had tread like my boots, I could do it."

Continuing our loop, we hiked cross country over Island Pass, hit the JMT, skirted the artificial Waugh Lake and started up the Gem Pass Trail. That trail has been completely relocated from what is shown on my 15 minute map. When we crossed Crest Creek, we left the trail and headed up the valley a short way and set up camp on a seldom-visited bench ringed with very large lodgepole pines. Crest Creek was bedecked with bold splashes of yellow and pink wildflowers including soft arnica, a yellow monkeyflower not in our book, pink Lewis's Monkey Flower, Mountain Marsh Delphinium, Newberry's Gentian, Baby Elephant's Head, Ranger's Buttons and more.

I enjoyed the climb of Blacktop Peak the most. The only PCS name I saw in the register was Harlan Suits. This peak is not on any list and so sees only about three parties of climbers a year. Its shale slabs are stable and easy to climb. The views back towards Ritter and Banner and north into Tuolumne are fantastic and the lack of visitors makes this area especially beautiful. On the way up the valley we surprised a herd of 6-8 bachelor deer with quite large racks. There is also a large lake at the foot of the Koip Crest that is not on the 15 minute map. I dedicated my climb to Caltrans.

The next day it was a quick hike out and back to Mammoth to return our rented bear canister.

• *Debbie Bulger*

## Pyramid Peak (South)

August 24 - 26, 2002

Three PCS'ers (leader Charles Schafer, Andy Skumanich and scribe Mike McDermitt) headed out on a Friday afternoon in late August to Cedar Grove for a three-day trip to Pyramid Peak South (12,777') in Kings Canyon National Park. We overnights at a campground at Cedar Grove and the next morning moved to the ranger station at Roads End (~ 5050') to finish packing and pick up the wilderness permit. We then set out on the trail along the Kings River South Fork admiring the huge gray granite walls of the canyon and views of The Sphinx.

Upon reaching the Bubbs Creek Junction we turned north continuing up the Kings S Fork and rambled upstream. The hike up the beautiful canyon was uneventful, albeit hot, as we passed through Paradise Valley and then eventually reached the junction with Woods Creek after about ten miles from our start at an elevation of approx 6900'. There was a flimsy but serviceable bridge over the Kings consisting of three narrow logs tied together. After crossing the river the trail turns east and follows Woods Creek upstream. We continued on another 4= miles to

Castle Domes Meadow (~ 8200') where in the early evening we found a secluded campsite just off the trail and adjacent to the creek.

We were walking by 7am the next day on calm, clear and surprisingly cool morning, heading east up the trail along Woods Creek intending to approach the peak from the east. After a couple of miles we reached the JMT/ Baxter Creek junction (~8500') and then continued north along Woods Creek on the JMT. Over the next mile, there are two streams entering Woods Creek from the east, as indicated on maps. This particular year, most side streams in this area were dry, and these streams were no exception. After filling up on water in Woods Creek, we left the JMT at ~9000' and to avoid brush followed along the dry streambed of the second stream uphill to about the 9800' - 10,000' level. At this point the stream veered to the left away from our route and we started cross-country uphill, aiming for a thicket of pine trees above and to the right, then continuing up through the thicket up to a small ridge above the lower and smaller of the two lakes shown on the map east of Window Peak. The terrain was modest brush, talus and grassy slopes. We made steady progress but still had several thousand feet of vertical in uncertain terrain. However views behind us up the Baxter Creek drainage to Diamond Peak and the Rae Lakes Basin opened wider and grander with every step. With Andy leading (pulling) us uphill, we finally reached the 10,400' ridge beside the first smaller lake, and Pyramid Peak first came into view. After a break, we continued along the drainage. The stream now had water; although the first lake was dry, a second small lake adjacent to it was not, and higher up the large lake was quite full. From the large higher lake we could see that the stream continued up in a narrow cleft and decided to follow a ramp which rises along the west side of the stream, parallel to it. This took us upward over talus to about the 11,000' level from which we aimed for the prominent notch just south of the peak. The day remained sunny and mild but it was now after noon. Steadily we traveled over slabs and large talus towards the notch. The terrain looked difficult but actually went quite well, as we never had to backtrack or lose significant altitude.

The Class 3 began about 100' below the 12,000' notch. We ascended over slabs, starting from the left/ south of the notch then traversing up to and then across it. The wind was blasting here. Then it was straightforward class 3 blocks - with a fair amount of loose rock - for another hundred or so feet upward and to the right (i.e., off the ridge) to gain the summit massif. From there it was a slog over talus towards the peak, Class 2 until the last couple of hundred feet then Class 3 on good rock. Although we all summited from the south side, each of us took a slightly different route. Suffice to say, the direct west face is Class 4 or 5 and so when gaining the peak from the west as we did one must make the final approach from the south (or the north). The peak was gained first by Andy at 2.20pm, with the others following within the next 20 minutes.

We stayed on the summit for an hour. Although not overly high, the peak is very centrally located and as such has very good views to the north (Palisades, Powell/ Thompson farther, Arrow, Ruskin nearer), east (Cardinal, Striped, Pinchot, Wynne, Baxter, Diamond) and south (Kings/Kern and Great West Divides, Gardner, Clarence King). Mt. Gardner looked most imposing.

We headed down at 3.20pm, our happiness at having gained the peak tempered by knowledge of the long descent back to camp. Care must be taken in reversing the route, mainly from the point where one leaves the smaller lake and starts back down the slope towards the JMT. This area can be confusing and a poor route can lead one into thick brush (which we mostly but not completely

avoided) and also at certain points into the deep impassable cleft of the streambed. These challenges notwithstanding, we managed to reach the JMT around 6pm. On the way down I found (but did not take) a weathered, blood-stained horn from a bighorn sheep which may have fallen prey to a mountain lion. This area is just across Woods Creek from the Acrodictes Peak/ Mount Baxter area, much of which is permanently closed for bighorn sheep protection. From the JMT, we had another four to five miles of trail walking, and we all reached camp by 8pm or sooner, making for a day that was long (13 hours) but successful and enjoyable.

Monday's hike out was uneventful as we retraced our steps down the Woods Creek trail to the South Fork of the Kings River and back to Cedar Grove/ Roads End. Black flies were in force on much of the trail from above Mist Falls down to Bubbs Creek. We were back to the car by around 3pm having started out around 8am. After stocking up on some goodies at the lodge at Cedar Grove, we took to the road and headed back to the Bay Area. Total trip stats were approx. 35 to 40 miles and 8000' gain.

ROUTE NOTES: The original plan was to pack in on the Woods Creek trail only to the small unnamed creek which Secor refers to as Window Creek. This small creek flows southwest from Pyramid Peak before joining Woods Creek, and we planned to camp there (~7800') and then the next day ascend the peak from the WEST via Window Creek. Upon arriving at Window Creek, we found it to be bone dry. Rather than be forced leave camp carrying enough water for the entirety of a long summit day, we opted to continue up the Woods Creek trail sufficiently far to position us for the approach via Pyramid's EAST side drainage (also an unnamed stream) which had large enough lakes such that we were reasonably confident water would be available (in fact, good water was and should always be available on this route, at the large lake). However this creek was also dry where it joined Woods Creek. Hence, whether in fact Window Creek was dry all the way upstream or whether water would have been available up high, we don't know. Our revised route added on the order of 10 miles round-trip; however the views (Rae Lakes area, etc.) were very aesthetic, more so than the original route would have been. The original route also appeared to be considerably brushier and is even steeper. Finally, it should be noted that there were no flat areas suitable for overnighing in the vicinity of the Woods Creek trail/ Window Creek junction so a party taking that route might be better off stopping lower down at the S Fork Kings/ Woods Creek junction where there are campsites, a bear box and reliable water.

• *Mike McDemitt*



# Harrington and Kennedy

August 28-30 2002

We had a good and successful time on this SPS backpack out of Kings Canyon. Seven of us started at the Deer Cove Creek trailhead (4400'). The backpack was to elevation 8000' -- the trail fork for Kennedy Pass and Grizzly Lakestrails. Advantage of this route is that it is in the Monarch Wilderness and no permit is required. After leaving our gear we went up to Grizzly Lakes thinking we could do Harrington the first day, but were a bit tired and slow after 4000' gain with packs, and turned around. Back down to camp for an early start the next morning.

In the morning when we got the area east of the summit of Harrington, we took a route up the cliffs below the col northeast of the peak. Our route was near some trees; 3<sup>rd</sup> class, and there a couple exposed moves. We waked a bit to the north side of the 300' summit, and followed the north ridge and along its west side. There were a few 3rd class sections but no rope needed. On to the top, it was nice sunny and warm. After relaxing we came back down the headwall via a crack that is at the extreme left edge of it as you look from below.

We had plenty of time left, so we just lazed around the two small lakes for a couple hours. Some of us did swimming too. Then we went back to camp and had another happy hour, turning in early for a dawn start to Kennedy. For that peak, it was just a matter of following the trail to Kennedy Pass and then going up the mostly class 1 ridge to the summit. Again sunny and warm on top. To return to camp, we followed the ridge that goes southwest from the summit, down for thousands of feet until we intersected the trail near Lewis Creek at 8500'. We picked up our packs and headed back down the hot south-facing slope of Kings Canyon, arriving at the cars in the evening. Dust from the loose tracks of horses which had pulverized the steep trail made hiking a bit less pleasant. All seven of us made both peaks.

• *Ron Hudson*

## Hut Work Parties

Hut and Work Party Enthusiasts:

Each year the Sierra Club schedules work parties to prepare its backcountry huts in the Donner/Tahoe area for the coming winter season. Stocking the cabins with firewood is the top priority. There will be other projects that give everyone a chance to participate - from cleaning windows to posting new signs; not everyone has to saw wood. A special project at Peter Grubb Hut will be to construct a new outhouse. We also hope to install solar electric lighting at Peter Grubb. Both of these projects can move forward, albeit more slowly because of the fire restrictions. For those less familiar with work parties ... The usual format is to drive to the Club's Clair Tappaan Lodge at Donner Summit for Friday overnight and breakfast Saturday morning; both are available at no cost to volunteers heading out for that weekend's work party. Bradley and Ludlow Huts can be reached via forest roads (vehicles will need average or better clearance but 4WD is not required); Peter Grubb and Benson require a short backpack. The Club provides food, tools, and supplies; you will need overnight camping gear, a healthy attitude toward manual labor, and a desire for fresh mountain air mixed with fall colors and (maybe) a touch of frost in the morning.

No previous work party experience is required. In fact, many participants don't even ski or snowshoe; they just like the idea of getting outdoors and contributing to a good cause.

The schedule is listed below. For more information or to sign up, contact one of the leaders.

Oct 5- 6: Ludlow Hut-- contact  
Dick Simpson  
650-494-9272, or  
[rsimpson@magellan.stanford.edu](mailto:rsimpson@magellan.stanford.edu)

Oct 12-13: Bradley Hut-- contact  
Dick Simpson  
650-494-9272, or  
[rsimpson@magellan.stanford.edu](mailto:rsimpson@magellan.stanford.edu)

Oct 19-20: To be determined-- contact  
Dick Simpson  
650-494-9272, or  
[rsimpson@magellan.stanford.edu](mailto:rsimpson@magellan.stanford.edu)

Oct 26-27: To be determined-- contact  
Dick Simpson  
650-494-9272, or  
[rsimpson@magellan.stanford.edu](mailto:rsimpson@magellan.stanford.edu)

The last two work parties are real; the destinations will be determined based on need and conditions (such as whether chain saw restrictions are still in effect).

• *Debbie Benham*

## 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.

### Mexican Volcanos

Peaks: Citlaltepētēl, (Orizaba, 18,400), Iztaccihuatl (17,340) & 2 more.  
Date: Nov. 22, 02 - Dec. 3, 02 (Fri - Tues, 12 days)  
Contact: Bob Evans, [robtwevans@email.msn.com](mailto:robtwevans@email.msn.com)

### Nepal - Tibet

Goal: Kala Pata (18200'/5545m), Mera Peak (21100'/6437m), Tibet  
Date: Apr 12 - May 12 (Sat-Mon)  
Difficulty: Peak Climbing - mixed  
Location: Nepal - Tibet  
Contact: Warren Storkman [dstorkman@aol.com](mailto:dstorkman@aol.com)  
650-493-8959

April 2003 - Nepal Two trips running simultaneously, both will be in the Khumba area. One group will climb Mera Peak 21,100 ft (6437 meters) then cross Amphu Lapcha and do Island Peak (Imjatse) 20,300 ft (6189 Meters) returning through Namche. The other trekking and climbing group will trek to Lobuche 16,200 ft. with options of Everest Base camp or walk up Kala Pata 18,200 ft. (5545 meters) Then over to do Island Peak (Imjatse) -- with a layover day for the trekkers.

May Option - Tibet: There will be a two day lay over in KTM (Kathmandu) after trek / climb before going to Tibet. We fly to Lasha and motor back to Nepal. This is 8 days - 7 nights of hotels.

Will include full board. (no camping) My wife will arrive in KTM with some trekkers wives, and others, for Tibet trip. As in the past I do not ask for any of your money. You pay the provider.

## Elected Officials

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## Subscriptions and Email List Info

Hard copy subscriptions are \$13. Subscription applications and checks payable to "PCS" should be mailed to the Treasurer so they arrive before the last Tuesday of the expiration month. If you are on the official email list ([lomap-pcs-announce@lists.sierraclub.org](mailto:lomap-pcs-announce@lists.sierraclub.org)) or the email list the PCS feeds ([pcs-issues@climber.org](mailto:pcs-issues@climber.org)), you have a free EScree subscription. For email list details, send "info lomap-pcs-announce" to "[listserv@lists.sierraclub.org](mailto:listserv@lists.sierraclub.org)", or send anything to "[info@climber.org](mailto:info@climber.org)". EScree subscribers should send a subscription form to the Treasurer to become voting PCS members at no charge. The Scree is on the web as both plain text and fully formatted Adobe Acrobat/PDF.

## 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 10/27/2002. Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month.**



Peak Climbing Section, 789 Daffodil Way, San Jose CA 95117

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

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