



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

Next General Meeting

Date: Tuesday, August 12
Time: 7:30 PM
Program: A Slide Show by Ron Karpel
 Another sensational slide show, presented by Ron Karpel
Location: Peninsula Conservation Center
 3921 East Bayshore Rd
 Palo Alto, CA

Directions: From 101: Exit at San Antonio Road, Go East to the first traffic light, Turn left and follow Bayshore Rd to the PCC on the corner of Corporation Way. A sign marking the PCC is out front. Park behind.

Deadline for submissions to the next Scree is Sunday 8/24/2003 Meetings are the 2nd Tuesday of each month.

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.

Matterhorn Peak

Peak: Matterhorn Peak
Dates: August 1-3, 2003
Leader: John Wilkinson, 408-947-0858,
jfwilkinson@sbcglobal.net

A leisurely trip to this Northern Yosemite peak. We'll meet in Bridgeport for lunch on Friday, drive to Twin Lakes, and backpack in to a campsite somewhere on Horse Creek. Saturday we'll dayhike the peak, returning to the same campsite. Sunday we'll backpack out and drive home. This is a Class 2 peak and the trip is suitable for beginners. Limited to 5 people. Contact John to reserve a spot.

Tenaya Peak

Peak: Tenaya Peak, class 2, 10,301'
Dates: August 9-10, Sat-Sun
Map: Yosemite National Park, Wilderness Press
Leader(s): Debbie Benham, 650/964-0558,
deborah4@pacbell.net
 Chris MacIntosh, cmaci@attglobal.net

Join us for a backcountry stroll up the sloping side of Tenaya Peak! We've reserved two nights (Fri-Sat) at lovely Tuolumne Meadows campground with plans to climb Tenaya Peak on Saturday and 'pick-a-peak' on Sunday. A non-refundable fee of \$8 will reserve

your >spot. PLEASE CONTACT DEBBIE TO SIGN UP. Must be comfortable hiking off-trail.

Stanford

Peaks: Stanford (South, 13,963, cl. 3)
Dates: Fri. Aug 8 - Sun. Aug. 10, 2003
Leader: Charles Schafer, c_g_schafer@yahoo.com,
 Home Phone - (408) 354-1545
Co-leader: Bob Evans, robtwevans@msn.com, Week days:
 (408) 998-2857
 Friday, 8/8: 11 mi. walk in from Onion Valley (9192), over Kearsage Pass (11,811), to camp along JMT in the vicinity of Center Peak (ca 10,800).
 Saturday, 8/9: Climb Stanford (the southernmost of the two Standfords) by E. Face, cl. 3; possible side trip to Gregory's Monument, cl. 3). Sunday, 8/10: walk out.

Winchell

Peaks: Winchell (13,768, cl.3) & Gayley (13,510, cl.3)
Dates: Fri. Aug. 22 to Mon Aug. 25, 2003
Leader: Charles Schafer, c_g_schafer@yahoo.com,
 Home Phone - (408) 354-1545
Co-leader: Bob Evans, robtwevans@msn.com,
 Week days: (408) 998-2857
 Friday, 8/22: 9 mi. walk in from Big Pine Creek lot (7677), up the N. Fork trail to the vicinity of Sam Mack Meadow (10,600).
 Saturday, 8/23: Climb Winchell (13,768) via E. Arete (cl. 3) and return to camp.
 Sunday 8/24: Climb Gayley (13,510) via S.W. Ridge ("The Yellow Brick Road,"cl. 3).
 Monday, 8/25: walk out.

Marion & State

Peaks: Two remote and rarely visited peaks:
Dates: Thur - Mon, 9/25 - 9/29
Leader: Charles Schafer, c_g_schafer@yahoo.com,
 Home Phone (408) 354-1545
 Cell Phone (408) 829-0381
Co-leader: Bob Evans, robtwevans@msn.com,
 Week days: (408) 998-2857
 Thur 9/25: From Road's End in King's Cnyn (about 5,000 ft), up Copper Creek Trail to Granite Creek (11 mi, 10,080 ft)
 Fri 9/26: About 10 mi. and 2,100 ft. gross el. gain to highest State Lk (10,960)
 Sat 9/27: State Pk (12,620) by N.W. chute (cl. 2); then a 3 mile traverse to Marion (12,719), on E. side of ridge (cl. 2).
 Sun & Mon. 9/28-29: Out. Pleasant disposition while suffering required.

Monomania

June 14-15, 2003

Peaks: Bloody Mtn, Laurel Mtn, Mt Morrison, Black Point

Monomania: the single minded pursuit of only one thing. We set out to explore a high place in Mono County: Bloody Mountain. Jim Ramaker and I were the leaders of this expedition, and we were accompanied by Kai Weidman, Cecil Anison, Liz Harvey, Debbie Benham, Tom Driscoll, Nancy Fitzsimmons, Anthony Stegman, and Alex Sapozhnikov.

Friday night, on the way out to our reunion point, Tom, Nancy and I stopped at the south shore of Mono Lake. It's much saltier than the ocean, but although it can't sustain fish, it is not a dead sea. Mono Lake teems with brine shrimp, and supports a huge winter colony of California Gulls. Underwater mineral springs create towers of precipitates, known as tufa. The lake is much smaller than it was in the fluvial age thousands of years ago, and today towers are exposed on the lake shore. We hiked past dozens of these fossilized mineral springs, each twenty or thirty feet high, puffy in form, resembling stalagmites in caves. Under the platinum glow of the full moon, the tufa was other-worldly.

We camped at the plush National Forest campground at Convict Lake, and in the morning, met the rest of our group at the base of Laurel Creek Road, where it joins Sherwin Creek Road. We had read accounts of other people who had driven up Laurel Creek Road all the way to 8400 feet, but neither Kai's car nor my car could handle the deep ruts. We drove only about 1/2 mile, and started hiking at about 7300 feet. We followed the road until we stood under the saddle between Laurel Mountain and Bloody Mountain, then headed cross country for the gap.

Monolith: a single, unbroken tower of rock. If you want to climb a monolith, head to the Palisades instead. We walked up the shattered shale slopes of Bloody Mountain. Jim and I had pre-arranged with the national Sierra Club for approval to climb with ice axes and crampons, but by the middle of June, the shale fossils of Bloody Mountain were dying of thirst. There were a few scanty patches of snow, but we only made about 100 footprints each. We reached the saddle.

Monoxide: never breathe it. The sweet desert air hung around us still and warm and aromatic. Nancy climbed Laurel Mountain, and the rest of us continued up into the atmosphere of Bloody Mountain. We stood on the 12544 foot summit and admired the view far below.

Monotone: not very tuneful. As we hiked down, we belted out every Beatles number we could remember, and we knew a lot of them. Rocky burst in, grinning a grin, and said, 'Danny Boy, this is a showdown!' We all live in a yellow submarine. Give peace a chance. We collected Nancy back at the saddle.

We hiked back to the cars. At the place where the use trail meets the rugged road, Liz dropped her trekking poles. Find those poles and return them to Liz, and she'll take you to dinner, some place nice. This Saturday night we cooked dinner at our campsite at Convict Lake. Noodles. Chili. Mashed potatoes and powdered gravy straight from the envelope. Mono sodium glutamate. Gourmet camping food. Porter. Liz promises something much better.

Monogamy: one mate for life. Did I mention that Tom and Nancy are getting married in January? Mazel tov, Nancy and Tom!

On Sunday, Jim and Cecil stampeded up Mount Morrison. Kai relaxed at the camp ground. The rest of us abandoned our mad plan for a second 5000 foot day to Mount Baldwin, and instead

rode up to Mono Lake. Kai recommended that we hike up Black Point and explore the fissures there.

If you want to see this wonder for yourself, take highway 395 north from Lee Vining to the clearly marked right hand turnoff for well-paved Cemetery Road. You'll pass the old boneyard in about a half mile, and then the road becomes unpaved but graded. Several miles further (sorry, I didn't watch the odometer), at 6500 feet of elevation, a poorly marked right turn puts you on the nameless dirt road to Black Point. At the end of the road there is a parking lot. There is no trail, but the cross-country route finding is trivial. Hike uphill across the cinders to the summit at 7000 feet, about 1/2 mile from the road. The fissures are visible from the top. Continue in a westerly direction for a couple hundred yards, drop into the big cracks in the earth, and then give yourself an hour to experience the interior.

Monograph: A treatise on a single subject. The BLM leaflet explains, 'Black Point is a volcano that erupted beneath the waters of a much deeper Mono Lake about 13000 years ago, near the end of the last Ice Age. As the cinders and lava quickly cooled and hardened underwater, the top split open to form several hundred-yard-long cracks. These fissures measure from 20 to 50 feet deep and are only a couple of feet wide. Layers of tufa, ash and sediment are visible from inside these fissures. As the fluctuating waters of Mono Lake receded after the Ice Age, Black Point was left as a peninsula. It is said to be the only fully exposed underwater volcano on earth.'

Inside, the fissures resembled the slot canyons of Utah. It was cool and moist within, generously appointed with flora, even though just outside the desert baked in the noon sun. The clear sky was just a slit above us. I was struck by the realization that while yesterday we were in the Sierra Nevada, today we were in the Great Basin. We had crossed an abrupt boundary between two of the great geological and ecological regions of North America.

Monotreme: the platypus and its kin. We found in Black Point an oddity of nature, on the shores of a lake which is itself a curiosity. Our whole Mono weekend was a wonder.

• *Aaron Schuman*

Middle Palisade

The web base report with picture is at

<http://www.karpel.org/Ron/Reports2003/MiddlePalisade20030628.html>

Sunday June 29th 2003, the 7 of us left camp at the south end of Finger Lake heading towards the moraine separating the south and north portions of Middle Palisade Glacier. Climbing the sun cupped snow on the south side of the moraine, we reached the headwall.

There had been lots of talk about the difficulty of finding the correct chute, so we came prepared with maps, pictures, copies from guide books, and a printout of every trip report I could find. Peter Maxwell's report from 1993 and Kelly Maas's from '99 were most helpful. I could see the gullies Peter was talking about and I could see Kelly's large snow patch and "lower buttress". The one difficulty was the correct spot to climb the headwall. I couldn't make out Secor's "chimney and ledge system", but close to the highest point on the South Glacier and a bit to the right, we found an EASY class-3, 45 degree ramp, leading off the snow, around a corner, and into the chute.

The moderate class 3 chute led up to a ridge where it ended and forced us to the next chute on our right. The melt from Kelly's snow patch help with last minute water supply. Continuing up the

chute and keeping left as it branches, we made it to the summit ridge. The west side of that ridge is a sheer drop hundreds of feet down. The only way to continue is on the east side of the ridge.

Next challenge was to find the EASY way to the summit block. We found the traverse about 10 feet below the summit ridge and followed it for about 50 ft south. Then a 20 ft. corner led up to where there seemed to be a possible traverse around some blocks farther south, or a slightly harder class-3 ramp still higher. We first tried the higher ramp, and discovered Peter's "difficult last portion". Traversing south another 50 feet or so and up some exposed blocks we found the "trivial route round the back side".

We never climbed anything harder than class 3, the entire way, but it was loose.

One of the interesting things about the summit of Middle Palisade is that it provides a great view of the trailhead, in addition to all the normal views of any summit. Another thing we could see from the summit was our camp. And we could also see Tom's tent sailing across Finger Lake. It got blown in the wind and was now sailing towards an island in the middle of the lake. On the return, Tom's tent got blown up on the island and now stood upright as if Tom put it there himself. We built a hoping stone bridge and went to save Tom's stuff, which was partially soaked from sailing in the water. Luckily, the wind was kept blowing all evening, which help dry his things off.

Wildflowers were in bloom and we were treated to terrific display both going up and back down, but the mosquitoes seem to be in charge of every shady spot.

Participants: Brian Doyle, Christopher Franchuk, Debbie Benham, Greg. Johnson, Nancy Fitzsimmons, Tom Driscoll, and scribe, Ron Karpel

• *Ron Karpel*

Dragon Peak, North Ridge

June 21/22 2003

Well, Charles Schafer and I hadn't intended to climb the North Ridge on Dragon Peak. It isn't even in any guide book. We were intending on climbing the Northwest Ridge, which is listed in Moynier and Fiddler's first 100 Classics of the Sierra book. This route isn't mentioned in the second version, which should have been a clue as to how classic the route really is.

We headed out of Onion Valley on Saturday morning and chugged up to the unnamed lake at the base of Dragon Peak. This was achieved in a few hours and we spent the afternoon goofing off. Sunday morning we headed up to the North Dragon Col, which is above the talus and scree on the north side of Dragon. Getting to the top of the Col we looked down the other side. A large iceberg had taken up residence about 100 feet down the col and we had left the crampons in the truck. Furthermore, it looked like it would take a rappel to even start down this col. The footing at the beginning of the step down was incredibly loose. Finally, the wall above the col showed signs of stuff coming off. This col is very narrow and any junk starting down the slot would scrape off anyone or anything in it. I was secretly glad we had left the crampons at the truck. The North Dragon Col is possibly the most dangerous looking place in the Sierras I have ever laid eyes on.

While I was parked on my pack Charles suggested maybe we could go up the wall above us and get on the ridge. There is a crack system or book right above the col but it looked loose. The rock further left looked better but it wasn't clear we could get through it. So, for no other reason than we had nothing better to

do, we headed up the book. The first pitch is the hardest and has maybe one 5.6 move in it and the rest is 5.4 or so. It is somewhat loose and all holds needed to be tested. Furthermore it is sort of tricky getting in cams but there are enough openings in the discontinuous crack to put in a few. After about 60 meters a chute is achieved. This has a big plate like rock about the size of two grand pianos perched above it. I opted to continue up the left side of the chute and we came to a notch right on the ridge. This is about 3rd to 4th class.

The route looks like it can continue up the ridge, however, it was now possible to climb down 30 to 40 feet and get on the East Face which looked 3rd class. Since we had no real idea where we were and I was nervous about getting over to the South Dragon Col and heading down the snow late in the afternoon we opted for the 3rd class escape. It looks like there are at least two towers further up the ridge that would have to be negotiated. We cruised along on the East Face and then came to a broken area that allowed us to get back up on the ridge. We headed up this broken area and 3rd classed along the ridge until confronted with a 5th classish looking move and broke out the rope. After about 60 meters directly on the ridge the summit of Dragon is achieved.

On the summit we ran into Elizabeth Wenk and Chris Tuffley, both PhD students at UC Berkeley. They were smart enough not to get on the North Ridge. We lollygagged around for half an hour and then headed down. The summit block has a classic 3rd class crack for the feet and a few pockets for the hands. This is positioned above a huge drop. We headed along the ridge on the West side and headed for the South Dragon Col. This is another nasty spot in the world. In order to avoid the snow we ended up down climbing steep ledges that were covered with scree. Once on the snow it was a cruise to our camp at the unnamed lake. We packed up and headed out to Onion Valley.

The North Ridge of Dragon Peak is not harder than 5.6 and is only one move. The first pitches are pretty loose. I plugged a cam into a crack, gave it a good yank, and the whole block fell off and landed on my foot. The route really needs to be done by going up and continuing all along the ridge. This would be a far more aesthetic route but will require bypassing the towers. I am not sure how hard that would be but it would make the route more interesting. For gear we had a single 60 meter rope and a selection of stoppers and a single set of cams up to #3 camalot. The big cam was unnecessary.

As for the Northwest Ridge route I would not go up and over North Dragon Col. That is a good way to get killed. Going up and over the South Dragon Col will drop you down at a nice looking lake and it is probably straightforward to get to the base of the route from there. This would extend the trip but it is probably worth it given how dangerous the North Dragon Col appears to be.

• *Rick and Dee Booth*

Mt Sill, Swiss Arête, Mt Gayley, Yellow Brick Road

July 3-6, 2003

Thursday morning, July 3, Dee and I headed up to the Palisades Glacier via the North Fork of Big Pine Creek. We arrived at the moraine above the lower camp and at the tarn at the end of the glacier and it looked like the two open sites were taken. The so called "site" on top of the huge rock there was covered with a giant red tent. How they got that thing up there I don't know. We were looking for Alexey Zelditch and his son but we did not see their tent there. We headed up the boulder field to the Northwest corner of Gayley to what is referred to as Gayley Camp. There are many bivouac spots there and a reasonable water drip about 30 feet in elevation below the camp. Dee and I scored the incredibly wind proof spot built in between several boulders. This was a good thing since the wind was whipping through this area. Several of the other sites were occupied by another party of six. It took about nine hours to do this chug which is one of the hardest hauls I do on what seems to be a regular basis.

Friday morning Dee and I headed up to Sill at about 6 AM. We chugged up to Glacier Pass and partway up the L shaped snowfield. The arête is to the left of the snowfield but the flank of the arête is sloping and it is not crystal clear where to get on the arête. We headed up high enough so that we could third class to a more or less level point partway up the arête. At this point we roped up and head up the first pitch or what we thought was the first pitch. This turned out to be fourth class with one or two low fifth class moves thrown in. The next pitch was higher angle and went at about 5.6 and was a lot of fun. This brought us to within half a pitch or so of the crux pitch on this route. I headed up the third pitch and encountered the "step around". This is not really at a headwall but is at a gendarme. Looking around to the left of the gendarme one will find a nice looking hand and finger crack, which reported goes at about 5.9 or so. To the right is the "step around". This was protected with a small stopper and a very long sling in order to make the step around move. Once around the step around I headed up the first hand crack that went up. There is supposedly another crack further to the right that goes up. After some junk at the top of the crack a nice flat spot is encountered just as the rope runs out. The "step around" move is not to be missed in spite of the nice looking crack to the left. It is airy and fairly difficult. It amazes me to think of Richard Jones doing this so long ago in 1938. It is also not 5.4 but more like 5.7, which I think this route is now rated. In any case, this pitch is followed by a long fourth class pitch and then a final low fifth class pitch. The Shooting Star guide indicates this last pitch requires going left and then encountering a "chimney which is difficult enough that it is advised to push your pack ahead of you" while climbing this chimney. We went straight up and never encountered this chimney. Frankly, I would consider this an IQ test. Anyone who deliberately seeks out a chimney which has to be climbed by pushing his pack ahead of him should be classified as a moron. By going straight up we essentially ended up tripping over the summit register. This is another nice feature to this route. The last of the technical difficulties drop you right at the summit.

The descent is interesting. The back or south side of Sill has a long second to third class chute on it. To descend to Glacier Pass we stuck to the third class arête, which is to the right (north) as you look down the third class chute. We stuck as close to the north edge as practically possible and in short order encountered the duck marking the drop down to the West Face traverse. This can be down climbed (fourth class) or rappelled. Since this gully was mostly full of snow we decided to rappel from the rappel

station down about 20 feet in the gully. A pair of 50 meter ropes just made it to the bottom of the snowfield. From there it is a stroll over to the top of the L shaped snowfield. We headed down the snowfield; back down Glacier Pass, and across the glacier to Gayley Camp. Supposedly one can head straight down the snowfield on the West Face but we have not tried that although it certainly looks quite feasible. We were not sure what the bergschrund was like at the bottom although this end of the 'shrund is usually not a problem. This would avoid the scree at the top of Glacier Notch. We were about 11 hours round trip which included lollygagging around the summit for a while and chatting with Christopher Jain and Michelle Park whom we encountered on the West Face traverse. They were on their way to doing the Palisades Traverse.

We had originally hoped to climb the Northwest Arête on Gayley on Saturday but the incredibly loose looking shelf about 100 feet up put us off considerably. In addition, we were having trouble figuring out which arête was the right one although the morning sun highlighted enough features that it became clear which arête was the correct one. We opted for the West Face route. So Saturday morning we headed up looking for the West Face route. We headed towards Glacier Pass and then headed back to the North on an incredibly loose and scree covered ledge system. This sucked. After a hundred yards of this we lost interest and headed back towards Glacier Pass and after a foolish attempt to go up a loose and dangerous chute we gave up and headed for Glacier Pass.

The Yellow Brick Road route on Gayley heads up the reddish looking band on the Southwest Ridge of Gayley. We headed up this route and in about 30 minutes or so were parked on the summit. It turns out we were too far off the ridge to be on the real Yellow Brick Road. We descended by dropping straight down the ridge. This is a nice section that includes a large slab and is essentially right on the edge of the ridge. After a few hundred feet a duck indicates the third class descent back down into the third class boulders and ledges on the Southwest Ridge. This descent is about 3+ in difficulty and the ascent up this section was missed on our way up to the summit. Too bad, it would have been fun to walk up the slab and the easy walking that is right on the top of the ridge. On Sunday morning we packed up and headed for home.

Final Notes:

We probably missed one or two pitches lower down on the Swiss Arête. Another party of four came up right after us and the leader claimed to have climbed the route previously and he essentially started in the same place we did. It looked like there would be one or two pitches of fourth class below where we started but most route descriptions indicate two pitches of 5.6 plus the pitch of 5.7 before encountering the "step around". It looks like one can get on the route in several places so it is likely my estimate that the lower pitches are fourth class is wrong. I way over racked for this route. Nothing over a #2 camalot is need and one of any size is enough. A few stoppers and a long sling were handy. We used a double 50 meter rope system, which was fine, however, the party behind us also used a 50 meter rope, which brought them up short on the crux "step around" pitch. This is because the leader chose the second crack system to the right after the "step around" instead of going up the first crack.

The hike up to Gayley Camp or the glacier can be shortened and simplified considerably. The trail goes up a chute as it gets near the glacier and then abruptly folds back to the east to get on top of a rib of rock. The trail then winds around through slabs and involves some traversing on some of the moraine scree. I have been through this twice and it is not the way to go. In the spring or early summer the upper end of the chute near the glacier is full

of snow. Go straight up that until the top of the snow, which ends on some dirt but quickly turns into a boulder field. There is usually another snowfield visible and up a little higher. Go across this field. If you are heading to the tarn at the end of glacier head towards the right toward a low spot and in short order the boulders go down hill and the camps at the tarn are soon encountered. To get to Gayley Camp head slightly to the left and head up to the top of the moraine coming down from the northwest corner of Gayley. After a while a use trail will show up which saves a few hundred yards of knee thrashing boulder hopping. This will bring you to Gayley Camp.

References:

Climbing California's High Sierra, second edition, John Moynier and Claude Fiddler, The Globe Pequot Press (A Falcon Guide), 2002, ISBN 0-7627-1085-3. Good photo of the route.

The High Sierra, Peaks, Passes and Trails, second edition, R.J. Secor, The Mountaineers, 1999, ISBN 0-89886-625-1

Mt. Sill, Allan Bard, Shooting Star Guides

• *Rick and Dee Booth*

Saps Climb Mallory Instead

Mt. Mallory 13,850'

July 5, 2003

I knew something wonderful would happen on this trip when the day before the hike in to camp we found the singing tree. As is my custom, I drive to the eastside and sleep at altitude before heading for a peak climb. When time allows, I like to explore a geologic wonder that day. So Richard and I were hiking around Obsidian Dome, book in hand, when we heard, not saw, the remarkable lodgepole pine. It was singing.

It must be baby birds, but they were not visible although the tree had several holes in it about 30 feet up. From my daughter, the wildlife biologist, I have learned patience. She spent one summer mapping birds' nests near Mount Shasta.

Richard sat on one side of the tree and I on the other. After about 15 minutes, I spotted the parents. Two Williamson's sapsuckers. The male with a red chin and black and white body, the female in a different barred pattern in brown.

The next day hiking into Meysan Lake, we talked about our plans to climb Lone Pine Peak. That's right, we climbed Mallory by default. We had planned to climb Lone Pine Peak but if the truth must be known, we went up the wrong chute.

The hike into Meysan Lake is hot and seems much longer than it is. For most of the way, the trail is a considerable distance from the creek. We met two separate parties of day hikers who were exhausted and looking in vain for a lake.

We found a nice campsite on a bench overlooking Meysan Lake and went to sleep to the sound of rock fall. Not a good sign. The next morning we left at 7 a.m. to climb the steep chute across the lake.

Scree is like childbirth. You forget how difficult it is between times. Otherwise you might not do it again. When we reached the top of the chute we noted that some had climbed the very unstable chutes going up peak 3985 to get to the Lone Pine plateau, but we declined remembering the rock fall sounds of the night before.

It was an easy choice. After resting and exploring the plateau east and south of Mallory, we climbed this peak named by Norman Clyde in 1925, a year after the Everest climber was lost. The view

from the top is terrific, especially that of Russell and Whitney. The summit is composed of big blocks, a trifle airy. I did not see a summit register, although I checked several possibilities since several of the blocks are roughly the same height.

On the way down we chose the snow-filled east slope (p. 60 in Secor). It was quite steep, and we had a fast, and at times scary, glissade. The black and blue mark on my leg is almost faded where I bumped myself during a self arrest.

Back in camp we duly noted the correct chute by Grass Lake lower down on Meysan Creek. I'll be back.

On the hike out we were rewarded with another avian treat: a Red-naped sapsucker.

Will the real saps (I mean sapsuckers) please stand up.

• *Debbie Bulger*

Donner Summit Weekend

Peaks: Castle Peak, Basin Peak, Donner Peak, Mt Judah

July 19/20, 2003

The advertised Donner Summit Weekend in 'Scree' changed venue due to one coleader's employer! Chris MacIntosh was asked to accompany her boss to Paris and all of us had to forego the SouthBay Ski Cabin experience. PCS ingenuity won the day, and we stayed at the famous Clair Tappaan Lodge (CTL for short). CTL was our home base for dayhikes to all peaks listed above and a fabulous time was had by all.

All agreed that Castle Peak was the "funnest" primarily because of the 80 ft, Class 3 climbing at the tippy-top. Another PCS'er enjoyed the 360 degree, panoramic view from the summit of Donner Peak. Beautiful day, hot, with a slight breeze -- perfect photo opportunities! I was amazed and impressed at the number of wildflowers in bloom -- mule ear daisies, Whorl penstamen, Blue Flax, tiger lily, Mariposa lily, corn lily, and columbine.

For all participants, this was a first time stay at CTL. All agreed it was in a good location, offered good meals included in the price, and the 'one chore' rule encouraged less 'sloppiness', or, invited a sense of responsibility, if you will. One PCS'er said staying at CTL made him want to buy a tie-dye shirt then start singing protest songs (a blast from the past...).

Saturday night, the mosquitoes were out, and so were the 20-somethings...drinking beer around a roaring fire in the spacious backyard of the lodge. All of which brought back fond memories of days gone by (well, not too gone...!). A wonderful time with a great group of climbers! Thanks guys.

Participants: Debbie Benham (leader and author); Allen Hu; Nick Pilch; Alex Sapozhnikov; Ron Toy; and Jeff West.

• *Debbie Benham*

Taking on Two Sides of Onion Valley

July 19-20, 2003

Peaks: Independence Peak, Kearsarge Peak

On July 19th I drove up to Onion Valley. The sights on the 395 were impressive, as thunderstorms had engulfed most all of the eastern Sierras.

Mt. Whitney could not even be seen through the dark and angry looking clouds. As I got to the Onion Valley parking lot it started to drizzle and I feared the clouds would open any second. Luckily they didn't. I started out at about 5 in the afternoon up the poorly marked Robinson Lake trail. The trail begins in campsite 8 of the Onion Valley campground. There is a sign that points the trail going through a creek, but being the questioning fellow that I am I decided not to follow the creek but go up the faint trail more to the right of the sign. My mistake as this trail is very steep and goes straight up the slope. After a bit of a haul up this trail I found the real trail and was at Robinson Lake soon after 6. There I rendezvoused with my climbing partners for the next couple of days, Judy Molland and Joe Baker. The mosquitoes at Robinson Lake were horrible and it took much deet to get rid of them. The next morning we got up rather late and started back down the trail to climb Independence Peak. After a half-mile or so there is a use trail that goes up the side of the Mountain. We hopped on that and went up it for a ways. The trail continues all the way to a notch near the summit, but we broke off left to go the route less traveled by. We went up through a lot of loose sand and talus until we reached a section near the top, which included a few class 3 moves. Once here we discovered the only way up was through a 100-foot section of exposed class 3-4. Joe decided to run up it and see what more there was. He discovered that after this 100 foot section there is another, longer section of exposed class 3-4 on the ridge and we decided to go down and around and reunite with the trail. We did this and went up to the notch and then traversed up and left to the summit. At the summit we noticed the clouds that had engulfed University peak, our goal for tomorrow, had lifted. Unfortunately we also saw that University pass was totally covered in snow. Without any axes we wouldn't have a chance. We went back down the use trail and back to our camp and then out to the car to find a new destination for the next day.

We decided to try Kearsarge Peak. We stayed at the Onion Valley campground and headed off a little after 8. We went down about half a mile to an old dirt road. From here it was just horrible for about 1500 feet. I supposed if you like walking on very faint and overgrown trails through sharp brush and then up rather inclined sand for 1500 feet this climb is for you, but for anyone sane this is just a pure slog. And to add a little more to the hike the weather had completely changed, as it was very sunny and very hot. After an incredibly annoying two hours of 3 steps forwards 2 steps back we reached a point where the trail became more obvious and less severe. From here the trail gradually switch backed up through a small pine forest. The trail eventually forks with the right trail going up to scree fields near the summit and the left one going around to prospects on the south face of the mountain. We went left and then up a scree field for about 700 feet. When we reached the top of the scree field we discovered an old mining cabin with walls the chimney still intact and the end of the other trail. Oh well, scree is more exiting than trails anyway. From here we managed to go up every false summit until we reached the true summit, which is a ways down the ridge. Once there we found the register and discovered we just the third party there this year and only the second since March. Wonder why that could be... We stayed at the summit for quite a while, as we were tired from the slog up here. The views of the surrounding mountains were very nice, as was the view of the cars in the Onion Valley parking lot. I suppose that this peak would not be that bad if you went up it in spring via Sardine Canyon. It would probably be a very nice ski run and wouldn't be nearly so horrible. However, I would not recommend it in the summer up the trail we did. After lunch on top we went back down, this time via the other trail. After going back down the switchbacks we discovered how much easier it was going down steep sand. What took us 2 hours going up took 20

minutes going down. We got back to Onion valley around 4 after an 8-hour day. We drove down to Independence for a well-deserved meal and went our separate ways.

• *Will MollandSimms*

Mt. Baldwin

July 19-20, 2003

On the weekend of July 19-20 I climbed Mt. Baldwin from Convict Lake. For those who are interested here are some comments on the climb:

I had first seen Mt. Baldwin many years ago while climbing Red Slate. The look of the rock on Mt. Baldwin intrigued me. The mountain was streaked in different layers of black, gray, and white rock. The knowledge that there was an old mine high on the side of the mountain only added to its attraction.

Although the weather report was not encouraging, I headed up the trail from Convict Lake Saturday morning. It was easy getting a last minute wilderness permit, and the backpacker's parking lot only contained a few cars. After about two hours I reached the site of the washed-out bridge. I remember seeing the bridge in its newly mangled state back in 1983. Since then all the timbers have disappeared, and only the concrete footings remain. Since it has been 20 years, it appears that the Forest Service is in no hurry to re-build the bridge. Without a bridge, crossing the creek is rather tricky early in the season. I found it very challenging trying to keep my feet dry while I picked my way across the creek.

After crossing the creek, I continued up the trail for another two hours. About a mile past Mildred Lake I headed up along the first creek I encountered coming down from the east. I followed this creek uphill for a few hundred feet to a sandy flat area where I decided to make camp.

After a night of thunderstorms, Sunday started out as a very nice day. I followed a well-defined trail that led to Bright Dot Lake. Eventually the trail worked around a ridge to where the gully that comes down the northwest side of the mountain is in plain view. I left the trail here and headed up. There are various ways to proceed up this gully, but after getting about halfway up I discovered a climber's or miner's trail that entered the gully from Bright Dot Lake. At about 12,000 feet the trail crosses an area that contains many large clear Calcite crystals. Just beyond this the trail goes around a corner and onto the gradual slope of the west face of Baldwin. After working my way up this easy slope for about 500 feet I reached the top about three hours after leaving camp. Five hours later, I was back at my car at Convict Lake. I only saw a handful of people all weekend.

For those who wish to do this mountain I would like to make a few recommendations. First, I believe that the camp spot I found is at an ideal location for climbing Baldwin. One does not need to go all the way to Bright Dot unless the plan also includes Morrison. Climb Baldwin late in the season (August) when the creek is not too high, or carry water shoes. The climb is a class 2-rock scramble (no snow), or class 1 if the climber's trail is followed all the way. In addition to not building a new footbridge, the Forest Service is also not spending any money on trail signs. Not a single trail sign was found anywhere.

• *George Sinclair*

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.

2003 Sierra Challenge

Peaks: Virginia, Banner, Red + White, Gabb, Thompson, Sill, Norman Clyde, Tyndall, McAdie, Langley
Date: Aug 9-18 (Sat-Mon)
Difficulty: class 2-4, ice axe, crampons, glaciers
Location: eastern Sierra Nevada
Contact: Bob Burd, snwbord@hotmail.com

Ten (10) challenging dayhikes in the High Sierra, from Virginia Peak in the north to Mt. Langley in the south. This is the third year for this private/ non-sponsored event, drawing on a new list of peaks, including 3 14ers and 3 'Mountaineers' Peaks. Join us for one or all, from easy class 2 to challenging class 4 climbing. If you've ever wondered why you need to take 50lbs of gear and three days to climb a Sierra peak, this may be the alternative you've been looking for. Information, details and sign up info can be found at: <http://www.snwburd.com/bob/challenge/>

Palisades-Arama

Peaks: Thunderbolt, Starlite, North Pal, Poloneum, and Sill
Date: Aug. 15-20
Contact: Kelly Maas
co-contact: Jeff Fisher 650-364-5065,
han1cannae@msn.com

Pack in from South Lake over Bishop and Thunderbolt passes. Opens up to the five 14ers in the Palisades, Thunderbolt, Starlite, North Pal, Poloneum and Sill. We will try to get as many in as we can. Permit for 15. We can divide into groups and pick and choose the different peaks we go up. Some 3rd and/or 4th class experience needed. Contact co-leader. We would drive up Thurs. evening Aug 14 and hike in Friday. Leader We are looking for other 5th class climbers that could help lead on the summit blocks

Triple Trip

Date: Aug 16-24 (Sat-Sun)
Goal: Glacier Ridge, Whaleback, Lion Rock, Mount Stewart, Triple Divide Peak, Kern Point, Picket Guard, Milestone Mountain, Midway Mountain
Difficulty: class 2, class 3, class 4
Location: western Sierra Nevada (Triple Divide 15', Mt Whitney 15' map)

Contacts:
http://www.climber.org/WhosWho/Steve_Eckert.html
http://www.climber.org/WhosWho/Aaron_Schuman.html
The ninth annual Climb-o-rama rumbles to the Triple Divide in the very heart of the Sierra Nevada. Entering from the west side of Kings Canyon National Park, we'll pack to Roaring River and up Cloud Canyon, climb the Whaleback, Glacier Ridge, Triple Divide and maybe even its southern outliers, Lion Rock and Mount Stewart. We'll cross the Great Western Divide at Colby Pass, climb Picket Guard and Kern Point, even the rarely visited west side of Milestone Mountain, and finally Midway Mountain. After all of these successes, we'll hike out the same long trail that we took into the center of the range. Limit 15.

Mt. Russell

Peak: Mt. Russell, Class 3+, 14,086 ft.
Dates: August 23-25 (Saturday-Monday)
Leader: Cecil Anison, cecilann@attbi.com
Co-Leader: Kai Wiedman, (650) 347-5234

Secor - "This is the finest peak in the Whitney Region. It is high and beautiful and none of its routes are easy." Join us for a thrilling and breathtaking adventure to one of the most beautiful parts of the Sierra.

Call only if you're comfortable with very exposed Class 3 climbing and have had recent experience.

Beyond the Pale

Date: Sep 13-15 (Sat-Mon)
Goal: Palisade Crest 13,553'
Difficulty: class 4, helmet, rope used
Location: eastern Sierra Nevada (Big Pine 15' map)
Contact: Charles Schafer, c_g_schafer@yahoo.com, 408-354-1545
Aaron Schuman,
climber.org/WhosWho/Aaron_Schuman.html

Webster's dictionary defines a palisade as a wall of large pointed stakes set in the ground for fortification. One of those intimidating posts is a pale. The Palisades are the best defended ridge in the Sierra Nevada. We will besiege the Palisade Crest, a particularly steep and jagged medieval battlement, and if we are fortunate, we will catapult ourselves up to the very crenels. Endurance, sangfroid, teamwork, and skill in roped climbing are essential for success on this trip. Limit 6 people.

Nepal

Peak: Chulu West 21,752 ft.
Date: October 2-25, (Thu-Sat) 2003
Class A Treker Peak
The Manang region off the Annapurna Circuit
16 day trek and climbing \$800.00 total
Air travel in Nepal \$245.00
Peak permit (6 persons) \$60.00
Climbing sherpa (2) (6 persons) \$80.00
Tenative air from SF to KTM \$1,250.00
Contact: Warren Storkman, 650-493-8959,
Dstorkman@aol.com

Kilimanjaro

Peak: Kilimanjaro
Date: January, 2004
Contact: Warren Storkman
4180 Mackay Court
Palo Alto, CA 94306
Phone: 650-493-8959, FAX: 650-493-8975
dstorkman@aol.com

Kilimanjaro is shaping up for middle of January 2004. Considering the Western Breach route

7 day cost:
Park fee \$480.00
Forest fee \$20.00
Fully equipped package \$670.00
Total \$1170.00

3 nights otel \$30.00 a night includes breakfast and dinner. More to come later in the year. Open to all.

Can try this website for first information on Kilimanjaro climb
<http://home.pacifier.com/~intersec/tkutscha/kili.html>

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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) or the email list the PCS feeds (pcs-issues@climber.org), you have a free EScree subscription. For email list details, send "info lomap-pcs-announce" to "listserv@lists.sierraclub.org", or send anything to "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 8/24/2003. 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

First Class Mail - Dated Material