



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

## Next General Meeting

**Date:** Tuesday, August 11, 1998

**Time:** 8:00 PM

**Program:** Treks in Patagonia

The program will be a slide show of separate treks in Patagonia by Tim Hult, Kelly Maas, Landa Robillard, and Roger Crawley. See the sensational scenery of Towers del Paine and Fitzroy National Parks in Chile and Argentina, and Iguazu Falls.

**Location:** The North Face

217 Alma Street in Palo Alto, just north of the CalTrain station go North and turn right into the Town & Country



**Deadline for submissions to the next Scree is Sunday 8/23/98. Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month.**

## Navigation Class

**Date:** Tuesday September 1, 7 to 10 PM

**Place:** Peninsula Conversation Center, Palo Alto

**Instructors:** Kelly Maas (408) 279-2054 [maas@idt.com](mailto:maas@idt.com)  
Ron Karpel

Navigation is one of those essential wilderness skills that too many of us leave to the trip leader. In this class we'll try to get everyone proficient with the basics of map and compass. I'm also planning a (not yet scheduled) weekend navigation outing to the Sierra, for which this class will be a prerequisite. Please call if you want to attend, so that we can get a head count in advance.

## Expectations on Trips

Recently a prominent PCS member sent out an E-mail message polling members on various issues that can come up during PCS trips. These include carpool payment rates, payment of damage to a vehicle on a trip, sharing and paying for expensive gear, arrival time at the trailhead, where to eat on the way, and determining the pace of the hike. These issues should be addressed by all of us and we need to have guidelines. From my perspective, PCS trips have all been positive experiences with congenial people. However, on a trip or in a carpool, differences of opinion can arise. If not handled properly, this can harm the camaraderie of the trip and possibly spill over into the entire section. In a future issue of the Scree, I will publish a list of these issues with various members' opinions.

• *Bob Bynum, Scree Editor*

## Official (PCS) Trips

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

### Mt. Irvine and others

**Peaks:** Mt. Irvine, Class 3  
**Trailhead:** Whitney Portal  
**Date:** August 7-9  
**Leader:** Chris Kramar 510-796-6651

The first day we hike to Meysan Lake. There is a possibility of climbing a peak on this day for those who are able. The second day climbs of Le Conte, Irvine, Mallory and McAdie (TBD) are possible. The third day we hike out.

### Seven Gables

Peaks: Seven Gables & more if time permits (Class 2)  
Dates: August 7 thru 9 Fri thru Sun  
Maps: Mt. Pinchot & Marion Peak 7.5i  
Leader: Charles Schafer (408) 324-6003 (w)  
charles.schafer@octel.com

This trip is to a fairly remote section of the Sierra, but it is a west side entry so it should be really scenic.. We will hike in from Florence Lake on Friday and set up camp beside Seven Gables. Saturday we will climb Seven Gables and traverse over to Gemini if it doesn't look to be too painful. Sunday we will hike out, with an optional climb of Mt. Senger if time permits.

There will be plenty of snow yet so if ice axes and crampons are required tis will not be an official trip. Advanced beginners are welcome, but it will be a relatively strenuous trip so you will need to be in pretty good shape.

### Great Western Divide Backpack

Peak: Milestone Mountain, 13,641', Class 3  
Dates: Aug. 15-22, 1998  
Map: Mt. Whitney  
Leader: Roger Crawley 650 321 8602,  
rcrawl@earthlink.net

From Cedar Grove in Sequoia Kings Canyon Nat'l Park we will hike the Bubbs Creek trail to our first camp at East Lake. Then we will crawl over the Kings Kern Divide via Millys Foot Pass. The following days we will move down the line of 13,600' peaks that form the Great Western divide. My goal is to climb 3 or 4 of em: Thunder Mtn, Table Mtn, Midway Mtn, and Milestone Mtn. They are all class 3 climbs. Permit for 6 persons.

### Rodgers Peak

Peak: Rodgers Peak (12,978') Class 2/3  
Dates: Fri, Aug 21, thru Sun, Aug. 23  
Leaders: Debbie Bulger (408) 457-1036  
Debbie Benham (650) 964-0558

This striking peak on the eastern border of Yosemite should offer spectacular views to both the east and west. After a long backpack in (roughly 16 miles) from the June Lakes Loop, Rush Creek trailhead, we will set up base camp near Rodgers Lakes. The exposed east ridge may be a challenge for strong newcomers. We plan to stay together. Sunday we pack out and drive home. Limited to 8.

### MT. Whitney & Muir

Peaks: Whitney & Muir, Class 3  
Trailhead: Whitney Portal  
Date: August 21-23  
Leader: Chris Kramar 510-796-6651

This will be a loop trip. The first day we will travel to Iceberg Lake. The next day we will take the Mountaineer's route to the top of Whitney, then top off Mt. Muir as we proceed back to our second night's camp via the walking trail. Third day we hike out.

### Johnny Get Your Goat

Peak: Goat Mountain; class 2-3, 12207'  
Dates: Aug 22-23, Sat-Sun  
Maps: Marion 15 min. or Marion & Sphinx 7.5 min.  
Leader: Aaron Schuman H 650-968-9184  
W 650-943-7532  
aaron\_schuman@yahoo.com

Details: <http://sj.znet.com/~cynthiam/goat.html>

Saturday, pack four steep miles up from Zumwalt Meadow (5035) in Kings Canyon, along Copper Creek, to our campsite at Upper Tent Meadow (8600). Sunday, hike two miles on trail to Granite Pass (10347), then follow the ridge for two miles to the summit (12207) of Goat Mountain. Enjoy stunning views of the sculpted stone of Cirque Crest and the unimaginable depths of Paradise Valley. This trip will be quite strenuous but only of moderate technical difficulty.

### Mt Silliman, Kids Trip

Peak: Mt. Silliman (11,188), Class 2  
Dates: August 28-31 Friday - Monday  
Map: Triple Divide Peak 7.5 min.  
Leader: Ron Karpel and contact  
(W)510-683-4668 X231; (H)650-594-0211  
ronny@luxsonor.com

Co-Leader: Dennis Rosman (H)650-595-8678

Grownup must be accompanied by children. This is primarily a backpacking trip with emphasis of making is fun for kids. We will start at Sunset Meadow in Sequoia NP first night at Rowel Meadow (short day), Second night at Ranger Lake, Third night at Twin Lake. On the third day, the trail from Ranger Lake to Twin Lake pass over Silliman Pass. We plan to drop our packs and follow the ridge line to the summit. We will keep the summit as a low priority goal and emphasize the hiking and having fun. We will exit at Lodgepole . We will need to setup a car shuttle for this trip.

### Florence Peak

Peaks: Florence Peak (12,432'), Class 2  
Vandever Mountain (11,947'), Class 1  
Dates: Sept 4-6th, Fri-Sun (3 days)  
Map: Mineral King USGS 7.5 min  
Leaders: Debbie Benham H 650-964-0558 (until 9 PM)  
dmbenham@aol.com  
Judith Dean H 650-854-9288 (until 9 PM)  
judith.dean@forsythe.stanford.edu

Join us for a lovely Labor Day stretch in beautiful Sequoia National Park! We'll hike into Franklin Lakes our first day, then climb two, very easy, non-technical peaks Saturday, then hike out and home on Sunday. Especially invited are those new to peak bagging with a bit of backpacking experience.

### McDuffie, Black Giant, & Charybdis

Peaks: McDuffie, Black Giant, & Charybdis (Class 3)  
Dates: September 4 thru 7, Fri thru Mon  
Maps: North Palisade, Mt. Thompson, Mt. Goddard 7.5'  
Leader: Charles Schafer (408) 324-6003 (w)  
charles.schafer@octel.com

If you've ever climbed to the top of Bishop Pass, looked off into the interior of the Sierra, and thought that those magnificent peaks on the horizon looked awfully appealing; then this trip is for you. Secor says the three peaks are easily day hiked from Helen Lake (at Muir Pass), so I want to give them a try from just west of Black Giant. We will hike in over Bishop Pass on Friday and set up camp near Black Giant. Saturday we will climb the three peaks (or just two, if that's all we can do). Sunday we will either climb McDuffie (if we didn't get it on Sat.) or go for something else in the neighborhood. Monday we will hike out.

This should be a lot of fun, but it is a pretty ambitious trip so we are looking for experienced class 3 climbers to join us.

## Tuolomne Family Car Camp III

Peaks: Warren, Gibbs; class 1  
Dates: Sep 12-13 Sat-Sun  
Maps: Mono Craters 15 min.  
Leaders: Cecil Ann H 408-358-1168  
cecilann@earthlink.net  
Aaron Schuman H 650-968-9184  
W 650-943-7532  
aaron\_schuman@yahoo.com  
Details: <http://sj.znet.com/~cynthiam/warren.html>

Bring your grandparents and your grandchildren to enjoy the pine air and cathedral views of Yosemite's Tuolomne Meadows. Hearty adults and teens will enjoy the two day hikes, to Mt Warren (8 miles, from 9000 to 12327 feet) and Mt Gibbs (12 miles, up from 9600 to 12773 feet). The Tuolomne Family Car Camp, now in its third year, has become a real PCS tradition!

Contact Cecil Ann, not Aaron, to reserve a spot at our group campsite.

## Arrow Peak & Ruskin

Peaks: Arrow Peak, Mt. Ruskin, and more if time permits, (Class 3)  
Dates: September 18 thru 21 Fri thru Mon  
Maps: Mt. Pinchot & Marion Peak 7.5'  
Leader: Charles Schafer, (408) 324-6003 (w)  
charles.schafer@octel.com

This trip is to an area which is not as often visited as some other Sierra locations, but not for lack of beauty or interesting mountains to climb. We will hike in over Taboose Pass on Friday and set up camp near the headwaters of the South Fork of the Kings River. Saturday we will climb Ruskin and perhaps try a traverse over to Marion if it doesn't look to be too much of a killer. Sunday we will attack Arrow via a classic 3rd class route, and then possibly cross over to Pyramid if time permits. Monday we hike out.

Neither of the variations are required, and may not even be attempted. But either way this should be a great trip. It is a pretty ambitious undertaking, though, so we are looking for experienced class 3 climbers to come along. By the way, if this looks familiar it is a repeat listing of a trip listed earlier in the year which didn't happen.

## Notes and Requests

### Medic/First Aid Classes

To help trip leaders and would-be leaders get the required First Aid certificate, the Chapter sponsors a First Aid class each quarter, based on a nationally recognized first aid text, but with added material and emphasis on wilderness situations with no phone to dial 911. The next First Aid classes will be Saturday, August 22 and Sunday, August 23 at the Peninsula Conservation Center in Palo Alto (from Bayshore/Hwy. 101 at San Antonio, turn toward the Bay; turn left at 1st stoplight, then right at Corporation Way to park behind PCC). Class is 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (1 hour for your bag lunch) and is limited to 12 people. To sign up, send a check for \$38 with a stamped, self-addressed business-sized envelope to: Health Education Services, 200 Waverly, Menlo Park, CA 94025. Cancellations get partial refund if a substitute attends (you get to keep the Wilderness First Aid book). For more information, call 650-321-6500.

• Marg Ottenberg

## Highlights of Climborama 98

This trip lasted nine full days, from Sat. 6/27 through Sun. 7/05.

Participants: Steve Eckert (leader), Bob Suzuki (Co-leader), Tim Kutscha, Jim Ramaker, Aaron Schuman, Eddie Sudol, Craig Taylor.

The seven of us drove up in two cars. At the parking lot at Whitney Portal on the first night of the trip, four of us left our food in one of our cars and slept on the ground nearby. A bear broke into a truck with a camper shell parked right next to our car. We slept through the attack and awoke the next morning to find the parking lot covered with food debris, and were very relieved to discover that it wasn't ours. Even though our other car contained no food, the bear bent a window frame on it, stuck his nose inside for a sniff, then departed.

The group as a whole climbed 17 peaks over nine days, with individuals climbing anywhere from 9 to 15 peaks. Here's the list of peaks in the order we climbed them:

Mt. Muir 14,015	Mt. Newcomb 13,422
Mt. Hitchcock 13,186	Mt. Pickering 13,474
Mt. Hale 13,494	Joe Devel Peak 13,327
Mt. Young 13,176	Mt. McAdie 13,799
Mt. Whitney 14,494	Mt. Irvine 13,780
Mt. Carillon 13,517	Mt. Mallory 13,845
Mt. Tunnabora 13,563	Mt. Muah 11,016
Mt. Guyot 12,300	Thor Peak 12,306
Mt. Chamberlain 13,169	

"Winner" in the peak derby was Eddie Sudol with 15 ascents. Eddie was the oldest person in the group (he turned 50 on the first day of the trip), he has some of the worst gear in the PCS, and while he's in good shape, he was far from being the best conditioned among the seven of us. So desire and inner drive really count for a lot in climbing.

In addition to 10 days of food and fuel, we all carried snow shoes, ski poles, crampons, and ice axes. Packs at the beginning of the trip averaged about 65 pounds.

We were on snow about 90% of the time -- rock hard in the morning, and so soft in the afternoon that we often postholed up to our knees.

We all carried snowshoes, but found them to be of limited value on the steep or sloping terrain where we usually found ourselves. Once I postholed WITH snowshoes, got my snowshoe caught under a rock three feet down, and needed 15 minutes of hard digging to free leg and then snowshoe.

Average camp was at 11,000 to 12,000 feet, often on a rock "island" surrounded by snow next to a frozen lake.

Except for three lower peaks, summits ranged from 13,000 to 14,500 feet. Total elevation gain hiking and climbing for the week was around 30,000 feet.

Every one of the ten or so major lakes we passed was frozen solid and covered with snow. Temps at dawn averaged 25 degrees and we often had to chop a hole in an icy lake to get water in the morning.

On all nine days we had perfect cloudless weather (!!!).

Except for the first and last days when we were on the standard trail up Mt. Whitney, we saw NO other people. NONE!!! This in a state with 35,000,000 people and near the highest and most

popular big mountain in the 48 states. The El Nino snowpack had scared most people away from the Sierras until later in the summer.

This trip demonstrated how vast the Sierras really are, once you start poking around all of the peaks instead of just cruising through on the Muir Trail. All of our wanderings for the entire nine days were contained on a single 7.5 minute map!!! Remember, to cover all of the "climber's Sierra" from Tower Peak

This trip was definitely not easy. On three separate days, 6 p.m. found at least some of us above 13,000 feet, slogging upward on soft snow in the hopes of bagging another peak, with a steep potentially tricky descent still to come. (So much for a prudent "turn-around time.") On all three days we bagged the peak and got down to camp by dark. But a couple times we barely made it, even with the long days just after the summer solstice. On the other hand, we still had a margin of safety on those three evenings. The weather was calm, we were all experienced, and those who were too tired to keep climbing had bailed out earlier.

Steve and Eddie climbed Carillon and Tunnabora the hard way. These peaks are both class-2 boulder hops, but Steve and Eddie made them interesting by starting from Guitar Lake west of Mt. Whitney, crossing Whitney-Russell Pass, descending a steep snowfield with a cliff below it, and traversing the shelf perched above a cliff on the southeast side of Mt. Russell. They bagged both peaks and reversed their route, covering eight miles of rugged cross country above 12,000 feet.

To top it off, they got back to camp at 4:30 p.m. with enough energy to insist that everyone pack up camp and backpack over to Crabtree Lakes that evening, so we'd be in position for the next day's climb. (For a full description of Steve & Eddie's route, go to the PCS Web site, page down to "Resources," and select "errata to Secor."

On the same day, Craig Taylor and I climbed the west face of Mt. Whitney. This huge face is a maze of buttresses and gullies. Two of the gullies appear to go all the way to the top and we took the left-hand one. Thanks to El Nino the gully was a fine moderate snow climb, 2000 feet of easy cramponing and never steeper than 30 degrees as it threaded its way up past huge rock towers and walls. From the top of the gully, 500 feet of scrambling up sun-warmed class-2 boulders took us to the summit plateau. For the second time in three ascents, no one was on the summit of Whitney when I arrived.

The most boring climb was Guyout Peak. For the five of us who did it, it was 12-mile day, most of it on the Pacific Crest Trail with intermittent snow patches. The peak itself was a low-angle snow slog with occasional postholing. The peak has four small summit towers -- the third one we got to had the register, but according to Steve's GPS, the fourth (northernmost) one is the actual summit, so we climbed that one too. (We sure didn't want to come back and do the peak again, though in all fairness, it had spectacular views of the vast wilderness around the Kaweahs and the upper Kern River). One of the high points of the day was when Bob navigated back through the woods to our camp using only map and compass (Steve had put his GPS away and there were no useful landmarks visible.) At 5 p.m. we came up over a small hill and walked right into the center of our camp. Way to go Bob.

The hardest and most interesting peak we climbed was definitely Mt. McAdie (13,799), which is next to Arc Pass about 3 miles southeast of Mt. Whitney. McAdie consists of a north, south, and middle peak. The north peak is the highest, but a direct assault on it from Arc Pass is class 5 so a circuitous route was required. We climbed some class 2-3 rock on the south peak, did a short traverse toward the south on soft 60 degree snow (measured

angle), traversed an exposed snowy ridge over to the middle peak, downclimbed a short icy step, traversed the middle peak, then downclimbed 50 feet of nearly vertical class 3-4 rock to get to the ridge between the middle and north peaks. At that point, just when it looked like the climbing was about to get harder, a hidden ledge took us around onto the west face of the north peak, and then enjoyable class-3 rock took us straight up to the summit.

We triggered a small, non-threatening, wet-snow avalanche on McAdie. Over 4th of July, some skiers were nearly killed in an avalanche near Tuolumne Meadows. In a normal year in the Sierras, avalanches are almost unheard of after May 1 because

After we got down from Mt. McAdie on the second-to-last day, the group split up, with Steve heading off to dayhike Mt. Muah and Tim, Aaron, and Craig hiking out. That left Bob, Eddie, and I to make a 3:30 p.m. start on Irvine and Mallory, neither of which are trivial. Thanks to Bob's persistence, we summited Irvine at 5, did a long traverse across a soft snowfield, climbed some steep mixed junk of soft snow and class-3 rock, and found ourselves relaxing in the silence on the summit of Mallory at 6:30. One of those golden days in the mountains, with great climbing and great companions.

Even at the end of the trip on July 5th, it was basically still winter in the high country. We saw no bugs and almost no wildflowers -- they were still yet to come. Only after descending from Thor Peak on July 5 did some of us see some green grass and a snow-free meadow that suggested the beginning of spring.

I ate about 50 Energy Bars of various kinds (PowerBars, Stoker bars, Think bars). The others ridiculed me, but I only lost a few pounds and had good energy right up thru the hike out on the afternoon of the ninth day. (Maybe the energy that day came from thoughts of a shower and a meal in a restaurant.)

Most of us didn't wash our faces or clothes for nine days. It was too cold to do so in morning or evening, and we were usually way up in the snow during the middle of the day. Reverting to savagery is fun, for awhile. (Steve was the exception, carefully shaving every day with his battery-powered razor.)

Because of the incredibly stable weather, Bob, Steve, and I slept under the stars every night and were rewarded with spectacular views of the Milky Way and many shooting stars.

Bob and Steve are nuts. Even for the PCS, they give new meaning to the word excess. For them, utter exhaustion is a virtue to be pursued and then used a springboard into ever deeper exhaustion. And they did an incredibly good job of leading this trip. Just to come up with a plan to climb so many peaks in nine days is quite an accomplishment, but then to make it all happen with no major mistakes or fiascoes is a bit unbelievable. On to Climborama 99!

• *Jim Ramaker*

NOTE: Route details, GPS waypoints, and route maps (with and without topo data) are at these URLs:

<http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Hills/1814/WhitneyClimbORama.txt>  
[/WhitneyClimbORama.pdf](http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Hills/1814/WhitneyClimbORama.pdf)  
[/WhitneyClimbORama.gif](http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Hills/1814/WhitneyClimbORama.gif)

(soon to be on the PCS website also)

• *Steve Eckert*

## 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.

### Mount Ritter

Peak: Mount Ritter (13,143) Class-2  
Dates: August 8-9  
Maps: Mt Ritter, Mammoth Mtn (E)  
Leader: Ron Karpel rkarpel@usa.net  
<http://home.earthlink.net/~karpel/ron.html>  
Co-Leader and Contact: Nancy Fitzsimmons  
Nancy\_Fitzsimmons@BayNetworks.com  
(408) 957-9683

This is a private trip with ice axe and crampons. Previous experience with ice axe and crampons are required. Saturday, we will start from Agnew Meadows and hike to Ediza Lake. Sunday we will climb Mount Ritter via the Southeast glacier route.

### Bear Creek Spire & Mt. Abbot

Peaks: Bear Creek Spire (13,720'+), Mt. Abbot (13,704'); class 3, 4  
Dates: Aug 15-16  
Maps: Mt. Abbot 15 min  
Contact: Bob Suzuki, w: 510-657-7555,  
h: 408-259-0772,  
bobszk@bigfoot.com  
Nancy Fitzsimmons, w: 408-764-1761,  
h: 408-957-9683,  
Nancy\_Fitzsimmons@baynetworks.com

This weekend we'll attempt two of Moynier and Fiddler's "100 Best Climbs in the High Sierra." After an early Saturday morning backpack into Treasure Lakes we'll tackle the class 4 northeast ridge and summit block of Bear Creek Spire. Sunday's challenge will include ascending the steep snow and loose rock of Abbot's north couloir. Climbing harness, rappel device, helmet, ice axe and crampons required. Only climbers with the requisite gear and experience will be considered.

Editor's Note: Bob Suzuki has informed me that this trip is full. however he is keeping a waiting list.

### Return to The Palisades

Peaks: Temple Crag (12,999'), Gayley (13,510'),  
Palisade Crest (13,520'); class 4  
Dates: August 21-23, Fri-Sun, 3 days  
Maps: Mt. Goddard 15 min.  
Contacts: Bob Suzuki, w: 510-657-7555,  
h (>8pm): 408-259-0772,  
bobszk@bigfoot.com  
Rich Leiker, w (>3pm): 408-453-4253,  
h (<2pm): 510-792-4816,  
leiker@san-jose.ate.slb.com  
(7/15-8/5 contact Rich Leiker)

One of the Sierra's highest and most rugged areas will be the setting for these three climbs. From a basecamp at Elinore Lake our routes will include the southeast face of Temple Crag, the southwest ridge of Gayley, and the northwest ridge and class 4 summit pinnacle of the Palisade Crest. Expect a late return to the BA.

### Ten Days in Milestone Basin

Peaks: Your choice  
Dates: Aug 29 - Sep 7  
Map: Mt. Whitney 15 min.  
Contact: Jim Curl, 415-585-1380, jimcurl@juno.com  
Co-contact: Dot Reilly, der@gene.com

Join us for a fun trudge with huge packs over Shepherd Pass to spend a long week in the Milestone Basin area. The peak climbing potential is vast and we currently have no set itinerary. Climb along with us or on your own, but be self-sufficient. This is not a led trip.

### South of Mono Divide

Peaks: Hooper (12,349'), Senger (12,286'),  
Seven Gables (13,075'), Gemini (12,866');  
class 1-4  
Dates: Sept 4-7, Fri-Mon, 4 days  
Maps: Mt. Abbot 15 min.  
Contacts: Bob Suzuki, Rich Leiker same info as "Return  
to  
The Palisades"  
(7/15-8/5 contact Rich Leiker)

If you can appreciate a typical PCS slog, this maybe the Labor Day trip for you! Long miles, rock slabs, talus, scree and sand - this trip should have it all! If you think you can stand the sweat and the pain, please give us a call.

### Dana Coulor

Peak: Dana Coulor, Class 3 Snow  
Date: September 26, Saturday  
Contact: George Van Gordon, after August 20  
408-779-2320

### Nepal

Peak: Mera Peak (21,200),  
Date: October 1998 (21 day trip)  
Contact: Warren Storkman  
4180 Mackay Drive  
Palo Alto, CA 94306  
650-493-8959(H)  
650-493-8975(FAX)  
Dstorkman@AOL.com

Trekking from Arun river through a seldom traveled route we experience seeing villages and people not accustomed to westerners. Both climb or Trek is 21 days. Cost \$1880 - a non-commercial private trip.

Mera Peak Climb (21,200 ft.) Mera is a non-technical peak and one of the finest vantage points in the Khumbu. This breathtaking mountain panorama includes no less than five of the worlds fourteen 18,000 meter peaks.

Kalapattar Trek (18,000 ft) looks down upon Everest Base Camp.

## Work Parties

The following list of trips are work party trips for the purpose of maintaining the Sierra Clubs huts. These are listed separately from peak climbs and are considered to be private trips.

Dick Simpson, a PCS leader, is organizing the following work parties where the participants help to build backcountry ski and snowshow huts. People of all skills are needed. Optional peak climbs (class-1 and class-2) are possible. Car camping nearby

(or a simple backpack in some cases). Tools and supplies and food will be provided.

Please contact Dick at 650-494-9272 or rsimpson@magellan.stanford.edu if interested for any of the following.

### **New Bradley Hut Work Party**

Dates: August 23-29, Sun.-Sat  
Dates: September 12-13, Sat.-Sun.  
Dates: September 19-20, Sat.-Sun.  
Dates: September 26-27, Sat.-Sun.  
Dates: October 3-4, Sat.-Sun.  
Dates: October 10-11, Sat.-Sun.  
Dates: October 17-18, Sat.-Sun.  
Dates: October 24-25, Sat.-Sun.  
Dates: October 31 - November 1, Sat.-Sun.

### **Peter Grubb Hut Work Party**

Dates: September 26-27, Sat.-Sun.

## **Mt Lyell (13,114 ft),**

July 3/4/5, 1998.

Over the Independence weekend, 5 PCS'ers took a tramp up to Mt Lyell, the highest peak in Yosemite at 13114 feet. This is a brief description of the trip to highlight the conditions we found in this El Nino year.

We got rolling from the ranger's kiosk in Tuolumne Meadows at about 9.15 am on Friday, the 3rd July. Due to the late opening of the Tioga Road this year (just 2 days ago) there had been hardly anybody going into the Lyell Canyon/Donahue Pass region this year. The rangers were singularly uninformed about the whole region vis-a-vis snow and they stared at us incredulously upon hearing that Lyell was our destination.

So, we decided to take our chances by leaving snowshoes behind but were otherwise prepared for early spring conditions and carried ice axes, crampons, extra warm clothing and even a couple of bear canisters between the five of us (Scott Kreider, Stephan Meier, Rick and Dee Booth and myself, Arun Mahajan). Turned out to be a wise choice.

The trail is long but even and goes thru spectacular country. Tuolumne never disappoints. We stayed on the right of the creek on the PCT taking numerous breaks, enjoying the warm sun and the sounds of the fast flowing creek. The trail was surprisingly free of snow except occasional patches in the wooded parts. One river crossing proved a little troublesome but there are fallen logs and some careful balancing over them can get you across. About 7 or 8 miles in, the trail disappeared in the snow and starts to climb quickly. We ran into 3 thru hikers of the PCT whose footsteps we traced till we got to the footbridge shown on the Vogelsang 7.5 min topo (9400 ft+). We headed up and right till we came to a flat spot which was mostly snowbound but had patches of bare ground showing and a slowing moving stream barely visible. The weather continued to be warm as we cooked dinner and stashed food away and planned the next day's route before turning in for the night.

We started hiking at 7.15 am. The snow was hard and suncupped and we put on crampons right away. We were aiming to top the steep ridge plumb in front of us but to get there we had to do some route finding thru the forest before it. Maclure Creek crashes down here and the crossing is fairly hairy. Since it was early morning, the snowbridges were firm but we were quite anxious as we crossed them as it was never clear which one would give. A lot

of the stream is hidden under what looks like dubious snow but everything that we walked on, held. We broke thru the forest and climbed the first steep ridge and were greeted by the alpine grandeur of a huge snow bowl ringed by Lyell and Maclure and other surrogate peaks and ridges. The route finding of Scott and Dee and Rick was on the mark to get us here.

There is plateau with 2 lakes but there were barely discernible as we walked past them on the suncupped snow and then the steep climb towards the Lyell-Maclure notch begins. Here we kept switching leads, as breaking trail in the snow was hard work. Below the north wall now, we decided to go straight up. We aimed for the first chute to the right of the large band of cliffs and that the snow was a little rotten in the section right between the rocks, where it was obviously melting fast.

There was only a very slight discoloration in the snow that might have been the bergschrund but it was all covered up anyway. Stephan took the lead in this steep section and we climbed straight up, glad to have him kick steps for us. I thought that the angle was comparable to that on Mt Hood above the bergschrund on the Palmer Glacier, and this puts it to at least 35 or above. Be very careful and cautious here. We took our time doing it and after some anxious moments topped the ridge to get to the summit plateau. Then it is a class-2/3 scramble to the summit of Lyell. It was 1.45pm then. We were pleased to discover that we were the first party on top this year.

We relaxed in the warm sun and cloudless skies for about 45 mins here. We had great views all around. The view of Ritter and Banner is awesome from this vantage point. We looked over to Maclure. It looked very hard due to all that steep snow that covered the ridge that PCS parties of yore have suggested taking.

Harder still was the final snowfield with an unsafe runout right near the summit. So, we decided to leave it for another day and again we down climbed the steep wall that we had come up with much caution, sometimes even switching to facing the wall as we down climbed. Luckily for the most part the axes held firm but they sank upto the hilt as we cautiously climbed the steepest section. A couple of glissades and some tiresome walking on suncups got us to the forest where again the route finding skills of Scott and Dee and Rick and Stephan's GPS helped us find our way back to camp. Crossing the stream here was quite hairy as the snow was softer. By the time we got back to camp, it was 6.15. It had been a 11 hour day.

Sunday, we hiked out under perfect conditions and made it to the cars in just about 5 and half hours and then pizza at 'The Two Guys' place in Groveland before fighting with the home bound traffic getting into the Bay area and yet another great PCS trip drew to a close.

A note of caution: The snow conditions are changing very fast day by day. The bergschrund on the Lyell Glacier may open up. The snow wall (maybe there will be a chute when some of the snow goes away) is steep on the north side, left of the Lyell-Maclure saddle. The stream crossing after camp, will be harder as more snow melts away, maybe it will be safer to cross it higher up. There is some route finding needed in the forest where this stream flows. Maclure will be doable when all that snow goes away, but right now it looked unsafe.

• *Arun Mahajan*

# Mt. Brewer Region

July 3-8, 1998

Rich Leiker, Maggie Hudson, Craig Clarence, Laurie Price, and your loyal scribe, David Harris, made up the 1998 ABC (Anarchist Brewer Climbers) crew. We spent a very enjoyable, though unexpectedly exciting, week at East Lake in the heart of Kings Canyon climbing whatever appeared interesting.

The crux of the trip was a crossing of Bubbs Creek during peak snow melt with 200% of normal snowfall. Entering from Kearsarge Pass, Craig arrived a day early and was able to use a tyrolean traverse set up by an exiting Outward Bound group. The rest of us managed a challenging roped crossing just upstream of East Creek, followed by a tedious bushwack up the east side of East Creek until the trail crossed over to our side. Since the cross-country was so unpleasant, we stayed on the trail on the return and had to cross Bubbs below its roaring tributary. Maggie describes her unfortunate adventure making the crossing in the attached story.

Craig blew away all the rest of us with his climbing energy. Before we arrived he soloed Jordan and Genevera, using a cam and sling as aid since he could not find the easier 4th class route to Jordan's summit. I spent a day chasing him up South Guard and Brewer, climbing a pair of steep snowy couloirs, while Rich and Maggie took a more reasonable pace up South Guard. We were the first party to sign in on South Guard this year, though with the exceptional snow it would not be surprising if others had made the summit and were unable to locate the register. Maggie and Rich showed up about an hour after us on South Guard, having taken the longer but perhaps easier route up a poor trail to Lake Reflection, bypassing a 30 foot tall cornice on Longley Pass via a short 3rd class rock pitch to the right of the pass. The third day of climbing, Craig ran ahead while Rich and I made the approach to North Guard. North Guard was the most enjoyable climb of the trip, featuring excellent 3rd class climbing to the summit block, a 20 foot monolith which Norman Clyde had described as leaning over the 500 foot east face at "an embarrassing angle." Secor and the 100 Classic book disagree whether North Guard is class 3 or 4; we would be inclined to call it challenging class 3 with a 4th class summit block since we never wanted a rope except while scrambling onto the summit. Craig had so much energy that he ran along the ridge and climbed another peak which we had misidentified as Francis Farquhar before returning to camp!

The region was particularly beautiful with so much water. We had to chop the Kearsarge Lake bear box out of a huge snow drift. Vidette Meadow is completely flooded; we were treated to the sight of a baby deer walking across the meadow with her mother on evening. This snow would also explain the lack of other people in the mountain: there were very few vehicles parked at Onion Valley, and we saw no other humans for three days while on the far side of Bubbs Creek.

*\* David Harris*

## The Crossing of Bubbs Creek

Packing out after the trip we knew that we were in for a difficult stream crossing. And, sure enough, we got to the crossing point to find the water level around waist high and the river raging. David attempted to make the crossing, assisted by ski poles and being belayed by Craig. However, after just a couple of steps, he concluded that it was not safe to attempt the crossing in this manner. Rich had already scouted downstream for a suitable crossing point to no avail. So David began to search upstream,

where the crossing involved traversing many streams that merged just above the trail crossing point.

David managed to get across, although I believe the crossings were not without some hazard, and he soon appeared on the other side of the stream. David and Craig then began the process of setting up a rope looped around suitable trees on either side of the stream so that we could cross with the safety of being clipped on to the rope. David then crossed via the rope to test out the method and got back to the group safely.

We then started the crossing for real, with backpacks. Craig went first and got across without incident. I then ventured out into the stream to begin my traverse. The first problem I encountered was that I could not reach the rope with the carabiner. So we had to quickly change the length of webbing that we were using so that I could clip on. This done, I clipped on to the rope and began to cross, moving my hands slowly along the rope. The force of the water was incredible: far greater than I had imagined. I was approximately half way across when I was no longer able to maintain my footing. Up until this point I had maintained contact with the bottom of the stream, although I was using my hands to get across more than I was able to use my feet.

But, once in the middle of the stream, the force of the water was just so great against my body that I could not maintain my grip on the rope. So I suddenly found myself with my head under water, struggling to get above the surface to be able to breathe, still attached to the rope via webbing and carabiner. At this point I believed that I was about to drown.

After what was probably seconds, but seemed a lot longer, my backpack came off and zoomed off downstream and then I was grabbed by Craig who had come to my rescue from the far side of the stream. I gasped for air only to hear Craig say something like "Someone help, I can't hold her". (This could be a misquote, apologies if it's not accurate but my memory of the whole event is probably somewhat warped!!). Rich then jumped onto the rope and quickly came to assist Craig in his rescue attempt. At this point, I was struggling to stay above water and Craig and Rich were both hanging on to the rope by one arm, holding on to me with the other. Neither of them were clipped on to the rope so they were both at great personal risk. However, they quickly managed to get the situation under control, I got my hands back on the rope, and all three of us made it to the other side safely, although somewhat stressed.

Craig then took off downstream to search for my backpack, which he managed to retrieve from a swirling eddy, but had to cross the stream again to do so (thanks Craig). Meanwhile, Rich had to go back across as his backpack was still on the other side of the stream. The remainder of the group then decided that they would risk crossing the way that David had originally crossed, rather than taking their backpacks across via the rope.

The group was soon united on the far side of the stream, although everyone was a little shocked, and my backpack was now almost impossible to carry due to the weight of all my wet gear. So Rich and I had to spend an hour and a half at the stream, drying out the entire contents of my pack. Luckily, the sun was out at full strength so I was able to stay warm and things dried out fairly quickly.

The moral of the story: don't underestimate the power of the water in the stream crossings this year. I for one will not be crossing any more streams unless I am able to wade across. I want my feet firmly in contact with the ground!

*• Maggie Hudson*

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## Rock Climbing Classifications

The following trip classifications are to assist you in choosing trips for which you are qualified. No simple rating system can anticipate all possible conditions.

- Class 1: Walking on a trail.
- Class 2: Walking cross-country, using hands for balance.
- Class 3: Requires use of hands for climbing, rope may be used.
- Class 4: Requires rope belays.
- Class 5: Technical rock climbing.

**Deadline for submissions to the next Scree is Sunday 8/23/98. Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month.**



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