



<http://peakclimbing.org/>

General Meeting

Date **September 14, 2010**
Time **7:30 – 9:30 pm**
Where **PCC**
 3921 E. Bayshore Road
 Palo Alto, CA
Program **69 Days in Tibet - Quest**
 for the Seventh Summit
Presenter **Enrique Rodriguez**

In March 2010, Enrique Rodriguez left sunny sea-level San Francisco for the icy slopes of Mt. Everest, the highest mountain in the world. With cold-weather resilience developed over years of waiting for the school bus in New Hampshire and winter camping skills honed high in the alpine zone of Mt. Washington, Enrique will discuss his 1st Himalayan expedition in pursuit of his "Seventh Summit."

How long does a Himalayan expedition take? What's day-to-day life like on an 8,000 meter peak? How do you train for Himalayan climbing? What gear was bulletproof and what gear totally failed? What's it like climbing in the "Death Zone?" Did he meet the youngest kid to climb Everest? ... the top 8,000 meter women? ... any famous Himalayan veterans with numerous ascents of

8,000 meter peaks? For the answers to these questions and many more, come September 14th for an exciting multimedia journey to the "roof of the world!"



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 and enter in the back of the building.

Google <http://tinyurl.com/28ngaw>

Editor's Notes

Thank you so much to everyone who submitted trip reports. I'm thrilled that I didn't have to nudge or cajole anyone this month, since you all happily sent in excellent stories voluntarily. Keep them coming! Judy

Chair column

This month Enrique will show us pictures from his trip to Everest earlier this year. Should be an exciting show. Wonder what grand mountain he will climb next?

While the summer is coming to an end it is not too late to climb a few more peaks and we still have several trips scheduled. Also, it is not too early to think of winter trips and you do not have to wait for the trip scheduling meeting to submit them to Louise!

With the end of the year coming up we will also need a new set of club officers. Feel free to volunteer or send suggestions to me.

And let's not forget the usual pleas: Please send new and exciting trip descriptions to Louise and speaker suggestions to me. Jesper

PCS Trip Calendar

These are required statements.

Note: CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.

Note: All Sierra Club trips require you to sign a Liability Waiver.

<http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/signinwaiver.pdf>

September 11 - 13 - Tehipite Dome
Leader - Louise Wholey

September 17 - 19 - Mts. Johnson & Gilbert
Leader - Charles Schafer

September 25 - 26- Merced Peak
Leader - Louise Wholey

October 1 - 3 - Vitamin & Mineral King
Leader - Aaron Schuman

PCS Trip Details

Tehipite Dome, Tunemah

Goal: Tehipite Dome (7,708') and Tunemah Peak (11,894')

Location: Wishon Reservoir, Rancheria TH

Dates: September 11 - 13

Leader: Louise Wholey

Difficulty: Strenuous, very long hike

Hike through the lovely forests of the southern parts of Sierra National Forest through Crown Valley to Tehipite Dome. We plan to climb the dome and return to camp below Kettle Dome the first day, covering about 20 miles. The second day is a 20-mile day hike into the NP through Blue Canyon to climb Tunemah and return to camp. The last day hike out, about 15 miles. Participants should be extremely well-conditioned for long light-weight backpacking and long multiple-day hikes. Contact: louisewholey AT yahoo.com

Mount Johnson and Mount Gilbert

Goal: Mount Johnson (12,871') and Mount Gilbert (13,106')

Location: South Lake, Eastside of the Sierras

Dates: September 17 - 19

Leader: Charles Schafer

Difficulty: Class 2/3

Friday we'll hike up to Treasure Lakes where we'll set up camp and enjoy the scenery. Saturday we'll split up with the faster party heading for Mt. Gillbert. After a successful visit to the summit, they will join the slower party relaxing on Mt. Johnson, before all head back to camp. Then on Sunday we'll hike back out. This will be a relatively slow-paced trip (for the slower party), and the climbing will for the

most part be easy, so it should be appropriate for relative beginners who have done a bit of climbing.

Contact Leader: Charles Schafer
c_g_schafer@yahoo.com; (408) 829-0381 or
Co-Leader Bob Suzuki: suzukir@sd-star.com

Merced Peak

Goal: Merced Peak (11,726')

Location: Yosemite National Park

Dates: September 25 -26

Leader: Louise Wholey

Difficulty: Intermediate

Backpack from Sky Ranch Road to Upper Ottoway Lake via Chiquito and Merced Passes. This route takes us about 15 miles to camp through the southernmost regions of Yosemite National Park. Sunday climb Merced Peak (class 2) and hike out. Contact: louisewhole AT yahoo.com.

Note: Trip is full, but with a waitlist.

Vitamin and Mineral King

Goal: Mineral Peak (11,550') and Needham Mtn (12,520')

Location: Mineral King, Sequoia NP

Dates: October 1 - 3

Leader: Aaron Schuman

Difficulty: Class 3

During the month of October, the aspens of Mineral King are clothed in gold. On Day 1, we'll hike 4 miles from the trailhead (7,830') to our camp at Crystal Lake (10,800') and make a side jaunt to nearby Mineral Peak (11,550'). On Day 2, we'll cross the tricky third class col (11,500'), drop down to Amphitheater Lake (11,100'), go up to Needham Mountain (12,520'), and finally return to camp the way we came. On easy Day 3, we'll hike out and drive home. Contact Aaron Schuman: [<a.j.schuman@gmail.com>](mailto:a.j.schuman@gmail.com)

Private Trip Calendar

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

October 2010 – Nepal

Leader: Warren Storkman

Private Trip Details

Nepal

Location: Tibet

Dates: October 2010

Leader: Warren Storkman

Climb both Gokyo Ri and Kala Patar. 19-day camping trek, \$1600.00 For more details, contact Warren Storkman: email dstorkman@aol.com or phone 650-493-8959.

Trip Reports

Mount Shasta

July 3, 2010

By Yoni Novat

Sandra Hao and I acquired summit permits to do Avalanche Gulch on Shasta July 3rd. This is a special year in that Shasta received 140% of its normal snowfall. As recently as June 19th, there was ice fall reported on Avalanche Gulch. The optimum conditions for a climb came late in the season coincident with our permits. The skies were clear, the weather was not as yet hot and the heart was almost completely covered in snow. Horse Camp was surprisingly not crowded. Sun cups covered all the snow around us. The majority of climbers were camped up at Lake Helen. We hiked in to Horse Camp without snow shoes and were in bed by 01900.

We started out at 0240 on a pleasant night. By 0500 we were at Lake Helen. There was minimal evidence of rock-fall on the snow. Looking up toward the Red Banks, we could see a line of climbers. Several of them were short roped with guides. Though the snow bridge behind the Thumb, at the top of Konwakiton Glacier was still good, we opted to climb through a gap in the Red Banks with a 45 degree face. Once we topped out, we rested at the start of Misery Hill with a view down the glacier and Mud Creek Canyon. Misery Hill had already lost much of its snow, making it a little more difficult to climb with crampons. However, the crampons and ice axes were useful for the final ascent, which is on a north facing slope.



At noon we were at the top after an uneventful, but spectacular climb. The views of Lassen to the south, Mt McLaughlin and Crater Lake to the north, were clear. The winds were low, making it an unusually great spot for lunch. Our return to camp was straight forward. The descent took us over the snow bridge by the Thumb, down glissade channels and onto snow that was surprisingly firm for the late afternoon. Lake Helen and Horse Camp were full of people preparing to summit on July 4th.

A note of condolences: Kathi Jeanne Ludwig, 56, was hit by a rock, July 4th, while climbing the West Face Route. She died of her injuries shortly after.

Mount Lyell - Almost July 6, 2010 By Yoni Novat

Our two intrepid climbers (Sandra Hao and I) not to be exhausted from Mt Shasta, set off in Ron Karpel's footsteps for Mount Lyell. After a four hour sleep, we were in the queue for back country permits with an entry on July 5th. A ten mile backpack brought us to the footbridge across the Lyell Creek where we camped. The trails were relatively clear of water and snow. At 07:30 on July 6th we set off to climb Lyell. A little over 10,000 ft, the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) crosses Lyell Creek and climbs the steep side of a hill then crosses the creek one last time before turning up Donahue Pass. Instead of crossing the creek twice, we climbed the snow bank over where the creek cascades down. After departing from the PCT, we worked our way up to the broad flat region to the right of the Lyell head waters. From there, we climbed onto a snowfield on the moraine. At the top of the moraine, Lyell and McClure loomed above. The ascent of the Lyell Glacier was pleasant. Our approach took us to a start on the rock about midway along the rocky summit area. However, a thunderhead was building in the southwest. To the west, the Tuolumne area was in rain. So just short of climbing onto the rock that leads to the summit, we turned back and raced the lightning down.

Our obligations required that we backpack out that evening. IT WAS one very long night, but a rewarding experience.



So close but yet so far: Mt. Lyell at our turnaround

Mount Elbrus - 18,512'

July, 2010

By Linda Sun

Our company has a shutdown week after July 4th, so I looked for a one-week peak climb in July, and Elbrus fit the bill.

Most people, even when going independently, use basic service from Pilgrim Tourse to facilitate the visa process. I signed up for a 9-day tour with LenAlpTours, for 640 euros. I booked in February, which allowed plenty of time to get a visa. The Russian consulate requires an original voucher and itinerary, which was couriered to me. Lesson number 1: use a travel agent to get a visa. I went to the Russian consulate in San Francisco by myself, had to wait for over two hours, and had to go again to pick it up.

Soon the date came and I flew from San Francisco to New York to Moscow to Mineralnye vody. Allow plenty of time to layover in Moscow, since everything is slow. Lesson number 2: use a travel agent to get airtickets. I used Orbitz, which was cheaper, about \$1100, but I took extra trouble to verify that I got the aisle seat that I requested, since it was difficult to find an Aeroflot agent. I arrived a day earlier to help with the jet lag., but still wasn't well adjusted till two days prior to the summit day. I think it's better if you can spend a few days touring Moscow, for example, before climbing high. Lesson number 3: better to break the flight and spend the layover day in Moscow. I had trouble finding a place to stay in Mineralnye vody, a tiny airport, because of the language barrier. I finally used concierge service from Visa, and they found a place and booked it with a translator.

OK. So much trouble to get there. Why should I go? It was really beautiful and Terskol was a peaceful village. I followed the program, which provides room, board, and guide. Worry free.



We spent four nights in Terskol, about 7,000', and day hiked. Day 2 we went to Cheget peak (9500'), which took about 5 hours. We had lunch at the Ai Cafe (9,000'), and the guide and I came down on the ski lift while the others hiked down. Bring trekking poles as it's steep and slippery. Day 3 we went to Terskol peak (10200'), and had our first view of Elbrus. Unlike California, the summer is very humid. Day 4 we drove to Azau (10 minutes) took cable cars up to 11,500' and hiked to Priutt refuge (13,450'). This is the first day on snow, and it's good to check the equipment. They have rentals, although I brought everything: plastic boots, ice axe, crampons.



Day 5 we went back up the cable car and took another chair lift to spend the next three nights at the barrels (12,300'). We hiked the same day to Pastukhov rock (15,100') to acclimatize. Day 6 was a rest day.



Day 7 was the big day. Three of the group decided to hike from the barrels, and started around 1:30am. The rest of us chose to use the snow cat, which dropped us at Pastukhov rock (15,100') at 4:30am. Elbrus is a very broad snow peak, with no crevasse as long as you stay on the standard route. Most of the way it's marked by wands. There are two peaks, east and west, west being the higher one that most people climb. First we went straight up for a couple of hours, and then we traversed left toward the saddle between the two peaks (17,400'), which we reached in three hours. From there, the route traversed up the right side of the peak, with some rock protruding out. We got to the summit at 9:50am, spent 20 minutes on top, and coming down took three and a half hours. A couple of people fell and slipped on the traverse back to the saddle; they had no ice axe, just trekking poles. Luckily the snow was soft and they were okay. But I think it's best to bring an ice axe.



We were very lucky with the weather. There were thunderstorms when we hiked lower in the Baksan valley, it even stormed one time at 5am, another time at 10pm. But the summit day was very warm. It's prudent to bring good boots (double plastic are the best) and good mittens just to be safe.

It took a day to take the ski lift back to our hotel in Terskol, and another day to get to Mineralnye vody and fly to Moscow. I stayed one night at a hotel near Moscow airport and flew back to the U.S. the next day. Long flights. If you have extra time, St Petersburg would be a nice visit.

Reference:

<http://www.russia-climbing.com/elbrus-climb-tours.html>

Julius Caesar - 13,200'

July 24 - 25, 2010

By Linda Sun

I've seen quite a few trip reports about Julius Caesar, so I decided to climb it too. I guess I like the name of the peak, just like everyone else. I got a permit for Pine Creek Road, and started slogging up the hot trail around 9:30am on July 24. The first couple of miles climbed 2000 feet among many switchbacks, with the view of the tungsten mill, painted cliff rock face and a waterfall to entertain us.

Harry and I got to Pine Lake around 1pm, a bit tired. I proposed that we camp at Upper Pine Lake, but when Harry heard that the next lake was Honeymoon Lake, he insisted that we go all the way there - we arrived around 2:30pm. It was Harry's first backpacking trip this year, and I'm quite happy that he made it.



We started hiking at 6am next morning toward Italy Pass. The trail gets more obscure, and winds left and right to avoid some cliff bands, but the scenery is beautiful: lots of meadows, wildflowers, and small lakes.

We arrived at the last lake around 8am, finally able to get a view of Italy Pass and Julius Caesar, and Harry decided to wait for me. From there, it was a round trip of about 3 hours: class 1 to Italy Pass, and north from the pass has some class 2.



I climbed onto the ridge and stayed mostly on it, but a bit left (west) below the ridge would avoid some of the bigger boulders. We got back to camp around 1pm, decided to shorten the trip and hiked out, and got to our car at 4:30pm.

"Matthes Peak" (12,960+') on the Glacier Divide

July 26 - 28, 2010

By Rod McCalley

Glacier Divide separates the Evolution country on the south from Humphreys Basin on the north side. Its east end, near the Sierra crest, has several well-known peaks such as Mt. Goethe & Muriel Peak, but the central section (where the Matthes Glacier resides) has several nameless summits closely approaching 13,000'. My goals on this Piute Pass trip were the two summits (12,960+ and 12,900') east and west of Packsaddle Pass, overlooking the glacier-fed Packsaddle Lake just south of Piute Creek. I found a good campsite on Piute Creek near one of the few wadeable crossings, just below Lower Golden Trout Lakes and above the major cascading section.

After the stream crossing (utilizing an island between two stream channels), it was a simple traverse around to the west into the beautiful Packsaddle Lake basin. Rather than mess with the nasty-looking, loose, moraine headwall of the basin, it worked out that a zigzagging climb of the rock/ledge slope west of the lake reaches a nice set of benches that lead south and west into the snow-filled upper basin. Thankful that I had my ice axe, I climbed the gradually steepening snow slope, avoiding the final overhanging cornice by going left onto easy rock up to Packsaddle Pass (12,450'). After lunch there, admiring the grand vistas back to Humphreys and forward over the west side of the Evolution country, it was an easy climb southeast up a blocky slope to the summit plateau of Pk. 12,960+. Of the two cairns at the far east end, the slightly lower one near the cliff above the Matthes Glacier actually had the Register bottle! The notebook was placed there in July, 1982 by Barbara Lilley's SPS group, and has only 14 entries before mine, with only two since 2004! Also there was a

small pad with the first-ascent note (Smatko, Ross, et al. in 1968) and with several more notes from the '70s. The name "Matthes Peak" was proposed at the beginning of the register notebook. I certainly recommend this appropriate name, given the peak's position atop the headwall above the Matthes Glacier.

By the time I got back to Packsaddle Pass, it was too late to do the Pk 12,900 on the NW side, so I descended (losing my way and backtracking several times as I went down from the benches to the lake) and finally reached camp at 6:15. Fortunately the weather had become very good on this Mon-Wed trip, after what had been a stormy Sunday and Sunday night that many other PCSers encountered that weekend. My Sunday night car-camp on Bishop Creek was illuminated by nearly continuous lightning from midnight to 2 AM!

**Trans-Sierra Hike: Rock Creek to
Lake Edison and back
July 31 - August 1, 2010
By Dara Hazeghi**

Participants: Dara H. Sassan H., Chris P. and Fred K.

Distance: Approx. 20 miles each way.

Elevation: Westbound: 2400 ft. up, 4400 ft. down.

This route for a Trans-Sierra dayhike has been on my radar for some time, but it took until this summer before I managed to finally get all the pieces together. Because we didn't want to split our group of 4, we opted to do the hike not as 2 groups with a key-exchange but as an over-and-back trip, spending the night at the Vermilion resort. This presented some logistical challenges (ferry schedule) and made for a more difficult hike (having to go both directions). We ended up taking about the same amount of time (11 hours) for both directions. Aside from mosquitoes, the timing was almost perfect as there was virtually no snow to impede us on Mono Pass and the

streams were all manageable, but we still saw many wildflowers at all elevations. Given a choice of directions, I would recommend the eastbound route, despite the additional elevation gain.



At the Mosquito Flat trailhead

Following a short night at the East Fork campground near Rock Creek Lake, the four of us set off from Mosquito Flat around 5:30am. After a couple of junctions we were ascending rapidly on granite hillsides above Rock Creek. We found both wildflowers and mosquitoes in abundance there. The sun caught up with us at the fork below Ruby Lake, and we took the left branch, following long switchbacks below Mt. Starr towards Mono Pass. We had tremendous views of the Rock Creek basin.

Just before 8am we reached the pass. Hoping for better views, we took a detour to the nearest peaklet overlooking the Rock Creek area, and took the opportunity to have a snack and admire the nearby peaks (Mt. Tom, Mt. Morgan (S), Mt. Abbot, Mt. Dade) as well as the basin.



Mt. Abbott and Mt. Dade, reflected

Descending the other side of Mono Pass, our views north steadily improved. Past Summit Lake, we climbed a small hump into a parallel valley, and soon we could see the lakes and granite slabs of the Pioneer Basin, and much of the Mono Creek drainage. At a lovely grassy spot below Trail Lake, we took a break to enjoy the sight of the nearby Fourth Recess. A mile or so further on, following some steep switchbacks, the trail descends into the trees where it largely remained for the rest of the hike. Despite the high-snow year, stream crossings were reasonable, although we did end up crossing one stream near the Fourth Recess junction four separate times, navigating a marsh full of flowers and insects.

We took our lunch break near the Third Recess trail junction. The next few miles in the forest were uneventful, but the ascent above the north fork of Mono Creek in the afternoon sun proved an unwelcome surprise. The last mile was as usual the longest one (or so it felt) as we hurried down the trail, anxious not to miss the 4:30pm ferry.

This was my first time at Vermilion, so I didn't know what to expect. The small store was chock full of hikers coming in and out, and the employee at the counter seemed to be responsible for everything, from camping reservations to JMT cache pickups. After some waiting, we received the okay to go to our tent cabin, which proved a minimalist structure, with holes in the floor, a flap that couldn't quite be closed, and 4 bed frames with mattresses.

This particular Saturday was barbecue night, which as we discovered when we went for dinner, meant that the restaurant only served barbecue. The place was full of both car-visitors and hikers, and seats were in short supply. The menu's 3 choices, tri-tip, chicken and pork, had diminished to 2 by the time we ordered (they ran out of chicken), but when the food did arrive, we were all happy to have a hot meal. Dessert was a bit disappointing (pies made from frozen pie-filling) but we did not go back to the cabin hungry. The

mosquitoes happily seemed to have disappeared.



Rising early at one of Vermillion Resort's tent cabins

Next morning we got up at 6am, after a surprisingly cool night. It was still pleasantly cool when the boat dropped us off at the far end of the lake a bit after 7:30AM. Soon we were at the crossing of the Mono Creek's north fork. Following a suggestion we'd got at Vermilion, we explored about 150 ft. upstream, and found a good crossing on a log. No need to take off the boots this time around!



Wildflowers at the Golden Creek crossing

We continued along steadily through the woods for the next few hours. While it did get warmer, it remained mercifully well below the 80 degree temperatures of the previous day. The shade also helped. The final 1500 ft. up to the pass felt longer than they were. Going down the other side, our progress was soon slowed by the presence first of numerous wildflowers in the rocks, then of excellent views of the whole Rock Creek area lit by the



Penstemon

We took many breaks to admire Mt. Morgan and Mt. Tom behind it, and attempted to identify the peaks surround Mt. Abbot, Dade and Mills. Lower in the valley, we could see not only Ruby Lake but also half a dozen others. Shadows lengthened as we descended, and by the 6PM, our side of the valley was entirely in the shade of Mt. Morgan. When we finally arrived back at the Mosquito Flat trailhead around 6:30PM, we had no questions about why it had gotten that name!

Mt. Sill and Mt. Gayley August 20 - 22, 2010 By Kelly Maas

This was a three day trip. The hike in wasn't terribly far, so we got off to a leisurely start, the 4 of us (Toinette Hartshorne, Greg Johnson, Mike Snadden and scribe/leader Kelly Maas). The day was clear and beautiful (and a bit warm at the lower elevations), and the hike to Sam Mack Meadow was 6 to 6.5 hours, with stops to enjoy the views at First Lake, Second Lake and Third Lake.



Temple Crag from Second Lake

We didn't see any other climbers, either on the trail or at Sam Mack Meadow. Before dinner, Toinette and I explored up the trail toward the Palisade Glacier. The columbine there are amazing. Where I thought that the trail ended at the toe of the moraine, Toinette pointed out that it continues left. We had a few mosquitoes at camp, but not enough to be a serious distraction.



Sill Overview

On Saturday we awoke as the sky started to lighten. Wind gusts during the night deposited fine dust on everything, including inside tents. We left camp at 6:45 am. It was to be a long day, and it was a bit after 7 pm when we returned. Toinette definitely knew the way, going left at the obvious moraine toe (about 30-45 minutes above camp), to slabs with cairns. About an hour above Sam Mack Meadow, we passed a place with flat and relatively spacious bivy sites, with flowing water nearby. This must be what I've heard called "Gayley camp". We ascended on this relatively easy terrain, heading at times almost directly for Gayley. The various Palisade peaks came into view, but so did a curious cloud. What did this mean so early in the morning, especially when the weather forecast was for clear weather all weekend? Further on we eventually got up onto the terminal moraine, which extends directly from a prominent buttress of Gayley, and this is where we had our first view of the impressive glacier and the lake beneath it.

We did a lot of rock hopping as we traversed and ascended the moraine to get onto the high left flank of the glacier. Once there we brandished ice axes and crampons and made our way to the base of the class 2 chute that leads to Glacier Notch between Sill and Gayley. We took our snow tools with us to the notch because we knew that there was more snow to come.



Palisade Glacier

The single cloud had morphed into a whole band of clouds that were streaming over the Palisades from the south. It was still clear to the north, but elsewhere the clouds were taking over. They were driven by an ever-increasing wind. I didn't have a bivy sack or tent, but I wasn't too worried because they weren't typical afternoon cumulus. We wore more clothes as the day went on, not less.



On top of couloir on Sill

The northeast couloir on Sill is quite obvious from the notch. The maximum angle is ~35 degrees. Though the snow became a bit icy near the top, we did OK with our crampons. A short scramble from there put us at the saddle

between Sill and its satellite peak. The guide books do a fine job of describing the route from there, first ascending a chute of sorts towards Sill, then working right, then up. I will only add that when ascending from the saddle, you can turn right after either 20 feet or 80 feet. The higher route is probably best because the lower route has you starting lower in the subsequent chute. I also suggest staying to the left side of the chute. I imagine that the chute can be more challenging earlier in the year when it has more snow in it, as evidenced by a few rappel slings. We encountered some class 3, with one particular move that gave pause to some people. Though we carried a rope, it never left the pack.



Sill from Gayley

Once at the ridge, with a view to the south, we still had to deal with a bit of non-trivial (class 3) climbing to the summit. The views there were beautiful, but the wind put a real chill on things and we soon started down. We had made mental notes of where to turn off the ridge while retracing our steps, but we still didn't do it very cleanly. Eventually we got headed down the gully, but first we stopped for lunch since we finally had a bit of wind protection. As we ate, a guy who was day hiking the peak passed us going up, then joined us on the way down.

Back at Glacier Notch, I couldn't resist the temptation of Mt. Gayley, which I had first climbed 21 years earlier. Mike – "against my better judgment" – and Toinette joined me for a fun scramble up a delightful class 3 route. Mike may have missed out on the enjoyment

because of the altitude and pace, and on the summit he looked like a poster child for AMS. We asked him to lead us back down at his own pace, and he gradually improved.

The return to camp was mostly uneventful, though it did take about 3 hours from Glacier Notch. On the glacier we encountered two people, one of whom had a snowboard. (There is absolutely no snow suitable for snowboarding on the Glacier.) They were apparently out for a day hike, but it wasn't clear why they were still heading up at 4:30 in the afternoon. As we descended, we saw two more people, apparently part of their group. But they were very spread out, and later seemed to be each going in a different direction. Very strange. One guy seemed to be descending the iciest portion of the glacier. We were glad when we eventually got out of sight of them.

The wind continued and that night we had some substantial gusts. The few mosquitoes from the day before had to retreat. We doubted that the recently arrived climbers who were now camped near us would actually attempt their goals tomorrow of the Swiss Arête (Mt. Sill) and the U-notch Couloir (North Palisade). In the morning, the overall cloud cover was reduced, but the clouds still poured over the crest, now obscuring the top of Sill and completely obliterating any trace of North Palisade and Thunderbolt. As we broke camp, we were glad that we did not plan to climb this day. But then the strangest thing happened. About an hour down the trail, we turned back towards the Palisades, and there wasn't a cloud in the sky! I don't think I've seen such serious looking clouds disperse so quickly. We enjoyed the flowers on the way back, and got back to the cars after 3.7 hours of hiking.

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Our official website is

<http://www.peakclimbing.org>. Joining the PCS is easy. Go to

<http://www.peakclimbing.org/join>

PCS Announcement Listserv

If you join the PCS Announcement Listserv you will receive announcements and updates of trips and meetings. Use the

<http://lists.sierraclub.org/SCRIPTS/WA.EXE?A0=LOMAP-PCS-ANNOUNCE&X=&Y=> web page.

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: Climbing using hands for balance.

Class 3: Climbing requires the use of hands, maybe a rope.

Class 4: Requires rope belays.

Class 5: Technical rock climbing.

Trips may also be rated by level of exertion: easy, moderate, strenuous, or extreme.

Deadline for submissions to the next Scree is Tuesday, September 28. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month.