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General Meeting

Date **November 8, 2011**
Time **7:30 – 9:30 pm**
Where **PCC**
 3921 E. Bayshore Road
 Palo Alto, CA
Program **Rocks Rock!**
Presenter **Sonja Dietrich**

When I hike and climb in California, I can't help marveling at the landscape at scales from several thousand miles to the rock I am holding in my hands, wondering how this all came to be. In one evening, I can only give you a glimpse into the fascinating story of rocks, but my goal will be to whet your appetite for more by sharing my best discoveries so far.

First, we will solve the case of the missing volcanoes. A classic suspense story where the clue is the missing victim. Next, we will head across the Sierras and go to a geologist's heaven: Death Valley. We will crawl on a turtle back, wondering how three of them could have gotten there. Maybe they were trying to get to the remains of a

Precambrian Ocean over in Titus Canyon, sandy beach ripples now stuck high up on canyon walls? Ever noticed the slick-n-slides in Fall Canyon? Who laid the mosaics in Mosaic Canyon? You may have driven the Artists' Drive, but have you stopped to explore the weird rock formations on the ventiform ridges across from the drive's entrance? Crawled up all 700 vertical feet (or maybe 650 feet, lively discussion right here!) and met two of the five endemic beetle species living on that dune on the way? Seen a stretched pebble? The famous pregnant bighorn sheep petroglyph? All this and more can be seen while you climb some nice desert peaks, too!



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

Congratulations to Rod McCalley on the occasion of his own unique list finish! And to Debbie Bulger, for surviving the Rockosaurus! And now, looking forward, here's the link to our Advance Trip Schedule, in addition to all the trips you can see listed below:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/ccc?key=0AtE_Co39b8vfdEJpR2c0NE13cktfS3ZDUURkT0l1ZFE&hl=en_US#gid=0

See you on the slopes! Judy

Chair Column

Dare to Climb but Don't Dare to Lead? Why is it Scarier?

It's amazing so many climbers are afraid to lead! It's that time of year again, PCS elections, and some times it feels like twisting arms to get people to step up and fill the vital roles to keep the club running. The complaint most often uttered is "I don't know how to lead" or "I am afraid to lead." We're not talking about lead rock climbing here, we're talking about stepping up for PCS leadership roles!

Let me share a story with you. In 2002, I graduated from business school and a girlfriend of mine, Shanon, invited me to an event: some group of women called the Association of Women MBAs (AWM) were having a happy hour. The woman who founded the loose group of women networking at quarterly happy hours took one look at me

and asked "Do you want to be the new President?" I thought she was crazy – this was my first event!!! And what on earth did I know about leading a group? I had never led a team, let alone an entire organization!

In a rare moment of weakness, I looked to my friend and said "I'll do it if you do it with me." That's how I became Co-President of AWM in 2003. There was no election, no definitions of objectives or roles, no grooming session; it just happened. I started with the basics – asking the members what they wanted and trying to deliver it. It magically seemed to work.

A year went by and, although Shanon and I were great partners, Shanon was getting more and more distracted by work and a desire to start a family. I realized I was suddenly running the show alone and to my surprise, I also realized I had vision, the ability to set plans in motion, motivate others to join me, and create a culture of empowerment and recognition. It wasn't hard: I just listened to the members and tried to deliver what they wanted. I fulfilled three years in the role and still get positive feedback today.

I tell this story because 1) I had never been President before and 2) I didn't believe I could hold a leadership role and be successful at it. As I tried to recruit others to transition into my role, I heard over and over again "but I have never been President of anything before." Well, there has to be a first time for you to be able to say you have ever been a President, or whatever role you are thinking about. You definitely won't know if you don't give it a shot.

So with that little pep talk, I'd like to encourage you to step up and take a leadership role in the PCS. You should have seen the email with the role descriptions. Give it a try, help support the club you love which depends on its volunteers, and you just might learn something about yourself in the process!

-Emilie
Madame Chair

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>

November 19 - Backcountry Ski Mount Lola
Leader: Louise Wholey

December 17 - Backcountry Ski Tamarack Peak
Leader: Louise Wholey

January 14, 15 - Backcountry Ski Jakes, Bliss
Leader: Louise Wholey

February 11, 12 - Donner Summit Dayhikes
On Snowshoes
Leader: Joe Baker

February 18, 19 - Backcountry Ski Mount Rose
Leader: Louise Wholey

March 17, 18 - Backcountry Ski Sierra Buttes
Leader: Louise Wholey

March 24, 25 - Cone Peak
Leader: Joe Baker

April 14 - 15 - Backcountry Ski Bridgeport
Leader: Louise Wholey

May 12, 13 - Backcountry Ski Sierra
Leader: Louise Wholey

PCS Trip Details

Backcountry Ski Mount Lola

Goal: Mount Lola (9148')
Location: Near Lake Tahoe
Date: November 19
Leader: Louise Wholey

Come join us for the first in our new Tahoe Backcountry Skiing Series. We will ski new or old (yes, there is some left!) snow on Mt. Lola. Skis may have to be carried to the snow. Requires advanced skiing skills (resort black diamond), avalanche training. Randonee or Telemark skis, climbing skis, avalanche beacon, shovel, and probe.
Leader: Louise Wholey (louisewholey at yahoo.com)

To sign up send \$8 for leader training to Louise Wholey, 21020 Canyon View Drive, Saratoga, CA 95070.

Backcountry Ski Tamarack Peak

Goal: Tamarack Peak (9897')
Location: Near Lake Tahoe
Date: December 17
Leader: Louise Wholey

Come join us for the second in our new Tahoe Backcountry Skiing Series. Typically Tamarack Peak (near Mt. Rose) has the best early snow. December is often the best powder. Requires advanced skiing skills (resort black diamond), avalanche training. Randonee or Telemark skis, climbing skis, avalanche beacon, shovel, and probe.
Leader: Louise Wholey (louisewholey at yahoo.com)

To sign up send \$8 for leader training to Louise Wholey, 21020 Canyon View Drive, Saratoga, CA 95070.

Backcountry Ski Jakes, Bliss

Goal: Jakes Peak (9186'), Bliss Peak (8658')
Location: Near Lake Tahoe
Dates: January 14, 15
Leader: Louise Wholey

Come join us for our third of the Tahoe Backcountry Skiing Series. Ski above Lake

Tahoe on steep powder runs. Requires advanced skiing skills (resort black diamond+), avalanche training. Randonee or Telemark skis, climbing skis, avalanche beacon, shovel, and probe.

Leader: Louise Wholey (louisewholey at yahoo.com)

To sign up send \$8 for leader training to Louise Wholey, 21020 Canyon View Drive, Saratoga, CA 95070.

Donner Summit Dayhikes On Snowshoes

Goal: Mt. Judah (8245'), Boreal Ridge
Location: Donner Summit, near Truckee
Dates: February 11, 12
Leader: Joe Baker

We will stay at the Southbay Ski Club lodge at Donner Summit, and do day trips. One day, we will climb Mt. Judah, and the other day we will do a loop from Highway 80 to Highway 40, following the PCT on the way there and coming over Boreal Ridge on the way back. Destinations may change based on snow conditions. Contact Judy Molland at judy@judymolland.com.

Backcountry Ski Mount Rose

Goal: Tamarack Peak (9897'), Mt. Houghton (10,490'), Mt. Rose (10,776')
Location: Near Lake Tahoe
Dates: February 18, 19
Leader: Louise Wholey

Come join us for our fourth of the Tahoe Backcountry Skiing Series. This tour is long and strenuous, definitely not designed as a first tour of the season! Requires advanced skiing skills (resort black diamond), avalanche training. Randonee or Telemark skis, climbing skis, avalanche beacon, shovel, and probe.

Leader: Louise Wholey (louisewholey at yahoo.com)

To sign up send \$8 for leader training to Louise Wholey, 21020 Canyon View Drive, Saratoga, CA 95070.

Backcountry Ski Sierra Buttes

Goal: Sierra Buttes (8591')
Location: North of Lake Tahoe
Dates: March 17, 18
Leader: Louise Wholey

Come join us for our fifth of the Backcountry Skiing Series, this one slightly north of the Tahoe area. Depending on conditions this may be an overnight ski trip or a long one-day outing. Requires advanced skiing skills (resort black diamond), avalanche training.

Randonee or Telemark skis, climbing skis, avalanche beacon, shovel, and probe.
Leader: Louise Wholey (louisewholey at yahoo.com)

To sign up send \$8 for leader training to Louise Wholey, 21020 Canyon View Drive, Saratoga, CA 95070.

Cone Peak

Goal: Cone Peak (5155')
Location: Ventana Wilderness, Limekiln Campground
Dates: March 24, 25
Leader: Joe Baker

We will climb Cone Peak from Highway 1. Cone Peak is the most spectacular mountain on the Big Sur coast of California. It is the second highest mountain (Junipero Serra Peak is higher) in the Santa Lucia Range. The trip is on-trail but somewhat strenuous. On Saturday, we'll take a leisurely hike up to our camp spot at Vicente Flat, where we'll spend the night. Then we'll climb our peak on Sunday morning, about 14 miles round-trip, before hiking out. This should be an excellent time to see lots of wildflowers.

Contact Judy Molland: judy@judymolland.com for more information.

Backcountry Ski Bridgeport

Goal: TBD
Location: Bridgeport, Eastside of the Sierras
Dates: April 14, 15
Leader: Louise Wholey

Come join us for our sixth of the Backcountry Skiing Series, this one in the wonderful Bridgeport area. Expect multiple one-day outings, such as Crater Crest. Requires advanced skiing skills (resort black diamond), avalanche training. Randonee or Telemark skis, climbing skis, avalanche beacon, shovel, and probe.

Leader: Louise Wholey (louisewholey at yahoo.com)

To sign up send \$8 for leader training to Louise Wholey, 21020 Canyon View Drive, Saratoga, CA 95070.

Backcountry Ski Sierra

Goal: Mt. Tom, Elderberry Canyon

Location: Mt. Tom, Eastside of the Sierras

Dates: May 12, 13

Leader: Louise Wholey

Come join us for our grand finale of the Backcountry Skiing Series, skiing a classic route in the high Sierra. Requires advanced skiing skills (resort black diamond+), avalanche training. Randonee or Telemark skis, climbing skis, avalanche beacon, shovel, and probe.

Leader: Louise Wholey (louisewholey at yahoo.com)

To sign up send \$8 for leader training to Louise Wholey, 21020 Canyon View Drive, Saratoga, CA 95070.

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.

November 11 - 13 - Pinnacles
Leader - Jeff Fisher

Private Trip Details

Pinnacles

Goals: Climb, hike, bike - your choice

Location: Pinnacles National Monument (East Side)

Date: November 11 - 13

Leader: Jeff Fisher

Hiking, climbing and/or biking. Your choice. Come down for a weekend of climbing and/or hiking or even biking. There will be climbers of varying abilities. Group site #134 has been reserved for 2 nights at the Pinnacles campground on the east side of the park. Holds total of up to 20 people (We've had more). Shoes, harness and helmet needed if you are going to be climbing. You can stay 1 or 2 nights (preferably both) or just come down for one of the days. The cost for the camp site is \$75/ night for up to 10 people and \$110/night for up to 20. Leader; Jeff Fisher 650-207-9632, E-mail; jeff_fisher_5252@sbcglobal.net

Trip Reports

Mt. Fiske (13,503')

August 18 - 25

By Debbie Bulger

After snow conditions precluded our climbing Mt. Fiske in July, Richard Stover and I just had to try for it in August. This time we decided to hike from South Lake, since I had never seen the section of the John Muir Trail between the LeConte Canyon Ranger Station and Muir Pass.

We were also in search of the unusual Roundleaf Sundew, a carnivorous plant that grows in mossy bogs. This easily overlooked plant traps insects to provide nutrients not available from the soil.

We hiked over Bishop Pass to Dusy Basin the first day. It had been 11 years since we last went over this pass, which has been rerouted because the trail is subject to frequent rockfall.

The next morning we continued on our way to Muir Pass stopping near Big Pete Meadow to look for the Sundew. We took off our packs and searched among the sphagnum moss and muck for at least 30 minutes. No luck. Those little buggers are hard to find! But the real bugs (mosquitoes) were busy chomping on us as we searched for their predators. We decided to continue on and look more carefully after climbing Fiske.

On Day 3 we were thrilled to pass hundreds of endangered Mountain Yellow-Legged Frogs and tadpoles. This seriously cute frog has disappeared from more than 90% of its former range. Threats to its survival include introduction of non-native trout, disease, and probably pesticide drift from the Central Valley.

After reaching Helen Lake we proceeded over talus to the north shore where we camped on a bench about 40' above the lake. Early the next morning we set out for Mt. Fiske. Hard snow covered the bowl south of Mt. Fiske. It was hard to believe it was almost the end of August, with still a lot of snow everywhere: from Helen Lake to Muir Pass the trail was mostly obscured by the snow.



Debbie Climbing Fiske

Once we started climbing, however, most of the snow was gone from this southern route. We climbed fun blocks on the southwest ridge and descended on the much easier south face. The view from the summit is superb. 360 degrees of peaks including massive Darwin, bristly Haeckel, dark brooding McGee, and towering Goddard. What a view!



Debbie and Richard on summit of Fiske, with Goddard in background

Below in the bowl, the rocks were covered with watermelon snow, a pink coloration caused by the presence of an algae, *Chamydomonas nivalis*. Apparently there was red carotenoid algal pigment left on some of the rocks after the snow had melted because our hands became stained pink as well.

Rising late the next day we moved our camp to a small lake south of Helen Lake and set up our tent just in time to protect us from the rain and hail. We decided to save Black Giant and other peaks in the vicinity for another time. But I just had to visit the Sierra Club Hut on Muir Pass.

This hut was built in the 1930s at a cost of \$5,800 before the establishment of Sequoia National Park using a design based on shelters found in Italy. More than half the expense was for packing in the building materials. Returning to Big Pete Meadow the next day our search for the Sundew was successful. The small plants were not

apparent at first, hidden among the taller vegetation.



Roundleaf Sundew

And then, we saw them, tipped off by the long red petioles and red glandular hairs on the leaves. The tiny white flowers on a stalk that rises 6-8 inches above the basal rosette were almost invisible. We fed it one of the mosquitoes that were feeding on us.

Then we almost lost Debbie to the dreaded Sierra Rockasaurus. Luckily she escaped, and we scampered back to the trailhead.



Luckily, Debbie escaped to climb again

Mt. Gould (13,005')
August 28
By Debbie Bulger

Except for the summit rocks, Mt. Gould is a straightforward climb from Kearsarge Pass. Richard Stover and I decided to do it as a two-

day backpack since we are slow. It was a good decision since it rained for several hours after we set up camp above Heart Lake shortly after noon.

Bright and early the next day we started for the pass. The skies had cleared, and we surprised several blue grouse near camp.

In *Place Names of the Sierra Nevada* by Peter Browning there is a photo from 1890 of Joseph N. LeConte, "Little Joe," standing on the top of Mt. Gould. The smaller rock on which he stands, on the very tip of the summit, is no longer in place.



Debbie Climbing Gould

Richard remained below the tippy top and photographed my climb. We recommend descending to the pass instead of heading for Big Pothole Lake to shorten the amount of tough-on-the-knees scree which we regret taking. Returning to the pass is a shorter distance, and then you are on the trail.

Mt. Ritter (13,143')
September 7 - 9
By Rod McCalley

The third try is always the charm! After 2 serious attempts (Sept. 2002 and Oct. 2009), I finally reached the summit of Mt. Ritter -- in the company of my son Roddy (32) and daughter Carrie (30). When I showed them the pictures of my failure two years ago, they each independently said they wanted to go along on my next try. Carrie's research summer of collecting methane-emission data

in the tundra of northern Sweden had just ended, and Roddy's schedule as a trip leader for Southern Yosemite Mountain Guides had a 4-day break after the Labor Day weekend; so we managed to rendezvous at Agnew Meadows Campground on that Tuesday evening.

From my previous attempts, I had learned 3 big lessons: camp well ABOVE Ediza Lake, get an EARLY start, and find the RIGHT route! So on Wednesday, we had a pleasant backpack past Ediza Lake, going NW above treeline to a nice bench campsite (about 9760') between the arms of the split stream. We watched the descent of, and then chatted with, a guided group of 5 who had summited about noon (Roddy knew the guide, who was from Sierra Mountain Center, Bishop).

Next morning, Roddy got us up before dawn, and we were underway by 6:20 (just enough light to see the route above us). Following Jim Ramaker's good trip reports (and my own descent in 10/09), we headed up toward the pinnacle on the south side of the SE Glacier. Somewhat below the pinnacle (and crossing a lot of snow this year) we angled up to the right onto the toe of the glacier. After more snow (of generally low-angle), we diagonalled up right from the rocky islands in the glacier to the base of the first chute on the north side of the glacier (the "Secor chute"). This initially narrow passage went very easily almost all the way up (not really loose at all); then a steep snowfield across the top forced a detour to the right. Simple talus-hopping got us on top before noon! (5-1/2 hrs from camp). What a grand place -- long studying of the mountains in all directions, of course!

For this day (Thursday), thunderstorms were forecast to be working up the east side of the Sierra from the Gulf of California. They did arrive about 2 PM (with hail) when we were already back down on the glacier. Wet rock

below did slow us up a bit (more snow travel, instead), but the weather was moderating as we reached camp about 5 PM. Next day (Friday) the lightning started earlier, with rain by 1 PM -- so we got wet at the end of the backpack out to the trailhead. Later we heard from others about Saturday's weather, so it was good we got out when we did!

I had been particularly focused upon Mt. Ritter because it completes the simplest of my "quadrangle-based" lists of Sierra peaks: the 12 high-summits in areas of 1 degree latitude by 1 degree longitude! When my wife Peggy and I did #11 (Mt. Lola) last July, only Ritter was left. The next larger of these lists has the 31 high-summits of the half-degree latitude by longitude quadrangles -- still have 13 of these to go, including Red Kaweah. Eventually, there's my original list and goal: the 10' x 10' quadrangles, but I'm only approaching the first half of those 161 peaks.

Elected Officials

Chair

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415-260-3618

Vice Chair and Trip Scheduler

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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?A
0=LOMAP-PCS-ANNOUNCE&X=&Y=](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 Monday , November 28. Meetings are held on
the second Tuesday of each month.**