



<http://peakclimbing.org> - <http://www.facebook.com/peakclimbing>

General Meeting

Date Tuesday, October 14, 2014

Time 7:30 pm – 9:30 pm

Where PCC
3921 E. Bayshore Road
Palo Alto, CA

Program Gangsthang and the Thiroth Shivling

Presenter: Arun Mahajan

In fall 2007, an expedition from the UK spent close to three weeks climbing and exploring in a small section of the Himalaya that is in the Lahul-Spiti district of the state of Himachal Pradesh in India. In the process, the splendid pyramidal peak of Gangsthang (6162m/20,200+ ft) was climbed and 6 members stood on the tiny summit, having made a new route up the West Face, finishing up the normal SW Ridge. Prior to this, for acclimatization, the subsidiary rock peak of Thiroth Shivling (5324m/17,500ft) was also reached.

The team also enjoyed a superb journey into the area, taking the night sleeper from Delhi, the amazing narrow gauge railway to Shimla hill

station, beautiful roads through the verdant valleys of Kullu and Manali, and a breath-taking drive over the 13,000 foot Rohtang Pass into the spectacular Chandra-Bhaga valley.

Come and enjoy a slide show of this wonderful region and its imposing peaks with Arun Mahajan who was a team member of this expedition. This climb was noted in the 2008 edition of the American Alpine Journal.



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/28ng>

Editor's Notes

Wonderful News!

Sonja Dietrich would like to announce the arrival of the next generation for PCS. Johann Willem Dieterich left his first belay line on September 3rd at 4:12 am. He is looking forward to starting his outdoor adventures near and far. Meanwhile, he is working on establishing good relations with local wildlife.



Congratulations and welcome to the newest member of the PCS!

Our agenda for this month's meeting is very full, so please try and be on time so we can make a prompt start. Thank you!

Judy

Chair Column

We have been fortunate in the last two years to receive donations that enabled the Section to raise some money and put it aside for a good cause, despite not charging for membership. Last year Sybille Hechtel donated copies of Richard Hechtel's autobiography which we distributed for donations. Thanks to Sybille. This year Louise Wholey has donated money contributed by participants in trips she led co-sponsored with the Backcountry Ski Section of the Bay Chapter which were targeted for leader training. Thank you Louise.

At the last Section meeting, we floated the idea of donating to the Sequoia Kings Canyon Search and Rescue team in appreciation for their stellar efforts in evacuating Lisa Barboza after her unfortunate encounter with a falling boulder in the Kaweahs — in which the boulder won. The idea met with general approval and the above donations give us the wherewithal to do this without a fund raising effort. As a result we are sending \$150 in the name of the PCS to the Sequoia Parks Foundation earmarked for Search and Rescue. Of course, additional donations to help with this are also welcome.

Elections for next year's officers are coming up in November, folks. I need both volunteers for a nominating committee and suggestions and or volunteers for candidates.

Join us on October 14th for our monthly meeting. Arun Mahajan will regale us with tales of his 2007 Himalayan trip to climb Gangstang.

Before the slideshow, we will hold our annual fall trip planning session. So come with your ideas for trips you want to lead or have someone else lead during the late fall-winter-early spring season. We would like to get a good mix of ski touring and snowshoe outings, Sierra winter climbs (always a good adventure), and local training hikes.

Terry

PCS Trip Calendar

There are no official PCS trips currently scheduled.

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 8 - 9: Pinnacles
Leader: Jeff Fisher

Private Trip Details

Pinnacles

Goal: Have fun in the Park
Location: Pinnacles National Park
Dates: November 8 - 9
Leader: Jeff Fisher

Hiking and/or Climbing. Your choice. Come down for a weekend of climbing and/or hiking or even biking. There will be climbers of varying abilities. Campsites 69, 70 and 71 have been reserve Saturday night at the Pinnacles campground on the east side of the park. Each site is \$23 and holds up to 6 people. Shoes, harness and helmet needed if you are going to be climbing. You can stay the night, or just come down for one of the days. I will be climbing on Saturday and plan on hiking to N. Chalone Peak on Sunday. We will meet Saturday morning at 9AM at the Bear Gulch visitor center on the east side of the park. Bear Gulch visitor center is approximately 3 miles past the campground/park headquarters. Entry fees are can be paid at the headquarters or at the Bear Gulch visitor center. Leader; Jeff Fisher, E-mail; [jeff_fisher_5252 at sbcglobal.net](mailto:jeff_fisher_5252@sbcglobal.net)

In Addition

Here is a trip that may be of interest to PCS members from former PCS member and Chair, Emilie Cortes, who now runs an all women's adventure travel company. She's offering 10% off either of these trips for any PCS member.

Everest Base Camp

<http://www.callwild.com/trip.php?id=32>
\$3895 [November 11-27, 2014](#)

A challenging 12 day trek to the base camp of the highest mountain on the planet - Everest Base Camp. We will also hike to the top of Kala Pattar which offers the best views of Everest.

We carry day packs and stay in traditional Sherpa tea houses along the way. EBC requires a strong sense of adventure and willingness to train and prepare for your trek.

Trip Report

Middle Palisade (14,040')

August 18 - 23

By Debbie Bulger

Photos by Richard Stover

Middle Palisade is well known among the climbing community as having some of the finest rock scrambling in the Sierra.



Middle Palisade rises above the Middle Palisade Glacier

I camped with Richard Stover at the unnamed tarn above Finger Lake where I would begin the climb. Richard planned to remain in camp and photograph the climb. I had arranged for a guide to meet me at the tarn at 5 a.m. on the morning of August 20.

Richard and I took two days to climb the approximately 3500' from the trailhead to our basecamp with full packs, heavy with climbing gear and food for five days, in order to conserve energy for the climb itself. The obscure "use trail" from Brainerd Lake to Finger Lake lived up to its reputation and proved difficult to find. Later, on our return, Richard and I met a woman who makes the climb to Finger every year. Her preferred route ascends from the west side of Brainerd, but the start is obscured by pines and brush. The difficulty of finding this route was to cause me problems on the climb day.

Brainerd Lake is green, but Finger is more aqua, colored by the silt of the Middle Palisade Glacier. Many climbers start their climb at Finger Lake, but I figured I needed the head start since I am quite slow. Traversing the west side of Finger with only a day pack is not too difficult; with a full pack it is more of a challenge.

Obstacles include some talus and a short cliff that plunges about 15 feet into the lake. After one reaches the inlet at the south end of the lake, one must then chug up 450 feet of talus in a narrow chute to reach the tarn.

On climb day the alarm went off at 4:30 a.m. Matt, my guide, was supposed to arrive at 5 a.m. He did not arrive at the predawn hour. 5:30: no guide. 6 a.m., nada. I was getting very sad, on the verge of crying. After all, this climb was most likely my last hurrah. At 71 I no longer do technical climbing by myself, and I'm too slow to do it with any of my climbing friends.

At 6:40 a.m. I spotted a person skirting the lake shore 500' below. It turned out to be Matt. When he arrived about 7 a.m., he explained he had spent 3 hours trying to find the way up to Finger from Brainerd Lake in the dark.

At 7:30 a.m. Matt and I left camp scrambling over talus and glacial moraine for 1300' to the start of the climb, avoiding the Middle Palisade glacier entirely. We stashed our unused ice axes and crampons, roped up and began to climb on the brown/red rock at the end of the medial moraine.

The first two hundred feet or so consists of very steep and loose red and white rock. There is a wall on the right as one ascends. Some of the handholds are sound, and some come loose, including a 3-foot flake, which dislodged when I tested it. Beyond that crumbly beginning, however, the rock is solid and the climbing heavenly: sound rock, bucket handholds and footholds for 1500 feet. What can I say, FUN, FUN, FUN. The joys of solid rock and spectacular vistas are exhilarating.



The joy of climbing! Debbie on ledge during climb



This is what Richard could see with his telephoto lens. Compare to the previous photo!

We reached the summit, which contains one of the old cast aluminum Sierra Club register boxes, at 2 p.m. Can you believe I dropped what I thought was the only good pen in the register? It was a long way down. Finally I found a working Sharpie and signed in. Due to the late hour, we started down soon after.

We had about 2800' to descend to get back to camp. I was tired. My back and knees were telling me I wasn't 40 anymore.



Here I am on the summit

When we reached the moraine, I was spent. It was starting to get dark. All day I had had only brief stops and little food. I forced myself to eat a food bar. Yuck.

With only 300 feet of talus to descend to camp, it was very dark. We turned on our headlamps. From below there was a flashing light. Soon Richard arrived with hot miso soup, trekking poles, and medical supplies should they be needed. Despite the fact both Matt and I carried first aid kits, seeing Richard was a big morale boost.

Together the three of us returned to camp arriving at 9:30 p.m. By 10, after having soup and some food, Matt left for the trailhead. I fell into a deep sleep, which lasted most of the next day with brief awake periods for Advil and food. The day after there were extremely high winds (I estimated 50 mph) which almost collapsed our tent. With difficulty we packed up and hiked back down to Finger Lake. On the way we spotted an

American pika and its abundant haystack stashed under a rock to protect next winter's food from the high winds. From there it was a short hike back to the trailhead the next day.

Elected Officials

Chair

Terry Cline: terry_cline@yahoo.com

Vice Chair and Trip Scheduler

Rakesh Ranjan: rakesh.lists@gmail.com

Treasurer and Membership Roster (address changes)

Yoni Novat: ynovat@gmail.com

Publicity Committee Positions

Scree Editor

Judy Molland / screeditor@gmail.com

PCS World Wide Web Publisher

Joe Baker/ pcs@joebaker.us

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 Thursday, October 23. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month

