



## Next Meeting

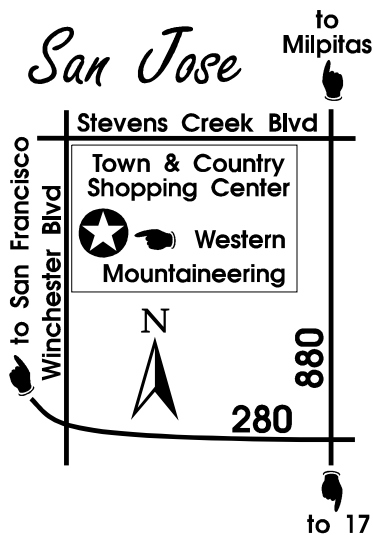
**Date:** Tuesday 12 Mar 1996

**Time:** 8:00 pm

**Program:** Babes In The Wood

Think mountaineering is a macho sport? Think again! Come see a short and sweet slide presentation on the perils and pleasures of these (and other) bold and beautiful mountaineers.

– Phyllis Olrich and Debbie Benham



**Location:** Western Mountaineering  
Town & Country Village, San Jose

## Advance Schedule

Please do not contact the leaders to sign up for trips listed here. Most leaders will not accept signups until the trip is formally announced with OFFICIAL/PRIVATE TRIP designation from the PCS Scheduler.

Contact Roger Crawley (the new PCS Scheduler - see back page) to add your trip to this list, or if the details are wrong!

Date	Destination	Leaders
<b>MAY</b>		
4-5	Smith and Crag (C3)	Bob Suzuki & Steve Eckert
18-19	Mt. Tallac (Beginner trip)	Aaron Schuman
25-27	Mt. Shasta (Hotlum/Bolam)	George Van Gorden
25-27	Cherry Creek Canyon (Hike?)	Kate Ingvaldstad
<b>JUNE</b>		
1-2	Navigation Field Trip	Noreen Ford & Debbie Benham
8-9	Palmer	Siamak Navid
15-16	Matterhorn Peak	Aaron Schuman
16-19	Mt. Shasta (Hotlum Glacier Sun-Wed)	George Van Gorden
21-23	Mt. Williamson	Phyllis Olrich
29-30	Mt. Agassiz	Debbie Benham
29-30	Grand Canyon of the Tuolumne	Charles Schafer
30-7	Arrow Peak, etc.	Debbie Bulger
<b>JULY</b>		
4-7	Mt. Ansel Adams	Kai Wiedman
4-7	North Pal (U-notch) or Gabb/Hilgard	Peter Maxwell
4-7	Red & Black Kaweah	Paul Magliocco
12-14	Mt. Winchell (C3)	Debbie Benham & Joe Coha
13-14	Virginia & Twin Peaks (C3)	Jim Ramaker
20-21	Mt. Julius Ceasar	Debbie Benham & Phyllis Olrich
20-21	Gale, Sing	Warren Storkman
27-28	Mts. Mills and Abbot (C3)	John Ingvaldstad
27-4	Great Western Divide (C3)	Kelly Maas
<b>AUGUST</b>		
3-4	Mts. Morrison & Laurel	Phyllis Olrich
17-18	Mt. Russell	John Ingvaldstad
17-19	Mts. Darwin & Mendel	Bob Suzuki & Charles Schafer
22-25	Devils Crags & Wheel	Cecil and Paul Magliocco
29-2	Thunder, Deerhorn, etc	Cecil Magliocco & David Ress
31-2	North Pal (U-notch) or Gabb/Hilgard	Peter Maxwell
31-2	Mokelumne River Canyon	John Ingvaldstad
31-2	Yosemite Valley Car Camp	Warren Storkman
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>		
7-8	Tuolumne Meadows car camp	Cecil Magliocco & Aaron Schuman
14-15	Dana Couloir (Ice)	George Van Gorden
13-15	Mt. Clarence King	Charles Schafer
20-22	Mt. Whitney Portal Area (TBD)	Debbie Benham
20-22	Whorl Mtn. and Virginia Peak (C4)	Bob Suzuki and Debbie Bulger
27-29	Vandever, Florence, Sawtooth	Aaron Schuman
<b>OCTOBER</b>		
4-6	Madera & Red Top	Debbie Benham & Judith Dean
12-13	Yosemite Valley car camp	Cecil Magliocco
12-13	Tenaya Canyon (part of above trip)	David Harris & Bob Suzuki

## Official (PCS) Trips

PCS trips must be submitted through the Scheduler (see back cover for details). Trips not submitted to the Scheduler will be listed as **PRIVATE**, without recourse.

### Ohlone Wilderness

Peak: Rose Peak Class 1 - 3,817'  
Date: Apr 6 Sat  
Leader: Vreni Rau 510-583-5578  
Leader: Cecil Magliocco 408-358-1168  
pmag@ix.netcom.com

Carpets of wildflowers are promised along the one-way 20 mile hike from Livermore to Sunol. 4000+ feet of gain. Call leaders for meeting place and carpool information.

### Will You Sing, Gale?

Peak: Gale, Sing Class 2  
Dates: Jul 20-21  
Map: Merced Peak 15 min Quad  
Leader: Warren Storkman 415-493-8959  
Dstorkman@aol.com

We go over Chiquito Pass in Southern Yosemite Park. Call leader for more information.

## Why Did I Quit Mountaineering?

1/6/96, high camp, 16,000 ft, Humbolt peak, Venezuela: It was just after four days of alpine style hell when I found myself standing on the summit. It was the greatest joy, the most intense rush, the justification for my efforts; or so I thought. There was something different this time. I was being hunted by fears and guilt; the fear of not being in control of my life, of being at the mercy of the conditions; the guilt of being part of such a selfish act: mountaineering.

The summit did not feel the same. I saw the excitement in my partner eyes, I saw the summit rush going through his face. But such excitement could not be seen in my eyes; something had changed. I realized that every time I summited a peak, every time I took part on an expedition, It was only myself who would feel the pleasure of summiting; the rush that justified all the risks. But what about those affected by the risks but would never feel such rush? I was thinking about them this time. I could not stop thinking about the people that I would leave behind if something wrong were to happen. I saw the image of my wife and my daughter crying saying good bye, not knowing if I would come back; the images of every one who said take care and return alive! I never thought about them while in the summit, but they were there, praying for me. They were never part of my decision to climb, but were

passively waiting for my return, waiting to hear me talk about a wonderful feeling that you can only experience on the summit, waiting to hear my voice which would end their distress.

And after many years I quit mountaineering. There is so much more in my life than summits, so much more to fight for, so much more to love. And even though the mountains are there to be climbed, I'm no longer the one to do it. One day I did it to appreciate life, today I quit because I do.

*– The joy of challenge remains with me every time I go rock climbing to any climbing area; where I'm in control of the degree of danger of every climb, where such danger is determined by my experience and ability to follow safety procedures and rules, where my style defines how dangerous the sport can be, where I feel safe! But such feeling of safety and security disappeared every time I come mountaineering, I feel at the mercy of the environment, I feel like a string puppet of nature. A Puppet that, against all common sense, is challenging its puppeteer. Nestor Lopez*

*NOTE: Lopez' report was taken from the rec.climbing newsgroup, and is the second in a series of Scree articles intended to provoke thought on the backcountry. These articles are more emotional than the normal "got up 7am, summited noon" reports. The Editor neither agrees nor disagrees with the thoughts presented in this series, but would appreciate feedback on the concept.*

## Mt. Pilatus

"If you wish to extend your field of vision, cast your glance roundabout, and gaze off far and wide at everything, there is no lack of lookouts and crags on which you may seem to yourself to be already living with your head in the clouds. If, on the other hand, you should prefer to contract your vision, you will gaze on meadows and verdant forests, and even enter them; or to narrow it still more, you will examine dim valleys, shadowy rocks, and darksome caverns. In truth, nowhere else is such great variety found in such small compass as in the mountains, in which one may, in a single day, behold and enter upon the four seasons of the year—summer, autumn, spring, and winter. In addition, from the highest ridge of mountains, the whole dome of our sky will lie boldly open to your gaze, and the very rising and setting of the constellations you will easily behold without any hindrance, while you will observe the sun setting far later and likewise rising far earlier."

*Konrad von Gesner, Swiss naturalist, describing his 1555 ascent. (Source: The Discoverers, a book by Daniel Boorstin)*

# The Request Page

## Request for Ice Partners

For some time I've been looking for climbing partners to start some technical (or semi-technical) snow/ice climbing in the Sierra. I am in Colfax (on your way to Tahoe), but am certainly willing to drive from Shasta to Olancha to meet partners. I'm a class 3 climber now, but am tiring of "the slog" and ready to do some rope work. If anyone who knows the score is interested in hooking up with an eager belay slave, or if anyone wants to join me on the learning curve, give me a call at (916) 346-7279, or E-mail me. Would like to do some glacier work on Shasta in the spring, and would also like to just go out for a weekend to practice boot-ax belay, pro placement, etc. I have ice screws, pickets, etc.

– Christian  
firstcrow@aol.com

## Request for Ranier Partners

I am interested in climbing Mt. Rainier following the 'regular' route of Camp Muir to Ingraham Glacier from June 15-19th.

– Debbie Benham  
415/964-0558  
<dmbenham@aol.com.>

## He Sells Snowshoes by the Seashore

I have like-new 30" Tubbs snowshoes for sale or will consider trade for 25".

– Rich Calliger  
<calliger@infolane.com>

## Scree and Email Broadcast Archives (and other files) on the Web

Try these two URLs for a supplement to the normal PCS Web Pages - they contain many files like the SPS Peaks List and Ranger Station contact info, plus fuel names for countries around the world, Sierra Club ByLaws, and all messages that have gone out over several different email lists. These archives are available via FTP or the WWW:

ftp://ftp.netcom.com/pub/ec/eckert/broadcast  
ftp://ftp.netcom.com/pub/ec/eckert/SierraClubArchives

And don't forget the more fully developed PCS Web Page  
<http://reality.sgi.com/csp/pcs/index.html>

## WANT UTM 4 GPS

Does anyone have a data file that contains UTM coordinates for significant Sierra Peaks (e.g. those on SPS list or those in Secor's book)? Such a list would be very handy for peak climbers with GPS receivers. Please post the file or where it can be found. Thanks.

– Richard Vassar  
<vassar\_richard@mm2.rdd.lmsc.lockheed.com>

*NOTE: If this information is available, the Editor will be happy to merge it with the PCS's version of the SPS Peaks list, and include it in the online archives and the official PCS Binders.*

## Here's The Poop on Pieps

Tim Hult found a great price on Pieps avalanche transceivers in Colorado. He and I have already mail ordered ours. Here's the info from Tim: Wilderness Sports in Dillon Colorado is selling the Pieps 457 avalanche transceiver for \$200. With Optifinder add approx \$30. This is about the lowest cost you will find except those selling them at a loss. They do mail order at the cost of \$5. Their address is:

Wilderness Sports  
PO Box 131 Summit Place  
Dillon, CO 80435  
970-468-5687

– Butch Suits

## Great Western and Kings-Kern Divide Climb-o-Rama Survey

A number of people expressed interest in this Jul 27 through Aug 4 climb at the trip planning meeting, so I want to gauge interest from the rest of the PCS. The highest priority (and most remote) peaks are Milestone, Table, Thunder and Midway. We'll fit in as many other climbs as we can, choosing from Genevra, Jordan, Ericsson, Stanford and Caltech. Tyndall is also a possibility. We'll make this as much a basecamp trip as possible, with a minimum of camp movements. The climbing is predominantly class 3, though a couple peaks have class 4 summit blocks, and there are a couple of class 2 peaks. Participants must be able to lug 9 days of food and gear over Shepherd's Pass. Private or official is TBD. Contact me if you're interested.

– Kelly Maas  
408-279-2054  
maas@idt.com

**Madness takes its toll.  
Please have exact change.**

## "Alaska without Denali" Slide Program Proposal

Perhaps the combination of

- ◆ slide shows about Denali, just Denali, and only Denali
- ◆ the inaccuracies of the TV series "Northern Exposure"
- ◆ my own experiences in Alaska

lead me to propose an idea which I considered at the December PCS potluck. With the nod from many people, I am assembling a small team of presenters on the subject of Alaska but without ascents of Mt. McKinley (a.k.a. Denali). Alaska is the largest state in the Union, yet we have numerous presentations on one geographic point.

Alaska is a huge state, and it's clearly home to many more mountains: Foracker and the rest of the Alaska Range, the Kachitna Spires, the Brooks Range and the Gates of the Arctic, and the sites of the mountain books by David Robert's \*Mountain of My Fear\* and \*Debroah: A Wilderness Narrative.\* Every year, on the Benson Hut work party trip, a woman from Santa Rosa named June spins very interesting tales hitchhiking airplane rides around Alaska (in real contrast to our drives). One Alaska guiding firm takes clients up unascended peaks for first ascents. Huge 8,000 ft. faces exist all over the place. Alaska is much more than one mountain.

The idea of this presentation differs from the usual PCS slide show. Rather than a single presenter covering the entire state of Alaska, we will have three or four presenters covering different areas of the State: the far North, the Pan Handle, where ever YOU want. That's the point: bring YOUR slides of Alaska; just don't bring Denali slides. The presentation style will have 3-4 people with 30-40 slides each on different areas, and if there is time, audience members are invited to show up to a dozen Alaska slides. Photos of Denali will be absolutely prohibited! Even as a back drop. No fair cheating!

This will be a two-projector presentation with a second projector having a map displayed in parallel to provide a context where the slide presentation is taking place. The emphasis is on geography rather than chronology, which I'll attempt to ring master.

Bring your best Alaska non-Denali slides: mountains, yeah, we will consider kayaking, culture, and other topics peripheral to mountains. Just show the diversity of the state. Don't delay, I expect to turn away at least 1-2 people (i.e., they will have to take pot luck). The location counts more than most topics.

The target is the September PCS slide show. We decided to do this to allow your newsletter editor (Steve) to go home and get his slides. So if you are interested: contact me for an audition and map fitting. Call Eugene Miya at 415-961-6772 or email <eugene@pioneer.arc.nasa.gov>.

- E. Miya

## Unofficial (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, not because they are endorsed by the PCS.

### Roundtop Roundup

Peak:	Roundtop	snow/ice - 10,600'
Dates:	Mar 16-17	Sat-Sun
Contact:	George Van Gorden	408-779-2320 (call before 9pm)

Meet at 11am Saturday at Carson Pass. Bring skis or snowshoes. We will camp at Winnumucca Lake. Ice axe and crampons required for last 200'.

### Williamson, By George

Peak:	Mt Williamson	snow/ice - 14,375'
Dates:	April 19-21	Fri-Sun
Contact:	Tony Cruz	409-944-2003 CRUZ@idt.com

It is my intent to climb Mt. Williamson, the second highest peak in the Sierra. This will be my second attempt via the George Creek route, which is technically easy but arduous. If the April 96 attempt fails, then I will try again later in Spring or early summer via Shepherd pass (the George Creek access is closed during most of the year). I am looking for a few good PCRers to join me for a "classic" of the Sierra. The terrain is rated class 2 but is very tough. Knowledge and use of ice axe and crampons will be required. The first day will involve hiking 10 miles from 6,000 plus feet to 11,200.

Last year 9 PCSers including myself attempted this climb in April or May. We made it to only a little over 9,000 feet on the first day, far short of our goal of 11K. The next day we were nearly blown off the mountain during a valiant summit attempt and suffered a white out. No one got close to the peak. In order to insure success this time, we need to start the George Creek at the crack of dawn. We need to camp high, around 11,000 feet and pitch our tents such that they will not be blown away, since they will be exposed wind. We will need to carry full winter gear, while packing as lightly as is prudent.

**We should be careful to get out of an experience only the wisdom that is in it - and stop there; lest we be like the cat that sits down on a hot stove-lid. She will never sit down on a hot stove-lid again, and that is well; but also she will never sit down on a cold one anymore.**  
- Mark Twain

## Being DeMuir

Larry Baugher and I left San Jose about 3 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 8 1995 and drove to Lone Pine the long way -- 5 to 58 to 14 to 395. We stopped at the Lone Pine ranger station to get a self-issue permit and read about trail conditions. There was a notice warning climbers to beware of the mountaineer's route, recommending the use of an ice ax and warning about gravel on ice. We arrived at Whitney Portal (8,400 feet) a little before midnight.

Our hike up the Whitney trail began at 7:30 a.m. on Saturday. Right from the beginning, there were patches of fresh snow on the trail a fraction of an inch deep. There were a few large patches of ice on the trail that required care to cross. Mirror Lake was already frozen. In fact all the high lakes were at least mostly frozen. We arrived at the high camp (12,040 feet) near Consultation Lake in the early afternoon. We moved slowly because our heavy packs contained full winter and rock climbing gear.

At 7 a.m. on Sunday we began our climb of Mt. Muir. We had gotten several reports about this peak -- some people said it was a piece of cake and some said it was class four. We took no chances and carried slings, carabiners, harnesses and a 160 foot 11 mm rope, which proved to be too much gear! A few minutes from camp, we started our march up the seemingly endless switchbacks. One of my guide books says there are 95. A few minutes later we crossed the dynamited section found that the wire fence provided needed security since this entire section was covered with slippery ice.

A fraction of a mile beyond the trail crest, we spotted the cairn which marks the spot to begin the ascent of Muir. Muir appears as the tallest of the pinnacles en route to Whitney, making this cairn unnecessary. Most of the climb was a very short and easy class 2 scramble. The final hundred feet or so were more nearly vertical and required three difficult and exposed class 3 moves. On the way down, there was one move in which I needed Larry's help to mantle down and find the proper hold for my boot. It took us about an hour to make the climb from the trail and back. In order to insure an early return, we avoided the temptation to finish the trail, which ends on the top of Mt. Whitney.

After returning to camp, we quickly packed and hiked out, making it back to our van after dark. We slept at Whitney Portal and woke up early Monday morning to a light rain. The Sierras were covered with clouds by then and we were convinced that we had barely beaten out the winter storms. This was my second climb with Larry and our second successful ascent of a 14'er (last summer we climbed Split).

– Tony Cruz

## North by North Peak

There are three spectacular couloirs on the northern side of North Peak. On the first weekend in October 1995, Bob Spies and I drove to Saddlebag Lake with the intention of climbing the standard, right-most couloir. We left the parking lot at 7:30 am on Saturday. On the hike in we met three guys who had just come off the mountain. They told us that we could easily third class the route.

We began climbing around noontime and sure enough, there was no need to rope up. The moderate angle - 60 degrees - and consolidated snow made this climb a straightforward proposition. At the top of the couloir we left our day packs and scrambled up third class rock to the summit. We reached the summit at 2:30 pm.

The weather was beautiful and we could see for miles in every direction. After retrieving our packs we hiked down scree slopes on the south side of the mountain. We arrived back at the parking lot at 6 pm.

– Brian Boyle

**Lazlo's Chinese Relativity Axiom: No matter how magnificent your triumphs or how tragic your defeats, approximately five billion Chinese could not care less.**

## Issue of the Month Page

There have been several comments that the meetings were too much about business and too little about climbing, so the officers have tentatively endorsed this experiment in distributed democracy!

Each month, this page will raise issues of concern to the Officers, and give the Members a chance to voice their opinions. The results will be tallied and reported here the next month. It is hoped that this pre-meeting feedback can help us all think the issues through and either reach a consensus or at least prepare for a quick discussion.

Topics for this column will normally be selected by the PCS Chair, and the proponent of an idea will be asked to submit the writeup. Since we are trying to reach consensus, it is in the proponent's interest to present both sides of the issue, or to find someone else to write a counterpoint response.

This month's topics were selected and written up by the Editor (that's right, blame me) after discussion with the Officers. If you have suggestions for next month, please contact the Chair as shown on the back page.

**INSTRUCTIONS: Answer the numbered questions, either on a copy of this page or via email, and send your response to the Editor as indicated on the back page. Please include your name so we know that you are a PCS Member. This is a survey, not a ballot!**

## Subscription Fees

We are currently spending around \$9 per year per subscriber to produce the hardcopy version of the Scree. The subscription fees are \$12. Escree subscribers pay no fees, because their version of the newsletter costs nothing to produce or distribute, while the hardcopy Scree must be printed, stapled, and mailed.

The PCS has held fund raisers in the past (for operating expenses and items such as the portable screen used at meetings), but it has also used subscription fees for purchases such as the slide projector last year. This year there have been no expenses other than producing the hardcopy version of the Scree, so our surplus is rising.

1. Should the PCS use subscription fees ONLY for printing the newsletter, and hold fund raisers or ask for additional donations for all other expenses? Circle ONE: YES / NO
2. Should the PCS print a better quality newsletter than the current Scree with photos and offset printing, or should we charge less for subscriptions and keep using a cheap printer like this issue? Circle ONE: BETTER / CHEAPER
3. What kind of fund raisers would you suggest? (if any)

## What are the goals of the PCS?

The last time I checked, we had Scree circulation of 170 hardcopy and 180 email, with some overlap (but certainly less than 40% in my estimate). We've seen a genuine jump in newsletter circulation for the first time anyone can remember, and official membership in the PCS has risen by significant numbers also. There have been gradual changes in circulation before, but never 40% in the span of 6 months (from 200 to an estimated 280). It's possible that most of the people receiving the Scree have never been to a meeting, and we need to think about what we want to do with those new people and all that new energy.

Here is what one person had to say on the subject. You may disagree, but this is a starting point for discussion:

"I would like the PCS to have more trips than it does now. I would like there to be more trips in spring and fall, more treks deep into the backcountry, more variety in terrain, conditions, and equipment. I would not like an increase in number of trips to be offset by a reduction in the size of parties. All of these transitions are equally important: outsider -> member -> climber -> leader-> expert. The club will thrive only if we facilitate every one of these transitions."

1. Should we measure success by the number of trips lead, or number of people who summit on those trips, or the number of subscribers, or the number of members? Enter your proposed measure of success here (does not need to be one of the choices above, but we don't want an essay answer to this question):

2. Regardless of your favorite measure of success, is "more" also "better"? Is there an ideal size for the PCS?

Circle ONE: The PCS should SHRINK / STAY / GROW

3. Should we try to increase participation within our existing membership, or try to bring in new people?

Circle ONE: Increase EXISTING / NEW / BOTH / NEITHER

4. Should we have a training program to advance existing members or to attract new and possibly unskilled people?

Circle ONE: Train EXISTING / NEW / BOTH / NEITHER

## Publicity Committee Charter

A charter for the Publicity Committee will be submitted as a proposed operating rule at the next PCS meeting. The bylaws call for a vote at a meeting prior to publication of operating rules, so you must come to the March meeting if you want to get in on the first round of discussions. If approved for publication by the people at that meeting, it will be published in the April Scree and voted on at the April meeting.

– Editor

## "Lick"-ity Split

Well folks, the sight of all that white in the hills (4200') and 1 hr away was just too much for a couple of us not to get in some serious training and check out the Sierra Cement Coming to The Bay Area. The plans we had been making for 2 days came together with an opportune blanketing of the east hills on Sunday morning, 2/25/96.

Loading up the heavy packs (40 lb.) for a fine 6 AM alpine start, we first headed to Grant Ranch just below Mt Hamilton/Lick observatory. Alas, the gendarmes were 5 miles down the road before Grant Ranch in force to warn us off. We attempted a cross-country round-about skirting maneuver but got caught as the foliage was not sufficient to hide us, and got sent out again with the police and cal-trans laughing and REALLY admiring our persistence... good humor was enjoyed however. (The road was "under repair" we were told as we got fleeting glimpses of miscreant snow just yards away!) Snow level was about 1200 feet and later descended to 500'.

So, onward south we went, not to be deterred from our goal of frolicking in the white stuff so near yet so far! After a short drive we ended up at Henry Coe park, most of it high acreage (67000 acres total) gleaming beautifully in the sunrise as if TONS of diamonds were scattered about—the pine trees boughs were perfectly draped and carpeted with an almost fluorescent covering of snow and ice- almost so perfect to bring a tear to my eyes!

Most of the previous hour was spent creeping up the snow and black-ice (29F!) (we wondered "Why was this road not "under repair" as well"??!!) The creeping worked well as we debated whether or not to stop and put on chains, but we made it safely if not shakily to 2900' at the park/ranger hq. where every building (The circa 1800's buildings still stand/restored) and sign post and tall blades of grass blanketed in snow like something simultaneously out of Norman Rockwell and Grimm's fairy tales. It was a sight to behold as we strapped on our packs to summit up another few hundred feet.

We "bagged" 4 peaklets and several canyons for a total gain of 5900' and 14 miles by the end of the day. We had a fantasy lunch with a rain-fly "tent" and sleeping bag arrangement while the hail and snow flew, sometimes heavily, for 40 minutes at noon. No serious wind more than 5-10 mph. The Madrones were especially glistening as the snow melted and their dark wood seemed to glow and become even more ethereal.

On the way back down we were met with more hail and snow though 7PM as the sun descended, the temp being then at 36F the road was more dry and much safer encountering only small remaining patches of black ice. All in all quite it was a refreshing and immensely enjoyable and seriously relaxing and different day in the SF bay!

– Rich Calliger

## Palmer Dials Up Pyramid

On the weekend of 13/14th Jan 96, seven PCS'ers climbed Pyramid Peak (9983 ft) in the Desolation Wilderness in the western Sierra with Leader Palmer Dyal, Co-leader Chris Kramer, and trip members Aaron Schuman, Arun Mahajan, Scott Krieder, George Van Gordon, and Richard Verrow.

Most of us drove from the Bay Area in the wee hours of Saturday morning to meet at 9 am at the parking lot for the Horse Tail Falls on the north side of Hwy 50 past Twin Bridges. Aaron and George were to go on George's trip to Roundtop the same weekend, but decided to join us instead. We started off at 9.15 am, there was almost no snow on the earlier portion of the trail, which was just as good. The terrain was rocky, but not slippery, and after a strenuous section, we hit a lot of brush. There we got our first snow, I figure it was about 7000 ft elevation then. The sparse snow did not cover the dense manzanita brush cover (and some other unknown thorny brush type), so we had a hard time negotiating our way through it. We had great views of the Horsetail Falls to our right. Using his really fancy GPS, Palmer steered us in the right direction through the brush. We crossed a small forest, and then all the terrain was snow covered. It must have been 7500 ft then.

The snow was not really soft, so we could manage without snowshoes. We had initially planned to camp at the banks of a pond at about 8100 ft, but since trudging through the snow with heavy packs was hard business, we decided to camp a mile before that spot. Meanwhile Aaron and Palmer kept us all in thrall with their knowledge of the workings of the GPS, the general theory of relativity and other such weighty matters afflicting the world of physics till we reached our modified camp site.

This place was in a flattish section and in the trees, so we did have some protection from the wind. The snow was packed enough to obviate the need to make snow caves, so we just flattened the snow and pitched tents. Chris was brave enough to plan to sleep in his super-duper sleeping bag and not get a tent. It was about 3 pm then, we strolled around, Aaron and Chris made a small trip to a hill in the foreground. Pyramid Peak was in full view. The discussions on Relativity continued through dusk, but by 7 pm everybody was back in their tents and silence had softly surged back.

The next day we started for the summit in a severely-non-Alpine-style, i.e at 8.20 am! George led the push. This time we were in snow shoes. We had a break a mile later after some steep climbing. We then started for the final ridge, but soon discovered that snowshoes were not enough. It was steep and hard, little icy in spots, so we switched to crampons. Ice axes were not really necessary, ski poles were enough. George and Rich got to the summit first and soon the rest made it. We had glorious views all around and we did the usual summit photo thing, but after about 30 mins or so, the cold winds drove us down. It had taken us 2 hrs and 40 mins to get to the summit from the camp site. It took us 1 hr 25 mins to get back to the tents. We packed up and started descending at 2 pm. We were apprehensive about the manzanita brush slowing us down, but despite that, we were back to the cars in just about 1.5 hrs, at 3.30. 2 people went home directly, the rest gathered for a filling dinner at the Buttercup Pantry, a pleasantly non-fat-free name as any, in Placerville.

All in all, it was a very nice trip, especially for some of us who were being introduced to winter climbing and camping. We couldn't have had better weather, a better group, a better conversation nor better leadership.

– Arun Mahajan

## Permit Problems

*NOTE: The Editor called the Mt Whitney ranger last week, and he indicated that the rules for issuing permits will not be finalized until sometime in March, with no permits being issued until sometime in April. You can send a SASE to PO Box 8 in Lone Pine if you want to be notified when they decide what they are doing. Please keep the Editor up to date as you get permits this year! Here is information I have received to date...*

*Also, Updated information regarding the Mt Whitney Special Zone permit is said to be available on the John Muir Trail Page at:*

*<http://www.gorp.com/pcta/jmt.htm> including a copy of a NPS memo from the Sequoia/Kings District Ranger to their visitor information desks.*

### **MT. WHITNEY AREA:**

Day hikers on the Whitney trail will need a permit if they are traveling beyond Lone Pine Lake. A new zone created around Mt. Whitney will require a special stamp which will be attached to the permits to allow hikers to enter it. Hikers travelling to the Whitney Zone can obtain the special stamp along with their wilderness permit regardless of their entry point even if they are entering from another forest or National Park.

For further information call the Mt. Whitney Ranger Station at (619)876-6200 M-F 8-4:30.

### **YOSEMITE TRAILHEADS:**

These are 50% reservable and 50% first-come, first-served. Permits need to be picked up at established permit stations. Reservations can be made 24 weeks in advance and there is a \$3 per person fee. To make a reservation by telephone, call (209)372-0740; or write "Wilderness Permit, Wilderness Permit Center, P.O. Box 545, Yosemite, CA 95389.

### **YOSEMITE CAMPGROUNDS:**

Call (800) 436-7275, Destinet, for reservations. On Feb. 15, reservations can be made through July 14. On March 15, reservations can be made through Aug. 14, etc.

### **INYO NATIONAL FOREST TRAILHEADS:**

Beginning April 1, reservations can be made for all trailheads. There is a reservation fee (?) and quotas will be 100% reservable. Unreserved permits will be available the day before and the day of a trip at designated Inyo National Forest offices. For complete information ASAP, send a SASE to "Wilderness Permit", Mt. Whitney Ranger Station, P.O. Box 8, Lone Pine, CA 93545.

*– Cecil Magliocco*

## National Park Memo

*NOTE: Below is some information taken from the rec.backcountry newsgroup, said to be from the JMT web page mentioned above. It LOOKS official... and there are email addresses, names, and phone numbers of rangers who are inviting your comment. Speak now or forever hold your peace.*

Here is a copy of the NPS memo National Park Service Memo Regarding Mt Whitney Zone Permit. The following memo was distributed to the information desks in Sequoia Kings National Park. The memo is intended for NP employees to provide information to the public. This memo was provided by Robert Moore, The S/KNP Wilderness Coordinator.

*– brick@ix.netcom.com*

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Date: January 24, 1996  
To: Sequoia and Kings Canyon Info Desks  
From: Sequoia District Ranger  
Subject: Talking Points–Mt. Whitney

Attached is information about the Mt Whitney areas, signed by the superintendent. The intent is to identify a strategy to collect data, recognize resource impacts, and design a use system to mitigate the impact of very heavy visitation in the Mt Whitney area. This is a joint project between Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park and the Inyo National Forest. To help you and the visitors understand where we are going, I have listed some "talking points" that will answer some of the questions visitors may have regarding the "Mt Whitney special use zone."

#### ◆ Where is the Mt. Whitney Zone?

This is the roughly a 3 square mile area from just west of Whitney Portal to the summit of Mt Whitney and west to Timberline Lake near Crabtree.

This area is managed as wilderness to the east by the Inyo National Forest and to the west by Sequoia National Park

#### ◆ What will this plan do?

This plan will cap use at current levels.

#### ◆ When will this plan be implemented?

Summer, 1996

#### ◆ Who will be required to have a special permit to hike to the summit of Mount Whitney?

Everyone. Backpackers must still obtain a wilderness permit. Entry into this zone will require a visa type stamp added to that permit. The big change is that day hikers in route to the summit of Mt Whitney will be required to have a permit. Day use around Whitney Portal and up to Lone Pine Lake, 2.5 mile beyond the Whitney Portal trailhead, will not require a permit.

- ◆ Where can we obtain a permit?

Wilderness permits for backpackers entering trails on the west side of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National parks will be issued at all of the existing stations. Permit for day users and backpackers entering from the east will be issued from a USFS contractor beginning April 1 1996.

- ◆ What about the backpacker on the PCT who is unsure of what specific date they will arrive to climb Mt Whitney?

Pacific Crest, John Muir, and High Sierra trail hikers will be able to secure a stamp from the issuing station when they obtain their backcountry permit that allow entry into the Whitney Zone. This stamp permits flexibility for these hikers in their entry date.

- ◆ Is this meant to decrease use?

No. It is meant to determine current use levels and hold use there. Use figures over the past years indicate a substantial increase in the number of day users. Today, an estimated 40,000 users enter this area annually.

There is already a ceiling on overnight backpacking permits. This for the first time will place a ceiling on day use at current levels.

- ◆ How will quotas be established?

Existing use will be counted and quotas will be based on past use.

- ◆ Will there be extra fees?

There will be a charge for permits issued from the Inyo National Forest.

There will be no charge for the stamp issued with the permit from trailheads on the west side of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks.

- ◆ Will day permits be reservable?

Yes, through the Inyo National Forest contractor.

- ◆ What happens if someone enters the special use zone without a permit?

They would be cited for a violation of regulations the same as a backpacker without a permit.

- ◆ What about foreign traveler and those unfamiliar with the system?

Not everyone who wants to spontaneously include Mt Whitney as a side trip will be able to.

- ◆ Will use be reduced in the future?

We really don't know. We will continue to monitor impacts to resources and social conditions, our ability to manage and administer use, impacts to local communities and effects on other wilderness areas before making any decisions on decreasing or increasing use.

- ◆ I don't like this. How can I influence this decision, or appeal it?

This is an administrative decision made by the Superintendent of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and the Forest Supervisor for Inyo National Forest. Since the landscape is not being altered nor are we making changes that will increase or decrease use this action is not subject to NEPA regulations or appeal. However the Park Superintendent and the forest Supervisor do want to know how the public feels about our management of the wilderness. It is our charge to be good stewards of these resources and serve the public.

- ◆ How can I help?

Ask visitors to practice a strong wilderness ethic: Leave No Trace. Camp on sites already impacted. Pack out all waste. Be respectful of others. Suggest that those entering the areas ascend Mt. Whitney in the shoulder seasons. Some days in July through September are extremely busy with 400 to 600 visitors on the trail per day.

Please pass my name on to wilderness users who may wish to discuss this further. We are looking for the best means of managing this wilderness area so feedback is appreciated. I will be unable to personally respond to great volumes of questions, but I will attempt to assimilate concerns and be proactive with solutions.

—Tom Tschohl, District Ranger  
Tom\_Tschohl@NPS.GOV

—Ralph Moore, Wilderness Coordinator  
Ralph\_Moore@NPS.GOV

209-565-3708

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks  
Three River, CA 93271-9700

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**Civilization has so cluttered [the] elemental man-earth relation with gadgets and middlemen that awareness of it is growing dim. We fancy that industry supports us, forgetting what supports industry. Ability to see the cultural value of wilderness boils down, in the last analysis, to a question of intellectual humility. . . . It is only the scholar who understands why the raw wilderness gives definition and meaning to the human enterprise.**

**-Aldo Leopold**

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**Scree** is the monthly journal of the Peak Climbing Section of the Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter. Subscriptions are \$12/year. 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 PCS email broadcast, you have a free **EScree** subscription. Send Email to <listserv@netcom.com> for additions or removals from the broadcast (the message is "subscribe sc-pcs" or "unsubscribe sc-pcs"). EScree-only subscribers must contact the Treasurer to become voting PCS members at no charge.

## 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. A rope may be used.

Class 4: Requires rope belays.

Class 5: Technical rock climbing.

## In Upcoming Issues:

(if you sent something that is not here, please send it again)

Publicity Committee Charter

Backcountry Food Storage Box Locations (trip planner!)

At Rest Above the Atacama (death on Ojos del Salado)

Trip Reports: Mt. Paegun-dae, Virgin, Telescope, Russell

World's 60 Highest Mountains

Searching for Small Worlds to Conquer

Going Light When Backpacking

**Deadline for submissions to the next Scree is 3/25/96. Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month.**

Peak Climbing Section, 789 Daffodil Way, San Jose CA 95117



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