



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

## Next General Meeting

**Date:** Tuesday, February 11  
**Time:** 7:30 PM  
**Program:** Two Slide Shows by Bob Gross

### "Aconcagua, the Stone Sentinel"

In 1996, Warren Storkman rounded up the usual suspects for a successful jaunt up the highest peak in the entire Western Hemisphere. Although the peak is not technically difficult, the almost-23,000 foot altitude stressed us to the max.

### "Kilimanjaro, the Roof of Africa".

In 2000, Bob trekked up a slightly unusual route, the Arrow Glacier-Western Breach. Then it turned out to be a cakewalk to the 19,000 foot summit.

**Location:** Kestrel Room  
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 2/23/2003 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.

There are no official PCS trips listed this month.

## Spring/Summer Trip Planning Meeting

**Date:** Thursday, February 6th, 2003  
**Time:** 7:30 PM  
**Location:** Western Mountaineering  
2344 El Camino Real  
Santa Clara, CA  
(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.

Mark your calendars for the Spring/Summer Trip Planning meeting.

All are welcomed to discuss and propose their ideas for new trips. Feel free to email me ([amacica@pacbell.net](mailto:amacica@pacbell.net) or [andy.macica@klatencor.com](mailto:andy.macica@klatencor.com)) ahead of time with your trip ideas.

We look forward to seeing you there.

## Bôté Ánchouré's Lexicon of Climbing Terms and Expressions:

### P through Z

*By Arun Mahajan, Jim Curl, Tom Curl and Rick Booth*

**P.** **Peg Leg Crack.** Located in Yosemite Valley but not to be confused with Stove Leg Crack. First ascent facilitated by the use of wooden pitons cut from the leg of Captain Hook.

**Pick.** When you excavate your nose. Don't do it with the tip of an ice axe.

**Peak Bagging.** To place a bag over a mountain that is so butt ugly that you can't climb it if you have to look at it.

**Piton.** Contraction of “pee a ton” as in “Man, four beers an I hadta pee-a-ton”.

**Q.** **Quick Draw.** A gun slinger. Also, a fast sketch artist. “Boy, that sketch was a real quick draw”.

**R.** **Reverso.** An expensive belay device. It is NOT a reversed ATC.

**Ripstop.** Abrupt termination of a vicious poof. Almost always painful.

**Rope.** Useful accessory for inventing new curses as in “How in the \$@#\*\*& did this %\$\$#&^ rope get so \*&^@# tangled?” Most often practiced at rappel stations after dark.

**S.** **Stopper.** What a good belayer does when a female lead climber falls.

**Sticht Plate.** A flat eating utensil encrusted with last night's dinner.

**SPS list.** A list of peaks in the Sierra Nevada range, many which do not deserved to be climbed. Some climbers are so affected by this listeria that even a gargle with listerene will not cure them.

**T.** **Ten Essentials.** Fallacy propagated by equipment manufacturers and backcountry meal companies. The only essential is that you climb with a partner obsessed with being “prepared for anything.” He'll bring plenty of everything for the both of you.

**Trojan Peak.** The only completely latex coated peak in the Sierra.

**U.** **Uplift.** Refers to a mountain range, as in the Sierra uplift, a result of tectonic plates furiously colliding far beneath the surface of the earth. Also, as in Spontaneous Uplift, a result of uncontrollable hormone furiously colliding far beneath the surface of your loins.

**Ultralight Backpacker.** Someone who is perpetually cold and hungry.

**Uriah Heap.** A peak that is a rotting scree pile. Morrison, Kearsarge, Alice, the chute on Adams Minaret, Dunderberg etc are examples of this.

**Ukranian.** Gigantic climber, often a broccoli chopper, and life threatening to belay.

**V.** **Victoria's Secret.** A thin, barely there, nut on a thong wire. Only the inventor, Victoria, knew how to correctly place it. Consequently, it did not sell well since she did not put the secret in the user manual and so it has been retired as a climbing device. It has apparently found its way in the underwear business but it is still a secret.

**W.** **Way Honed.** See Bôté's bio.

**Whirled Peas.** When all of us finally get along.

**XYZ.** **Yak.** What you do after seven consecutive meals of freeze dried tuna casserole.

**YDS.** You Dumb Shit. Common refrain, heard in a wide variety of situations and almost always appropriate. See **Rope**.

**Yeti.** Reinhold Messner's latest climbing partner.

**"Z-Pulley System".** The way Euro climbers pronounce "The pulley system".

## In The Tules

June 8-10, 2001

Out the window of the VTA bus, whole neighborhoods drifted past. Strip mall parking lots sizzled under the summer sun. Exhausted children played languid soccer behind closed schools. A new wave hoodlum driving a pickup truck on an oversized chassis blared Puccini from his car radio. None of the street signs looked familiar. Was I even in San Jose any more? I got up from my seat and asked the driver for a route map, but I returned to my seat disappointed. A minute later, the bus concierge came over. She also had no map, but she gave me two complementary VTA day passes.

I opened my eyes from this dream to a conifer forest at the southernmost edge of Sequoia National Park, just above Summit Lake. We had backpacked in the day before from Mountain Home State Forest: Stephane and Kirsten Mouradian, Tony Stegman, Steve Eckert and me. Steve was going to spend the day exploring alone on the Hockett Plateau, but for the rest of us, our mission was to climb North Maggie Mountain. Dreaming of being lost seemed like an inauspicious start.

We had scouted the beginning of our route the night before, an easy trail up to Windy Gap. While returning from our reconnaissance, we came upon a pack of coyotes fiercely disputing dominance or territory. Now, in the cool light of dawn, the coyotes were sleeping off their battle, and we were looking over the gap at our destination. Still on trail, we dropped past Twin Lakes and overflowing Frog Lake. Just before reaching Maggie Lakes, we left the trail and headed west for the peak. We avoided most of the manzanita thicket that plagues parties that climb North Maggie Mountain from the Tule River. Still, we managed to lose our footing a couple of times on the smooth barked shrub. Tony gashed his shin and I slipped and punctured my water bottle. With my reading of the map reinforced by my brand new GPS receiver's directional clue, finding the 10235 foot summit was an easy matter. We were the first group to sign the summit register since the 20th century. There was a stunning view all the way to the still snowy Kaweah Range.

As we rested and ate lunch on the summit, we talked about the pioneers of the Sierra Nevada. Kirsten asked what was Kit Carson's full first name, then answered her own question: Kit is short for Katherine. Kirsten finally revealed the long hidden historical truth that Kit Carson was a woman. You heard it here first.

Our descent was not as charmed as our climb. We headed east, perpendicular to the Maggie Lakes trail. All we needed to do was to cross the trail at 9000 feet, take it back to Windy Gap, and then to our camp. Somehow, we managed to walk completely past the faint path without noticing it. We came upon a sturdy, well maintained trail at 8800 feet, but it headed down into Peck Canyon, not up to Windy Gap. Stephane wished that the trail concierge would come along just then, but that only happens in my dreams. I snapped a GPS waypoint. This unmistakable trail was absent on Stephane's current map, but present on my old 1955 era quadrangle. In spite of the fact that the USGS decided to omit mention of this trail, it was better and easier to find than the trail to Maggie Lakes. After a little scouting and a little consultation, we decided to follow the trail down into the canyon, then continue up the other side back up to Twin Lakes. This plan actually worked, though not before taking us through an inholding where the hostile rancher had posted alarming notices about using trespassers' horses as bear bait.

At Twin Lakes, we were back on route, and we should have made a quick return to our camp above Summit Lake. Yet somehow the flimsy trail eluded us a second time, and we ended up scrambling over a talus field to the pass just west of Windy Gap. I found the direction to my waypoint #30, which I remembered was at our camp. Too bad I remembered wrong! Old #30 was the spot where we ate lunch the day before, about 1/4 mile before Summit Lake. Although the etrek GPS allows the user to edit the name of a waypoint, I had been too lazy to use the editing feature, and instead had relied on the uninformative default name. There's a mistake I won't make again! When we saw the lake, we realized the error. It wasn't so bad going to the lake; we needed to stop for water anyway. Down at the lake, we found Damon Vincent and Corinne Hughes. We had planned to meet them mid-trip, so there was a second reason why my route finding accident was a fortunate one.

Sunday, our party, now seven people, packed up early and headed down the Tule River trail to the lower of two stream crossings. We stashed our backpacks in the woods and set out for Moses Mountain. In the steep forest, we found a bear's den, but the tenant was out foraging. On this mountain there was no avoiding wading eyeball deep through a furlong of brutal manzanita. We bypassed much of the brush by crossing it on the diagonal and clinging to the wall of the chute, but some whacking was just plain necessary. As we emerged from the flora onto a ridge, Tony decided to wait behind; he was bushed. After 700 feet of mixed class 2 and 3, we stood on the rugged rocky top, and gazed down at Porterville and Visalia. The final part of the climb was truly spectacular! The register revealed that we were again the first ascenders of 2001. We took some hokey posed photos, then descended to rejoin Tony and to reclaim our packs.

Back at the Tule River, we were surprised to encounter a group of our friends, led by Bob Suzuki, and including Joan Marshall, Ted Raczek, Joe Budman, and five others. Bob's party had set out to climb Rockhouse Dome that day, but found the charred Domelands Wilderness still closed to hikers since the huge blaze last August. They adjusted their plans and made a day hike up the brushy side of North Maggie from Mountain Home. We hiked all together through the giant sequoias for a distance, but split because Bob's group had started from Shake Camp instead of from closer-by Hidden Falls.

Then back at the road, we bathed in the river, and celebrated the end of a long weekend of exploration in a little visited corner of the western Sierra Nevada.

• *Aaron Schuman*

## Mt. Whitney

July 26-29, 2002

Was fortunate enough to get a permit to enter the Whitney zone on 27 July and leave on 29 July. As a first-timer, I thought the three days would make it easier on me, my wife Miss, and our neighbor Mark. We camped the night of the 26th at Lone Pine campground (6,000 feet), in a great campsite with nice shade and a great evening view of our objective. After some carbo loading at the Pizza Factory (great spaghetti and meatballs!), we were off for the portal at 0630. Could not find any parking spaces, and had to park on the shoulder east of the overflow parking, but the campground host said it was OK.

Started up the trail at a nice easy pace, and made it to Lone Pine Lake in just over two hours. Filled up our water bottles again (I tried the Potable Aqua with the neutralizing). Found out it was quicker and easier to use the PUR water filter.

Took our time getting to Trail Camp, enjoyed beautiful views at Big Horn and Mirror Lake, and met the ranger at Trailside Meadow. She gave one fellow a citation (\$150.00) for being up there without a permit. Spent a somewhat restless night at Trail Camp and got up at 5:30 for our summit attempt. The wife was not feeling too well, so she stayed in camp, while Mark and I had some breakfast (oatmeal and coffee for him, power bar and water for me), and hit the 99 switchbacks (I didn't count, but the ranger assured me it was 99. Whatever).

Seemed like forever, but we finally made Trail Crest. How disheartening!!! After all the climbing to get to the crest, the first thing we did was descend! That's OK - what a beautiful view! The Kaweahs and the Great Western Divide, and especially Guitar Lake. Went through the windows, which didn't bother us as much as we thought they would.

Made the summit by 10:45 and met an Army veteran named Bob who came up carrying nothing but an American flag. Mark and I got some good summit poses with Bob and the flag, then did the obligatory summit register sign-in, took the photos with the summit marker and the geodesic survey marker, got some good shots of Mt. Langley and Big Willie (hope to do one of those next year), called home (that would be Maryland) from the top of the mountain (great cell reception!), refilled our Camelbacks, and started down.

Got back to trailcamp in two hours and took a nice long nap. Got up and had a fine meal of freeze-dried beef stew (those Mountain Home meals are excellent! Highly recommend the chicken teriyaki! All they need is a little Old Bay - that's a Maryland crab spice that goes well with just about everything). Met a young man from Japan who had hiked down from Yosemite and ran out of food. He had been out for three days! We had one extra dinner, two extra breakfasts (yeah, we definitely overpacked), and several power bars, which we gladly gave him, and he was thrilled!

Got up at 5:30 the next morning, took our time getting back to the portal (thanks to Earlene for letting me bum a smoke when we got there), bought the 'I climbed Whitney' polo shirt, and waited around till 11:00 to get the best cheeseburger I've ever had. Topped it off by going into town and cleaning up at Kirk's Barber Shop and Public Showers. Not a bad deal - a shower and a towel for \$4.00 a person! Spectacular weather the entire time - brilliant blue skies every day, not too cold at night (30 degree bag was quite comfortable). I could go on and on (afraid I already did), but what an experience! Absolutely the greatest recreational experience of my life!

• *Jim Raley*

# Pyramid Peak

May 4-5, 2002

Difficulty: class 2, ice axe, crampons, skis, snowshoes, snow travel

On a clear and cool early May Saturday morning, Bob Suzuki and I woke up from our car-camp at the Echo Lake Sno-Park having driven up from San Jose the night before. There we met Charles Schafer (Leader) and Bob Evans, both having also spent the night at the Sno-Park lot. This trip originally was intended to climb Moses Mtn and North Maggie Mtn in the Southern Sierra, but a late season Forest Service Road closure forced a change in plans. With a short trip planned for that day and forecasted good weather we decided to get a hot breakfast in the town of Meyers off Hwy 50 prior to beginning our trek.

Around 9 AM the 4 of us headed down the Lower Echo Lake Resort access road reaching the lake in about three quarters of a mile traveling over hard crusted snow. After crossing the lakes dam, we joined up with the Pacific Crest Trail, which traverses west above the lakes North shore and private lakeshore summer homes. Nearing Upper Echo Lake we lost the trail under the snow, but our intended route was fairly easy to find. With clear blue skies and no wind, it was a beautiful day so we traveled slowly taking frequent breaks to enjoy the scenery. After a long break near Tamarack Lake we strapped on our snowshoes (Charles had already been traveling used skies) to ease travel in the quickly softening snow. After a short climb to Haypress Meadows we topped a ridge and gained our first views of our goal Pyramid Peak rising over Desolation Valley. Everything was cloaked in a smooth white blanket of snow including the valley lakes which were completely frozen over. A steep descent down to the north shore of the Lake of the Woods completed our first days travel, where we set up camp.

From our camp we had a clear view southwest over the frozen lake towards Pyramid Peak. Here we discussed tomorrows climb, and the enjoyed the usual chatter about our past and future climbing trips and gear. We marveled over the fact that we had not seen a single person that day. Seeing that the north end of the lake was under 3 feet of drift snow and ice, we discussed whether anyone had ever slept overnight on a frozen lake. After an unspectacular sunset, Bob S. surprised us by heading out onto the lake with his gear to spend the night ON the lake!

At 7:45 AM Sunday, under a cloudless sky, we headed out towards Pyramid Peak. With snowshoes + skis we safely crossed the frozen surface of the Lake of the Woods and headed southwest towards Desolation Lake. Crossing it, we turned west and worked our way slowly in and out of small gullies to the base of a small cliff south of Pyramid Lake. We worked our way up a small chute to the top and continued west up the increasing slope. Not seeing any avalanche danger we decided to take the peak head on up the east slope instead of the south ridge as originally planned. Bob E. lead the way kicking steps in the softening snow. Some of us wore crampons (which were not really necessary) and we each used either ski poles or ice axes during the ascent up the 40-degree slope. We reached the top around 1:00 PM, well behind our intended schedule. The clear skies provided good views all around, from Round Top to the south, all the way to Mt Rose in the northeast. While on top we were greeted by a lone dog and moments later her owner coming up the south ridge. After a brief chat, Bob E. and Charles headed down the south ridge. With ice axes, Bob S. and I had a thrilling, albeit quick, 1100 ft glissaded down the east slope. After joining up, we decided to try a more direct route back to avoid the many gullies we encountered earlier.

Heading to Pyramid Lake, we crossed its southern shore and took a northeast route up an open slope to a low point on the ridge, southwest of Channel Lake. Working our way down, we then headed east back to the Lake of the Woods and across it to camp. This proved to be easier than our route that morning.

After a quick repacking, we donned our backpacks at 4 PM and headed out. We met a lone skier near Haypress Meadows. He was only the second person we met all weekend, although we did see a climbing party headed for Pyramid Peaks south ridge while on top. We crossed Lower Echo Lakes dam just after sunset and made it back to our vehicles just as darkness fell upon us. It turned out to be a far longer day than we had anticipated. But great weather, an uncrowded, beautiful snow covered location and good traveling companions made the long weekend worth it.

• *Chris Franchuk*

## Williamson + Tyndall

### High and Dry

July 11-14, 2002

Hello All, This past Wednesday myself and Vishal J. left the bay area for a journey to Independence for the long hike over shepherds pass. On thursday morning we picked up our permit in Bishop and made a late (11:20am) start on a hot (105 degree) Owens valley day. The trek out of canyon to the pass has been described many times before so I will leave to say it was long, hot, dry and arduous.

We actually camped out below the pass under cloudy afternoon skies and were met by evening rain that came up from the east and lasted about 20 minutes, followed by clear skies again.

The next morning with Vishal moving fast and in far better shape than myself, we crossed shepherds pass and headed for the Williamson bowl lakes. En route, passing by the base of Mt. Tyndall, we dropped packs for lunch before the planned afternoon climb. I should mention that for me the mission of this trip was to knock off two more 14ers, and for Vishal, he wants to complete the SPS List of peaks. After lunch, under cloudy skies but no rain we climbed the North Rib route on Mt. Tyndal. The climb can be described as a combination of steep bouldering and moving between cracked rock. We summited and enjoyed the view of Mt. Williamson and the surrounding peaks. Seeing as it was raining to the West and North we heading down, retrieved our packs and set out for the Williamson bowl.

That night we camped at the first lake in the Williamson bowl. After dinner we compared notes on Mt. Williamson with another group up from Santa Monica whom we had again ran into as at various times before on the trail up. They had come to climb Mt. Williamson as had we. At this time they had learned in better detail where the actual dark water marks on the west face route were located. That was an important talk because in studying the mtn for the route, I had been looking too far to the north on the western facing slope. The dark water marks as indicated in the various climbing books turns out to be much further south down the western facing slope. Of course we were at the first lake so in hindsight based on our position it all makes sense now.

We awoke to partly cloudy skies at 6am. We saw lightning and it rained on us by 6:30am, but you could see it was only a few dark clouds and much too early in the day to be worried about the weather, so we continued our preparations and set out for the second lake by 7am. With clearing skies we headed up and over the dark water marks of the west face and into the the appropriate chute. There was only one small patch of snow in the chute so

there had been no need for an ice axe or crampons (we had learned this and left them at camp).

In the chute, you can clearly see the route as there was for the most part a trail from peoples' prior slip and slide steps leading to the ridge. It was some where in this chute with Vishal far ahead, that I believe he somehow came out of the chute and moved right/south down the face for his own little summit adventure. At the top of the chute the 'cleft' is clearly visible as being the only class three looking rock, so I scurried up this, reached the ridge/plateau and was on the summit by 11am enjoying the view. While resting on the top, from the southwest ridge up comes Vishal who had some how got off track but had safely made it to the top and from the ridge/plateau we were again visited by our friends from Santa Monica. The view was great, but again with increasingly cloudy skies to the west and north we headed down and back to camp. At the bottom, of the second lake, it rained and hailed on us but only for a short time before clearing.

The next day we hiked out hot and tired with a stop at Taco Bell in Bishop for an all-you-can-drink soda followed by a 'Hot Creek' soaking. That knocks off 8 of the 15. Next stop Mtn Russell.

• *Steve Landes*

## Return to Cathedral Peak

August 12, 2002

Difficulty: 6 pitches (give or take), 5.7, class 5, rope used

Cathedral Peak was my first long roped climb (my first 'real' climb being Northwest Books of Lember Dome--the night before), and I had fond memories of it, so it was great to go back and lead it this year with my friend Caitlin. She had also previously gone up Cathedral, but by the Class 3-4 John Muir route, so we were both psyched to go out for a great day of climbing. Starting up the John Muir Trail, we turned off onto the Budd Lake trail after about a half mile. This trail leads up the drainage to the east of Cathedral Peak, and affords amazing views of the both Cathedral and other Cathedral Range peaks awash in early morning light. Leaving the trail, we scrambled on slabs and through dusty talus up to the start of the buttress itself. We gathered our senses, then quickly racked up, eager to start the climb before the morning rush hit. There was another party on the first pitch at the lower, traditional start, so we started uphill, and I led up on some steep ledges that quickly turned into a corner. The knobs off to the right above the dihedral looked fun, but probably runout, so I opted to stay in the crack and work around the corner to belay. The corner was small and flaring, so I stuffed in my smallest cam and hoped it would hold, starting out on the undercling. As it turned out, the undercling/lieback wasn't as bad as it looked, probably 5.7, and the fantastic Cathedral Granite lent its unyielding friction, which was greatly appreciated. Caitlin followed, and then I set off again up through more corners and easy ledges before finally joining up with the more regular route. Another pitch or two brought us to the chimney (5.6) which is one of the classic elements of the Cathedral Peak experience. However, we arrived to find a party of three beginning to make their way through it, so I opted to go out right and climb the crack that leads around the chimney block. (Note to climbers: check out the nasty bloodstain just below the chimney from a bad accident in the summer of 2002. Don't worry, he lived.) The crack proved to be the crux of the climb, being somewhat wide and awkward. After much grunting and swearing, I got comfortable and got in my #3 Camalot as high as I could, then made a few minor offwidthy moves to the top. This crack is probably in the 5.7-5.8 range, if only for its awkwardness. From the top of the chimney block the climbing is clean, invigorating, varied, and offers up stunning views from every perch and belay. On the last pitch, I led over some blocks and slightly down into the VERY EXPOSED gap just below the summit block. Watch for rope drag on this wandering pitch, and also watch your feet as you go across the gap, because, though it's easy, any fall could be really nasty here. The crack to the summit is exposed and easy fifth-class (5.3-5.4). The view from the summit is jaw-dropping. Since there didn't seem to be any parties immediately behind us, we lounged on the summit, had some snacks, took some pictures, etc. The bolts that are sometimes on the summit block are just as frequently not there, as was the case last August, but it doesn't really matter too much. Sure, being able to rappel off is nice, but anyone who has climbed up to that point and has a clear head will have no problem down climbing the short summt crack. I belayed Caitlin down it, then coiled the rope and climbed down myself. We squeezes through the notch facing the north side and skirted across the occasionally exposed slabs, where we then went back over the notch to get to the east side of the peak and scrambled down. A few more hours brought us back to the car and onto the road to El Portal where we downed Sal's tacos and beer! Great fun!

• *Andy Steele*

# Thor Peak in Winter

January 4, 2003

Peaks: Thor Peak

Place: California

Difficulty: class 2, ice axe, snowshoes, snow travel

'Hey, I'm missing a snowshoe!' Dan looked down at his feet for moment longer and then turned around and started retracing his steps. I expected him to just go a step or two. After maybe 20, I finally asked him how far back it had fallen off his boot - 'I have no idea', was the reply. It ended up being 1/4 mile or so back; a sign, I guess, of either how much the snow had firmed up in the late afternoon or what a long day it had been.

Curtis Davis, Dan Goriesky, and I left Ridgecrest at 4am on Sat. Jan 4th, hoping to make a winter ascent of Thor Peak (12,300'), just south and east of Mt. Whitney. After breakfast at PJ's in Lone Pine, we drove up the Whitney Portal Rd. and managed to negotiate the Road Closed signs and the snow as far as the Meysan Lakes trailhead (~7700'), about a mile short of Whitney Portal. Driving up in the darkness, we passed a couple hiking up along the road. One of them stuck out a thumb, but Curtis wasn't sure we could get going again if we stopped, so he shouted our apologies out the window as we drove by.

We got started hiking with snowshoes at just about 7am and followed the well packed trail up the road to the summer trailhead. A few days before, Walter Runkle had snowshoed up the summer trail to just past the North Fork and then come straight back down to the trailhead (roughly following the route of the old trail), so we began by heading up the trail that he had packed on his way down. However, it was steep enough that once we got to the switchbacks of the old trail, we decided it was easier to follow them even though that meant breaking fresh trail. Once we hit the new trail, the only tracks were from before the last snowfall, and those eventually disappeared too. The snow varied from bottomless fluff in a couple places to quite hard higher up. We more or less followed the route of the summer trail up to Mirror Lake and then headed off around the north side of the lake and up a long snow slope towards Thor's summit ridge. Part way up we stashed the snow shoes and broke out our ice axes.

We picked our way up and to the right through mixed snow and scree slopes to climb a rock wall at its shortest point. Easy class 3 can be surprisingly intimidating when you are as skittish as I am and when wearing big telemark ski boots. The others were forced to put up with a bit of whining from me. We then cut back to the left on the slope above the rock band, checking out each of the chutes leading up to Thor's summit ridge in turn. We all agreed the first one didn't look promising. I vetoed the second. We passed on the third and ended up taking the left branch of the fourth, which worked well. From the notch at the top, it was just a short scramble up the other side of the ridge to the peak.

We got to the top at 1:30 pm. A pair of ravens apparently didn't care for our company and vacated the peak as we arrived. What would probably take 2 to 2-1/2 hours in the summer had taken us 6-1/2, even though the snow conditions had been quite favorable. The previous entry in the register was from mid-October. Thor has great views of the whole Whitney area, and the vaguely threatening clouds that had moved in from the east earlier had vanished, leaving a brilliant cloudless sky to the west and only a thin layer of high clouds to the east.

We left the summit and had a mostly uneventful return trip (for some reason the class 3 moves seemed easier on the way down) except for taking one 'shortcut' that was ridiculously steep and

brushy. And then Dan's missing snowshoe. Arrived at Curtis' truck at about 4:45pm and were treated to a spectacular sunset before driving home.

• *Keith\_RichardsDinger*

## Diabolical Day Trip

Jan 19, 2003

Kelly Maas led a trip to Mt Diablo. His entourage consisted of Charles Schafer, Jim Welch, Jim Moore, Rod McCalley, Kai Weidman, Cecil Anison, Liz Harvey, Dot Reilly, and your reporter, Aaron Schuman. Our trailhead was Mitchell Canyon. Though sunshine was forecasted, we began in a dense fog. After an hour we popped out above the cloud tops. The rest of the day it looked like we were on an island on a big white sea. We could see other islands: Tamalpais, Hamilton, and Loma Prieta.

From our lunch stop at the summit, we could make out the snow caps of the northern Sierra Nevada, although we couldn't identify any individual peaks. We looked for Mt Lassen, where Stephane Mouradian's party should have been summiting at that very moment, but the day just wasn't clear enough. We had a group picture snapped by a very 21st century 3D photographer. We're looking forward to seeing his image through Crystal Eyes glasses.

Kelly selected a descent via the Falls Trail, which turned out to be a stunningly beautiful walk past cascades and cold pools. We intruded on a trailside ladybug orgy, and we saw plenty of evidence of wild pigs.

• *Aaron Schuman*

## 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.

### Freel Peak

Peak: Freel Peak 10881' ; class 2, winter conditions  
Dates: March 1-2, 2003 (Sat, Sun)  
Map: Freel Peak 15 min  
Contacts: David Ress 650-450-0455  
Nancy Fitzsimmons 408-957-9683  
pkclimber@aol.com.

An easy, late-winter backpack, on showshoes or skis, to the high point of the Tahoe Basin. On Saturday we'll cover 5 or 6 miles and camp below the summit ridge. On Sunday we'll grab the summit and descend. Total distance is about 14 miles with 5000' of climbing/descending. Meeting point will be in the town of Meyers, 7 AM on Saturday morning. Call leaders if interested.

## Elected Officials

### Chair:

Stephane Mouradian / pcs-chair@climber.org  
650-551-0392 home

### Vice Chair and Trip Scheduler:

Andrew F. Macica / andy.macica@kla-tencor.com  
408-859-7634 home  
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### Treasurer and Membership Roster (address changes):

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**Scree** is the monthly journal of the Peak Climbing Section of the Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter. Our official website is [http:// lomaprieta.sierraclub.org/pcs/](http://lomaprieta.sierraclub.org/pcs/)

## 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 2/23/2003. 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**