



Next General Meeting

Date: Tuesday, January 13, 1998

Time: 8:00 PM

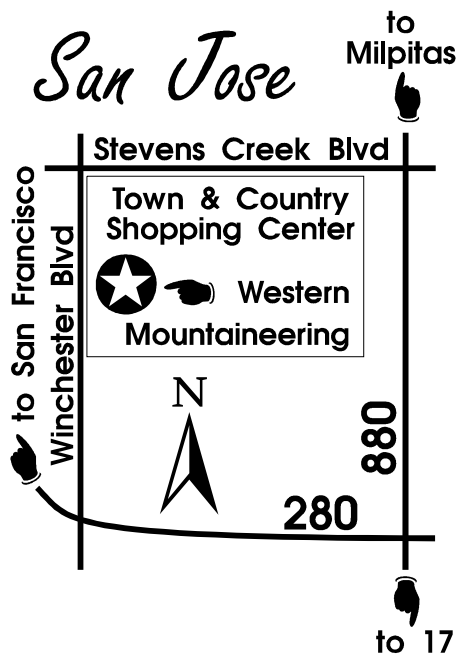
Program: Broad Peak, Pakistan

Hal Tompkins will present his slides from his successful expedition in July 1997 to Broad Peak, an 8000 meter peak in the Karakoram Range in Pakistan. Hal may be the first PCS member to accomplish climbing an 8000 meter mountain.

Location: Western Mountaineering Town & Country Village, San Jose

From 280: Exit at Winchester Boulevard, go East and turn right into the Town & Country Shopping Center across from the Century Theaters

From 880: Exit at Stevens Creek Boulevard, go North and turn right into the Town & Country Shopping Center



By-laws & Operating Rules Meeting

Date: Wednesday, January 14, 1998

Time: 8:00 PM to 10:30 PM

Purpose: To determine if new versions of the PCS By-laws and Operating Rules were properly approved by the section.

Place: Home of Roger Crawley, 761 Nash Avenue, Menlo Park, 650-321-8602

Directions: Take the Menlo Park Willow Road Exit off Highway 101 towards Middlefield Road. Pass Coleman and Gilbert. Turn right on Nash. My house is in the second block

Work has already been done by PCS members to make needed modifications to our By-laws and Operating Rules. At issue is whether our section properly approved the new versions of these documents.

The Section approved a By-law amendment at the October, 1997 PCS meeting (Nov., 1997 SCREE, p1, "Sunset Clause Approved 26:0"). The Loma Prieta Chapter EXCOM disapproved this amendment, probably because it stated that copies of the By-laws must be kept on file at the Chapter office.

We will briefly discuss the Mountaineering committee Policy document of May 3, 1995. Anyone who wants to provide input into this process is urged to come to this meeting or express your opinions to Roger Crawley. Thank you.

Ed Viesturs in Person!

Date: Wednesday, February 18

Time: 7:00 PM

Contact: Tech Museum of Innovation 408-279-7150

Cost: \$20.00 Non-Members; \$15.00 Tech Members

Ed Viesturs, who is the only person to summit Mount Everest seven times-five without oxygen, will speak at the San Jose Civic Auditorium as part of The Tech Museum of Innovation's lecture series. Ed tackled Mount Everest with a team of photographers to produce the upcoming IMAX film "Everest". His climb coincided with the disaster that claimed several lives in May 1996. His expedition is featured in the September issue of National Geographic and is the subject of a PBS Nova special airing in February.

Earth Day 1998

A Sense of Place: Bringing Earth Day Home

A steering committee has formed within the Loma Prieta Chapter to engage Sierra Club members in Earth Day 1998. This committee, plus other South Bay environmental groups, has chosen the theme, A Sense of Place: Bringing Earth Day Home. Using this theme, the coalition wants to show the connection between ourselves and our local environment. Also the Loma Prieta Chapter will use this event to reach out to organized religious groups. Together we want to work on our common concern for the planet. One of the models we will use is the "Green-Team," an environmental support group of 6 - 8 people wanting to "live more lightly" on the Earth. The groups meet in the participants' homes for 5 weeks, using a workbook as their guide.

We are inviting all Activity Sections and Regional Groups to attend one of two meetings in early January. At these meetings, we will discuss our preliminary goals for Earth Day '98, review some of the materials that are available for group use, see a 30-minute video produced by the Union of Concerned Scientists (Keeping the Earth: Religious and Scientific Perspectives on the Environment) and set up an outreach plan to local religious communities. We want a representative from each Section and Group. The two meetings will be identical to allow most people to attend at least one. We are encouraging all Loma Prieta Chapter members who are affiliated with a religious group to attend. **The two meetings will take place at the Peninsula Conservation Center on January 12 & January 15 at 7 PM.** Call the Chapter Office for directions or info, (650) 390-8494.

If PCS members have an interest in participating in Earth Day 1998, please join us at these meetings. The Chapter wants its offerings for Earth Day to reflect all aspects of our membership.

Lost Coast Alert

The King Range National Conservation Area, popularly known as the Lost Coast, is one of the most spectacularly beautiful stretches of coast in the world, as those of you who have visited it can testify. The pristine quality of this area is being marred by the presence of off-road vehicles (ORVs) on the southern 3.5 miles, known as Black Sands Beach. ORVs cause considerable damage to the delicate coastal vegetation, create ugly tire tracks and scars, and cause noise pollution. ORV users frequently flout the closure at Gitchell Creek. The Bureau of Land Management is proposing to close Black Sands Beach to motorized vehicle use. Well-organized ORV groups, backed by the ORV manufacturers, have been bombarding the agency with letters of protest against the proposed closure. Hikers and backpackers, who visit the area in far greater numbers, need to make their voices heard. Please take a few minutes to write to the BLM expressing your support for the proposed closure.

Address letters to

Lynda Roush, Area Manager
BLM Arcata Resource Area
1695 Herndon Road
Arcata, CA 95521

Although regular mail is the most effective way to make your views count, you can also contact Ms. Roush by email at

lroush@ca.blm.gov or by FAX at (707) 825-2301

• Submitted by John Wilkinson

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.

Pyramid Peak

Peak: Pyramid Peak (9983'), class 2
Dates: Sat. Jan. 17 - Mon. Jan. 19
Map: Pyramid Peak 7.5 min.
Leader: Palmer Dyal, H: 650-941-5321, Pdyal@msn.com
Co-Leader: Wanted

This will be a moderately paced 3 mile snowshoe trip to climb a relatively easy peak in the Desolation Wilderness area southwest of Lake Tahoe. The elevation gain is about 1000' per mile and we plan to camp at treeline.

We will have time to build snow caves on the first day and view the marvelous glaciated scenery of the whole Tahoe basin from the peak on the second day. There will be a choice of returning on Sunday or Monday depending on the weather, etc. A good trip for beginning climbers.

Annual Beginners Snow Camping Seminar

Dates: Tues. Eves. Jan. 6th, Wed. Jan. 7th, Wed. Jan. 14th; Weekend of Jan. 24/25 or Jan. 31/Feb. 1.
Leaders: Marj Ottenberg 408-867-4576 or Chris MacIntosh 650-325-7841<chrism@clbooks.com>.

A planned winter overnight trip in the Sierra can be wonderful or cold and miserable. A forced overnight due to storm, injury or equipment failure presents far more hazards in winter than in summer. For the 25th winter, PCS (and STS) leaders present a snow camping seminar to help backpackers, climbers, and others enjoy winter sports safely and comfortably. Participants learn do's and don'ts of winter planning, clothing, food etc. as well as making emergency and non-emergency shelters in the snow, then put these skills into practice on a weekend trip to the Sierra (traveling by skis or snowshoes. \$40 cost includes 3 books and equipment maintenance.

Treasure of the Serra Padre

Peak: Junipero Serra Peak, 5862 ft, Class 1
Date: February 1st 1998.
Maps: Junipero Serra 7.5'
Contact: Arun Mahajan, arun@sientnet.com, (h) 408-244-7912, (w) 408-473-8029
Co Contact: Bill Kirkpatrick. Home: 408-293-2447, Work: 408-279-3450 wmkirk@earthlink.net

The native Americans called it Pimkolam Peak, it has also been called Santa Lucia Peak, and now goes by the name Junipero Serra after the venerable padre. At 5862 ft, it is the highest peak in the Santa Lucia Coast Range. It is also the high point of Monterey County and the highest peak that you can get to in the Bay Area. Join us as we take a enjoyable and mildly strenuous (6 miles and 3900 ft gain, one way) tramp to this peak. There is trail all the way to the top.

Carpool suggestions from Bay Area: Meet at the Carl's Jr. that is at the Dunne Avenue exit on 101 in Morgan Hill at 7 am on Sunday, February 1. We will carpool from there. Non Bay Area People: Contact the leader for directions to the trailhead.

Notes and Requests

McKinley Redux

I'm looking for a qualified partner(s) for another attempt at North America's highest peak. After two trips on the mountain, I'm practically a "guide," which simplifies planning.

Qualified partners MUST possess high altitude experience above 20,000 ft, multiday expedition experience, have the right cold weather gear or be willing to purchase it, have adequate vacation time, XC ski (or be willing to learn) and not snore. First time want-to-be's will not be considered. Send email or call me at 408-970-0760 home, 408-543-3135 work.

- *Tim Hult* <tim.hult@lmco.com>

Items for Sale

'97 North Face Lunar Light Tent: 2 person, 3 season, under 5 lbs., full warranty, fully seam sealed, like new, used one night -- \$150 (retail \$245). Boreal Flyers approach shoes: size 9 U.S. men's, smooth soled sticky Fusion rubber, like new, used once to walk around the block -- \$35. Garmont Sticky Weekend approach shoes: size 10.5 U.S. men's, very good condition, used for about a week in the Tetons -- \$30 or \$25 and a pint of good ale. Wanted: Size 10.5 Five Tennies.

- *Jim Curl* <jimcurl@juno.com> 415-585-1380

Advice on Pants Needed

Advice on pants would be appreciated. I saw a pair of what I'd like at Western Mountaineering today for \$269.00 (Marmot). I'd go for something cheaper, even used if it's high quality. No blems please. Or I'd go for something more expensive if it's worth it. I'm looking for gortex or gortex-like material I can use on Aconcagua or winter mountaineering in the Sierra.

- *Tony Cruz* <cruz@idt.com>

Crampon Quest

I'm looking for a used pair of strap-on flexible crampons for occasional use with my leather Raichle Mountain Guide boots.

- *Aaron Grossman* <aaron_grossman@hp.com>

Andes and Himalayan Expeditions

I am looking for climbers interested in a summer 1998 trip to the Peruvian Andes. My intention is to focus on some of the more technical routes in the Cordillera Blanca, but I'm open for discussion on other objectives.

I am also interested in joining a Himalayan expedition in 1998. If you are planning a Himalayan expedition and are in need of another team member, please call 415-309-0570 or drop me a line at P.O. Box 8757, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546.

- *Craig Clarence* <sharpnd@telis.org>

Trip Leaders Wanted

Becoming a PCS trip leader is easier than you probably think. The procedure was listed in the December SCREE. I am putting this notice in to emphasize that we can always use more leaders.

1998 Roster Update

It is still not too late for you to be listed in the 1998 PCS roster. See the December SCREE for the update form. If you don't have a December SCREE, you can obtain a copy form the PCS website whose URL is listed at the end of this SCREE.

CLIMBORAMA 1997

JULY 2-8, 1997

Climborama 97 was a decentralized affair. Ten PCS climbers ventured into the Evolution region during the first eight days of July, and we all climbed various peaks with various combinations of partners during that time. Charles Schafer and I (Jim Ramaker) climbed together all week, and this report covers the trip from our perspective.

DAY ONE -- HIKING IN

On Wed. morning July 2, Charles and I drove down to North Lake after spending a restful night at David Harris's condo in Mammoth. David, Steve Eckert, and John Bees followed in another car -- they were hiking over Paiute Pass to climb Goethe on the way in, while Charles and I were heading over Lamarck Col. The Lamarck Col route is basically a trail rather than a cross-country route, even though it's not marked on the 15' map. Then only tricky part is finding where it leaves the official trail between Lower and Upper Lamarck Lakes. We cut off at the first creek crossing, about 1/3 of the way from the lower to the upper lake. Looking down on this section later on, we saw that there are actually two parallel trails leaving the main trail, with the second one cutting off about 2/3 of the way from the lower to the upper lake. After less than a mile, the two trails join and proceed past some beautiful small lakes and up a long steep hillside to some barren slopes and plateaus above. I got up near Lamarck Col around 4 and talked to some campers there, then decided to dash up Mt. Lamarck (13,417'), because Charles hadn't appeared yet. (He had a very heavy pack, his camera lens alone is the approximate size and weight of a brick).

Mt. Lamarck is easy class-2 and took 45 minutes round trip from the trail. When I got down, Charles was there, and we hiked over the col (13,000'), across the Sierra Crest and into Kings Canyon National Park. Then it was down down down to the highest Darwin Lake at 11,800', where we arrived at 7 p.m. Little did we know, but this wild, rockbound lake would be our home for the next three nights. It was a wonderful place, with a few bivvy spots carved out of the rocks by climbers, and too high for any bugs.

DAY TWO -- DARWIN

Charles and I left for Darwin (13,830') at 7 a.m. Thursday and by 9 we were at the bottom of the gully leading up to the notch in Darwin's west ridge. We passed the vertical section at the bottom of the gully by climbing a steep snow ramp on the right, then climbed mixed class-3 rock and frozen snow in the upper part of the gully. We soon arrived at the notch, a very alpine place -- shady, windy, and icy. We then shed our crampons, turned left, and started up the ridge toward the summit plateau. It was harder than expected, with several class-3 sections and some careful route finding needed to avoid cliffs to the left and right. By 11 we were on the vast 1000-foot long summit plateau.

I'd been harboring secret hopes that maybe the famous Darwin summit pinnacle had fallen over in an earthquake or been dynamited by some merciful soul. But halfway across the plateau it suddenly appeared, rearing up above the horizon like a grotesque nightmare, an unsteady stack of square blocks with a weird pointing finger formation on top, as if pointing the way to our doom. I didn't like the massive exposure around the pinnacle, and the two steep gullies leading over to it were filled with steep, soft, and unstable snow. I climbed down the first one unroped, then retreated, sat down in a funk, and suggested we just forget about the pinnacle and go down. But Charles was not to be denied. He perused the situation from various angles, then figured out a way to set up a solid belay that would protect both snow gullies.

After more delay, I finally agreed to try it. I tied in, climbed quickly down one snow gully and up the other, found a stance on the far side of the pinnacle, and belayed Charles over. While I was rearranging the rope, he floated up the class-3 crack and hopped onto the summit without a belay!! I followed suit, and we both found the last part of the pinnacle much easier than expected. I'd been told to expect a tricky mantle with 1500 feet of exposure, but if you move as far to the right as possible before doing the mantle (more on the east side of the pinnacle instead of the southeast), you have a nice flat ledge below you and the exposure is more like 6 feet instead of 1500 feet. As long as you fall off the mantle in an orderly manner, you'll land on that ledge. Since we found the descriptions of how to climb the pinnacle confusing, here is mine (don't read this if you want to preserve a little mystery): Stand on the edge of the plateau facing the pinnacle, and drop down off the plateau to your right. Then go left and cross over the small saddle between the plateau and the pinnacle. Descend a small gully on the left side of the pinnacle for about 40', then climb a similar gully to a stance on the far (east) side of the pinnacle (the two gullies form a "V"). From the stance, climb an easy class-3 crack to a ledge, then mantle onto the summit.

After climbing back to the plateau, we took a long break and then descended the mountain. Back on the glacier around 5:30 p.m., Charles announced that we had to climb Mendel (13,691') today. I suppressed a groan, then led across the glacier to a prominent right-slanting snow gully near the bottom right center of Mendel's steep east face. The snow was soft, steep, and carved into deep suncups, so that when you were standing in the bottom of one, the top of the next one was in front of your face. We climbed about 500' on this happy terrain, then exited left onto a wide, flat ledge. After about 50', this led us to another right-slanting gully that we climbed till it ended. From there, we couldn't figure out the correct route on the wide face above, and since it was going on 7 p.m., we bailed for the day.

A strange kind of euphoric exhaustion overtook me as I descended the glacier to our camp -- we'd fumbled around a bit on one peak and run out of time on the second, but it had been a great, 13-hour day on some of the best alpine terrain in California. The stars and the Milky Way were spectacular that night -- we had no moon for the entire week of the trip and I saw over a dozen meteors before drifting off to sleep.

DAY THREE: CENTURY DUO SOLVES MENDEL MYSTERY

Friday we decided to postpone our plans to hike over and join the rest of the group, and return to Mendel instead. We retraced our steps up onto Darwin Glacier, up the 500' slanting snow gully on Mendel, across the 50' ledge, and up the second gully for about 200' to our high point. From there we traversed left on a second ledge system for about 100', which brought us to the large open scree bowl high on the east face of Mendel. At the top of the scree bowl is a cliff going all the way across the mountain, forming a vertical, 200-foot wall at the upper left, a smaller cliff across the middle, and a small headwall split by a couple of steep gullies on the upper right. Secor says to go up and left to a chimney, but we just didn't believe him, because the cliff in that area looks vertical and even overhanging. So we wandered up to the right, toward the only obvious weakness in the cliff, on the theory that Secor was wrong and the chockstone was really at the upper right, not the upper left. My interest was piqued when I spotted a gully with a chockstone up there, and near it an old rappell sling. I climbed up the gully and forced my way all the way to the summit ridge, only to find that it was very exposed on both sides, with big awkward blocks barring the way to the summit.

I retreated back to the steep boulders and scree, and discussed various theories with Charles. It was after 12 noon by this time, and we weren't doing too hot on this damn mountain. We still had no idea whether the elusive route was up to the left or right. We did some more wandering back and forth across the face, looking for the magic staircase that would deposit us on the summit plateau. Finally I gave up, sat down, and told Charles it was time to go down. But once again he wouldn't have it, and he wandered up and left toward an unlikely looking cleft just right of the 200-foot high cliff.

There was a chockstone there, in a square chimney marked by bright greenish-yellow lichen. Instead of tackling the chimney, Charles assaulted a vertical 40-foot cliff to its right, working his way up bit by bit on what he claimed were plentiful holds. From my vantage point several hundred feet below, the cliff seemed to be overhanging, and I waited for a scream, clattering rock, and a grim thud. Instead I heard a yell of triumph, and there was Charles on the summit plateau at the top of the cliff. I scrambled up toward him and he offered to belay me up the chimney. The chockstone overhung a little bit and forced me out onto a smooth wall to the left, but with a top rope it was great fun. Although the exposure wasn't bad, I would call the chimney class four because of the awkward climbing on small holds. I would climb it unroped on a good day, but I wouldn't like to downclimb it unroped. A fall, while not fatal, would slam you onto some nasty sharp blocks. So that's the mystery of Mendel's east face -- just head for the square chimney on the upper left with the greenish-yellow lichen, and bring a short rope (50' is plenty).

Charles and I strolled across the summit ridge to the top at 2 p.m., for another hard-won summit. Views of the central Sierras were again tremendous, and from the edge of the plateau we could see the large lakes of Evolution Valley and the huge dark peaks over in the Goddard area. Around this time Charles and I discovered that our combined ages add up to exactly 100 -- thus the nickname century duo.

We descended the chimney on belay, then downclimbed the steep, loose face and the steep snow gully, finally getting back to the safety of the glacier at 4:30. An hour later, while descending the talus slope to our camp, I spotted two people a couple of thousand feet away, descending the slope opposite us on the way down from Lamarck Col. Both were skinny, one silent, one constantly talking -- it could only be Kelly Maas and Kai Wiedman! We met up with them at the lake, and had a good time visiting each others camps as we cooked supper and discussed the day just past and the day to come. Kai and Kelly were in with two friends to do one of the Mendel couloirs -- possibly the premier technical ice climbs of the Sierras. (They did the climb the next day, and found it to be a real thriller.) Finally Charles and I bade them goodnight and retired to another restful night under the stars.

DAY FOUR: A BEAUTIFUL BACKPACK

Saturday we hiked cross-country to rendez-vous with the other climborama climbers in McGee Canyon. (Note: there are two McGee Canyons in the Sierras, and this is the southern one, near Mt. Goddard.) With the early morning sun behind us, hiking down past the series of lakes in Darwin Canyon was exceptionally beautiful, with natural "gardens" of green grass, boulders, bushes, and flowers along the shores of the lakes. We crossed Darwin Bench and found a great staircase route down through some cliffs to the John Muir Trail below Evolution Lake. At that point the fun was over for a while -- the mosquitoes in Evolution Valley were ferocious, and the only solution seemed to be slather on the bug dope and keep hiking as fast as possible. We hiked up the trail to the far (south) end of Sapphire Lake, then started up the cross-country route over McGee Pass. This is a nice pass to avoid the

cliffs directly east of the pass, go south all the way to the end of Sapphire lake and then angle back northwestwardly toward the pass, on a line between the pass and the magnificent peak of Mt. Huxley, which stands out in the middle of Upper Evolution Valley. At the top of the pass I spotted a person down in the trailless valley to the west, and it turned out to be Kalon Kelley, who was hiking out after camping with the climborama group. After talking to him, Charles and I descended the valley and found the climborama camp at Middle McGee Lake about 4 p.m. Camp was deserted except for Tim Hult, lounging in his screen-walled tent to escape the bugs. Charles and I washed up, set up our tent, and took a welcome nap -- the only time in this seven-day trip we had time to do that.

Around 8 p.m., the rest of the group (Steve Eckert, David Harris, Rich Leiker, Don Martin, and Bob Suzuki) started wandering in from a very arduous 14-hour day climbing the Hermit (12,360') and Mt. McGee (12,969'). The Hermit has a technical pitch at the top that Bob Suzuki led at 5.7, while the route on McGee involved crossing a saddle and descending 1000 feet of loose scree on the way to the top, then re-climbing the same 1000 feet to cross the saddle again on the way "down." This was the one real climborama evening of the week, with all eight of us cooking, talking, and camping together in a vast flat sandy area next to the lake. It was another cloudless evening and many of us slept out under the stars.

DAY FIVE: THREE VARIATIONS ON THE GODDARD THEME

Sunday the group divided up again, with David Harris, Rich Leiker, and Bob Suzuki joining Charles and me to do Goddard. Our goal was Starr's buttress on the northeast side of the peak -- "an interesting route on an otherwise boring mountain," as Secor describes it.

Our plan was to hike back over McGee Pass to the John Muir Trail, drop our packs near Sapphire Lake, hike up the trail to Wanda Lake, then head cross-country to the foot of Mt. Goddard near its small northeast glacier. We dropped our packs next to the JMT about 9 a.m., then crossed the saddle west of Wanda Lake and gradually descended southwesterly into the Davis Lake basin, with Mt. Goddard looming above us ever higher, blacker, and more threatening.

At 12:30 we finally arrived at the bottom of Starr's Rib, which is the north ridge of peak 12,960+ on the 15-minute map. The first part of the rib was steep class-3, with strange porcelain-like rock with smooth rounded holds. Above that, the buttress has three more sections, all of them with very loose rock -- a long almost level section, a steep part that shoots up several hundred feet, then a final long sidehill traverse that leads to the long and easy east ridge of Goddard. At the start of the flat section, I spotted an exit onto the glacier to our right, and asked if I could go and climb it. Bob said okay, but no one wanted to join me, so I headed off alone.

Secor's photo on page 223 shows this glacier as a rather depressing scrap of snow streaked with rockfall. But in the first week of July it was a generous glacier, with a steep snow couloir above it leading all the way to the saddle between Peak 12,960+ and Goddard, and gentle snow slopes below it leading down past the bottom of Starr's buttress. The steep part of the couloir looked like no more than about 100 feet, and I figured I could handle that. I climbed up and right on the glacier, rested a minute, then headed up the couloir. As the walls closed in it got steeper and steeper until it was well over 45 degrees -- wow, I'd never been on snow this steep. Front-pointing and using the pick of my axe, I felt secure, but what if I slipped? I started climbing faster and faster,

and the couloir went on and on. Finally, after more than 500 feet of steep snow, I flopped onto the scree at the top exhausted.

After a few minutes I started up the class-2 slope to the summit, running into Kalon Kelley for the second time in two days in the middle of nowhere. He was descending after a solo climb from Muir Pass. I summited at 3 p.m., then waited for an hour for my four buddies to finish climbing up from Starr's Buttress. We relaxed on the summit for an additional hour, enjoying the tremendous views for which this isolated peak is justly famous. A weird lethargy overtook us -- a hard descent and miles of rugged cross-country terrain stood between us and our camp, but it seemed better to just lie around on the scree at 13,568'. Finally we shouldered our daypacks and started down.

After a debate about the descent route, we decided to go down Starr's buttress. The sidehill section near the top went okay, though one of us set loose a tremendous rockfall, the kind that raises clouds of dust and clatters and rumbles down into the void for over 30 seconds. Luckily we were traversing and spread out, so it was no threat to anyone. At the top of the steep section, I spotted a exit gully descending steeply to the left down to a snow couloir and then down to the glacier. Soft snow sure looked better than this hideous loose brown rock, and I got permission to check it out. The rock was loose class 3, and the snow couloir below it was steep, but not as steep as the one I'd gone up. Soon I was down on the low-angle part of the glacier, urging the others to follow me.

They reluctantly agreed, but as Bob was descending the snow couloir, someone above knocked loose another rockfall, and two soccer-ball-sized boulders came thundering down the gully toward him. With his usual studied calm, Bob waited till the boulders drew near, then dodged in between them. A close call. Finally we were all down on the glacier, and after an easy walk down the snow, we arrived back at the bottom of

Starr's Buttress at 6:30. Thus we really did three different routes on Goddard:

1. The "esthetic" and by far the fastest route, up the clean class-3 rock a the bottom of Starr's buttress, across the glacier, and up the steep snow couloir. This route of course will vary widely depending on snow conditions.
2. The "traditional" route -- all the way up Starr's buttress on loose class 2-3 rock.
3. The "paranoid" route (the way we descended), which avoids the steep snow above the glacier by going down the upper part of Starr's Buttress, and avoids the steep rock lower down on the buttress by going over onto the glacier. From the bottom of the buttress, we got water and started the long uphill slog across the talus to Wanda Lake. The alpenglow hit as we crested the saddle west of the lake, and the entire lake basin and even the air itself seemed suffused with soft pink light. From there it was down the Muir trail to our packs, then down some slabs to a flat sandy area at the south end of Sapphire Lake, where we set up camp. It was 9 p.m., for a 14-hour day, and incredibly, for David, Rich, and Bob, their second 14-hour day in a row.

DAY SIX : A COL FROM HELL

Monday our plan was up and over the Sierra Crest via the Haeckel-Wallace Col (except for David, who departed for Lamarck Col). We left camp at 8:30 a.m. and hiked up into the very beautiful and nearly untouched alpine valley just east of Sapphire Lake, enjoying the small lakes and meadows, strange rock formations, and excellent views of Mts. Huxley, Warlow, and Fiske just to the south. We climbed higher into more austere alpine terrain of talus, snowfields, and partially frozen lakes, then reached the bottom of the 1000' scree gully leading up to the col at noon. The scree gully was very steep and loose, and at one point part of the group had to take cover while two of us climbed up ahead -- there was just too much rockfall for the four of us to climb at the same time.

After two hours in the gully, with time out for breaks and whining, we reached the col at 13,000'.

After a break to eat and put on crampons, we walked over to the base of Haeckel (13,435') as dark clouds moved in from the north. The climb up Haeckel from the south is challenging class-3 but short -- in fact it leaves you wishing it were a lot longer because the climbing is quite interesting. The best route starts about 100' below the south ridge of Haeckel and angles gradually up toward the ridgeline, aiming for a slot about 10 feet below the summit. In 30 minutes we were on top, but just as we started relaxing and enjoying the views, we heard the rumble of thunder from the approaching storm and turned to descend.

Back down on the snowfield at 4 p.m., Charles and I discussed whether or not to do Wallace (13,377) (Bob and Rich had already climbed it). We were pretty tired and it was a long way down to where we wanted to camp, but on the other hand, neither of us had done it and the storm seemed to be breaking up. The argument "How long will it be before we're this close to it again?" easily won out, and we started up the snow that led almost all the way to the top. Some class 2-3 scrambling above the snow took us to the summit, which is an uncomfortable pile of huge thin slabs standing on end.

Charles worked on his photography for awhile, and after a rest, we descended and retrieved our packs. At 7 p.m. we started following in Rich's and Bob's footsteps down to our meeting place at Midnight Lake, 2000 feet below over complex terrain. We were assaulted by bugs on the ridge above Midnight Lake, and we finally spotted Rich's tent and pulled into camp at 9 p.m. After supper I drifted off to sleep with that deeply pleasurable feeling you get on the last night of a long and wonderful climbing trip.

DAY SEVEN -- HIKING OUT

Tuesday morning we got up at 5 a.m. and fled just as the bugs were waking up at 6. With a break for breakfast on the trail, we got down to Lake Sabrina at 10, watched the fishermen on the dam, cleaned up, and headed off to the Bishop Sizzler and home.

• *Jim Ramaker*

"We slept like babies. We woke up every two hours and cried." -- Todd Skinner, describing life at 19,500' on the Trango Tower

Langley and Tyndall

JULY 4, 1997

Mt. Langley

This trip to Mt. Langley was billed in Scree as a beginner peak-climbing trip. The trip proved very popular, as I had more sign-ups than I had space. The weather could not have been better; sunny and warm with no clouds. The only thing marring the trip was a moderate mosquito problem at the cotton wood lakes. After a brief (less than 3 hours) hike from the trailhead, we camped at the cottonwood lakes 4 and 5 area, just below Army Pass on Saturday night. We started hiking at 7 AM Sunday morning. As the group was large (8 people) and contained climbers of widely varying experience, we took 5 hours to reach the top. Everyone made it, including some people that I frankly had doubts about earlier in the day. We enjoyed fantastic views at the summit. I think that from the summit of Langley, all the 14ers can be seen except Shasta! It took us 3 hours to get down to camp. Everyone reported that they had enjoyed the climb and the superb weather. There was some brief, and I do mean brief, swimming in the lake by a number of brave souls, as the water was very cold. In fact Alex seemed to defy gravity by being able to exit the water seemingly as fast as he had entered! It looked like someone was fast-reversing a video of him diving into the water. We returned to the cars early the next day after a short hike out. This is a very enjoyable and picturesque area to be in and I recommend it for climbers of all abilities. Trip participants: Deirdre Conley, Juan Vera, John Cordes + Gerard (a summer intern at John's company), Dwight Goehring, Nancy Stevenson, Alex Sapozhnikov.

Mt. Tyndall

JULY 26, 1997

This peak was climbed in a weekend by myself and Alex Sapozhnikov, the only other trip participant. This trip was listed as long, strenuous and requiring one to go ultra-light, so I guess these tough trips do not appeal to many people. We traveled ultra-light, so that meant no stove, no drinking cup, no pots, no bowls, no silverware, no water filter (just Polar Pure), no rope, no harnesses, no ice ax, no crampons, no pro, well, you get the idea. It is easier to list the stuff we took, instead of the stuff we left behind. And, since the weather looked good, we had no tent or bivy sacks. I think my pack weighed 14 lbs. This light weight made for glorious hiking. This para-military death-march left the car at 8:30 and reached the top of Shepherd Pass 8 hours later. I reported that it felt like I had not done anything that day at all., due to how light my pack was. We scrapped the idea of knocking off the peak that evening, as Alex had a bit more weight than I, and he said he felt as though he HAD done something that day. Also, we were not sure how long it would take us to do the climb. The next morning we started at 4 AM and after some brief class 3 at the top, we signed in at the summit register and were back down at camp in a leisurely 5.5 hours. We were at our car by 5 PM. Afterwards, although Alex appeared to be partially dead, he said he would like to do two of these type of trips per month to stay in shape! By the time we got home, at about 1 AM, I had started to feel some of the affects of the 7000' gain-loss, 26 mile round-trip. Going light - how sweet it is!

• *Both trip reports by Chris Kramar*

Whitney & Russell

AUGUST 15, 1997

Five of us met at Whitney Portal on the morning of Friday, Aug. 15 to attempt Mt. Whitney (14,494') and Mt. Russell (14,086'). The group included Arun Mahajan, David Shaw, Bob Suzuki, and co-leaders Charles Schafer and myself (Jim Ramaker). We hiked up the north fork of Lone Pine Creek, starting at 10 a.m. and getting a morning wake-up on the short exposed section of the Ebersbacher Ledges. We had lunch at Lower Boy Scout Lake and pushed on to Iceberg Lake at 12,600', arriving in a hailstorm around 4:30 after a gain of 4200'. We got our tents up and the weather slowly cleared to a beautiful cool breezy alpine evening. The cool breeze sent us to bed shortly after 7, so we had one of those long sleeps you sometimes get on PCS trips.

Saturday we were up at 6 -- Bob and Charles to do the 1500-foot, 5.7 East Face of Whitney, and Arun, David, and I to do the Mountaineer's route. The three of us cruised up the Mountaineer's route with no problems, avoiding the scree and climbing the sandy class 2-3 ledges on the way up to the notch. From the notch we climbed the wide chute about 50 feet past it on the left, climbing carefully to avoid the ice flow and the small icy patches in the chute. About 9:30, after 2 1/4 hours of climbing, we stepped from the mountaineering world to the tourist world of the plateau. It was a beautiful calm morning, and after a long rest on the summit, we departed about 11 and arrived back in camp at 12:30. This climb seemed easier than when I did it last year -- it is definitely not one of those all-day PCS epics, though it's still a sporty and interesting climb in spectacular surroundings.

While the three of us relaxed all afternoon at Iceberg Lake, Bob and Charles were putting in a long, exciting day high above us. They got a bit off route above the Fresh Air Traverse, and had to downclimb over 100' to find the correct crack. Above that, they saved time by climbing unroped on some of the class 3-4 pitches, and summited at 2 p.m. After that they hiked a mile and 700 vertical feet down the Mt. Whitney trail to bag Mt. Muir (14,015'). Then it was back up to 14,500 and down the Mountaineer's route, finally arriving back in camp at 7:30 p.m.

~Around this time we had a fascinating visitor drop by our camp a world-class mountaineer from Bulgaria named Val Trenev. He was helping lead a coed group of about a dozen teenage Explorer Scouts, and told us off-handily of some of his mountaineering exploits. He'd climbed the north faces of the Eiger and the Matterhorn, done a first ascent in the Torres del Paine, skied the Whitney Mountaineer's route in one day in winter, and so forth. And he was no story teller -- before he'd dropped by, we'd watched him cruise unroped up a 100' vertical cliff above our camp, which he later casually dismissed as "only 5.8+". Suitably humbled and charmed by this mountaineering demigod, we washed our dishes and slunk off to bed.

Sunday was Russell day, and the plan was to hike down to Upper Boy Scout Lake and climb the East Ridge from there. We made good time, packing up our camp, hiking down, setting it up again, and leaving for the climb by 9 a.m. I'd forgotten how painful the scree slope leading up to Russell is steep, loose, and unrelenting for a full 1500'. At 11 we finally stepped onto the strange desert-like plateau at 13,000', and strolled over to the Russell-Carillon saddle. The spiry East Horn of Russell glowered down at us, and our mood was not lifted when we ran into two climbers on a CMC trip who'd just turned back on the East Ridge because of the exposure. After some minor procrastination, we started on the ridge at 12. Right at the beginning there's a knife-edge section with some narrow upright slabs cross-wise to the ridge, and we got our first taste of the vast exposure on both sides of the ridge as we did

some awkward straddling moves over the slabs. After that, the ridge rises steeply toward the East Horn (not to be confused with the East Summit farther on), with the only possible route going up a steeply sloping slab with some parallel cracks high up on the right side of the ridge. The slab looks frightening to climb unroped, but take heart, this section, like most of the East Ridge, is not as bad as it first appears. One of the cracks up on the slab is a knee-deep trough that we strolled up in almost total security. And the rock here, like almost everywhere on the ridge, is solid, with fairly frequent handholds and a rough texture that gives excellent friction.

After we passed the East Horn, the East Summit came into view about 500' away, and this section is the hardest part of the climb. We climbed briefly on the knife-edge, but most of the time on slabs and ledges 10 to 20' down on the right. This section requires total concentration, as the exposure on the right is hideous and a slip could be fatal.

But again, take heart -- you're always on slabs or ledges on an inclined "shelf" with good holds, and not on a vertical wall hanging your butt out over the void. And all of the actual moves are class 3 or easier if you find yourself struggling in terror on tiny holds or on a smooth inclined slab, back up and look for an easier way, because you're probably off route. Bill Kirkpatrick describes the East Ridge of Russell as like climbing on the curved upper part of the wall of a bathtub, and that's a good description (there's even a pool of water at the bottom of the wall, except it's 1000 feet below and filled with icebergs). As the ridge rises toward the East Summit, we kept traversing at the same level instead of following it up, aiming for the bottom of a nebulous gully about 50' below the east summit. Once we reached that point, the scary part of the climb was over. We climbed up almost all the way to the East Summit (class 3, but not exposed at all), then traversed another 500' or so over to the West Summit on sidewalk ledges about 20' down on the right side of the ridge. It's best to go a few feet past the West Summit on the ledges before climbing up to it.

It took an hour for the five of us to traverse the 2000-foot long ridge a smaller party that didn't stop to rest and BS could do it much more quickly. We relaxed on the summit for 40 minutes or so, reading the register and admiring the views of peaks near (Whitney, Williamson) and far (Great Western Divide, Palisades). Around 1:30 we retraced our steps, or tried to -- at a couple places we went slightly lower or higher than on the way up. By 2:30 we were back on safe ground at the Russell Carillon saddle, celebrating our triumph. We then did the 20-minute class-2 scramble up to the summit of Carillon (13,552'), and took a long break. Bob wanted to climb Mt. Tunnabora (13,565'), a mile away to the north across the Tulainyo Lake basin, and I agreed to go with him. Arun, David, and Charles had had enough and departed for the lowlands.

Around 4, Bob and I dropped down off the saddle (a 500' descent, class 2 if you zig-zag on ledges, class-3 if you go straight down) and strolled across the Tulainyo Lake basin on boulders and deeply suncupped snow. This basin, home to the highest named lake in the United States, is a silent, lonely, and beautifully peaceful place. The climb up Tunnabora was an easy class-2 scramble, just like Carillon but a bit longer. We summited at 5 and enjoyed tremendous views. To the north were the Palisades, Mt. Williamson, and an impressive, seldom visited cirque at the head of George Creek canyon. To the south was the spectacular ridge on Russell we'd just climbed, with its tiny shelf of slabs and ledges atop a vast vertical wall.

After suitable celebrations on our third summit of the day, Bob and I headed home through the waning light. We powered straight up the boulders to the Russell-Carillon saddle, then raced down the boulders and scree to camp, dropping 2000 feet in 40 minutes, and

arriving at 7 p.m. Like Iceberg Lake the night before, Upper Boy Scout Lake was a popular camp, with about a dozen or so tents set up. A neighboring woman dropped by to wait anxiously for her eight friends to come down from Whitney, and they finally staggered in exhausted about 8:30. A full moon rose over the jagged north ridge of Thor's Peak, and Bob and I stayed up for awhile talking, savoring the last hours of a spectacular day in the mountains.

Monday we strolled down the canyon and got briefly lost on the Ebersbacher Ledges, but still made it to the cars in 2 1/2 hours. The traditional post-climb lunch at the Bishop Sizzler brought our adventure to a close.

• *Jim Ramaker*

Tinker/Granite Traverse

DECEMBER 19, 1997

No one showed up for the Tinker/Granite traverse on Saturday. (I'm sending a blind copy of this msg to the 6 who were signed up in case I missed one of them in the parking lot - several sent email letting me know they were dropping out, but I had already left town.) Jim Curl stayed in the Donner area and reported ice in the morning and a storm in the afternoon... so the cancellations were probably a good call. I, of course, would have had to beg off as leader since my bindings were broken and I was pretty tired after walking out from Excelsior. The ridges visible from ASI/Sugar Bowl had rocks showing.

It turns out we had a nice climb of Excelsior on Friday 12/19 (after I broke a ski binding on Thursday and continued on snowshoes). There was some great powder around Frog Lake (10500') but mixed windslab and bare 2nd class rock on the ridges to 12,446' (better for glissading than for skiing - I got down faster than Jim did). It snowed all day Thursday but Friday was perfectly clear. By Friday night the snow down at Virginia Lake was already crusting up. The wind on the final summit ridge was terrible, but no clouds. I've been packed for this trip every weekend this month, and since every weekend has a storm Jim Curl and I went mid-week to trick the weather!

It was great to be "way back" the day after a storm, cutting fresh tracks with no one else in the area. Daytime high temp was around 20, nighttime low was 0 according to my new minimum-reading thermometer (which Taylor Instruments finally replaced after Campmor sold me a regular thermo in a min-reading box and could not understand my complaint). Aside from the broken ski binding, my OR gaiters blew a buckle, my snowshoe bindings popped a rivet, one of my car headlights went out, and we STILL had a hell of a good time.

BTW, Sugar Bowl told me on the phone that you could get a one-way lift ticket for backcountry skiing. They said it was the Lincoln lift. Well the Lincoln lift is apparently NOT accessible from a car - you have to buy a \$42 lift ticket to ride the gondola over to some other lift that drops you into the Lincoln lift. The gondola operator said the Judah lift (separate parking lot closer to ASI) was the ONLY place to get the \$10 backcountry lift ticket. Has anyone done this recently?

• *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.

New Year's Resolution

Peaks: Mt. Stanford (N) 12,838, Mt. Morgan (N) 13,005, class 2/snow

Dates: 2-4 Jan. 1998 (Fri.-Sun)

Maps: Mt. Morrison, Mt. Abbot, Casa Diablo, Mt. Tom (15' topos)

Contact: Steve Eckert <eckert@netcom.com> 650-508-0500

Co-Contact: Craig Taylor <ctaylor@calicotech.com>

Sure, you could do these peaks in the summer. But can you do them in the dead of winter? I'm not sure either, but it's going to be fun trying. If the weather gives us a break, that is. The views should be stunning! We'll start from the Sno Park at Rock Creek for an eastern approach to both peaks. The first day will be snowshoe or ski travel to establish a base camp at Hilton Creek Lakes. We may move camp toward Davis Lake the second day (depending on snow and the group's strength). Buy, rent, or borrow an avalanche beacon and a shovel, in addition to ice axe and crampons. You'll need either skis or snowshoes - skis will work best for the approach, snowshoes may work best for the climb.

NOTE: By starting from Rock Creek (instead of Hilton Creek) we have a little more mileage but a lot less elevation gain on the first day. If the road is not plowed, we'll divert to Hilton and grunt up past Davis Lake that way. This is not a beginner's trip. To sign up, send email to <eckert@netcom.com> with recent snow climbing experience. Please indicate what group gear (tent/stove/car) you have to offer, whether you prefer snowshoes or skis, and whether you would go in marginal weather.

Bear Valley Peak Bag and Randonnee Ski Instruction Trip.

Peak: To be decided by group and instructor.

Dates: Jan. 5-6

Contact: Rich Calliger

Map: N/A

Gear: Full winter gear required. Ice axe and crampons should be in car. (Along with car tire-chains!!!)

Location: Bear Valley is between Tahoe and Yosemite Administration: Liability waivers required to be signed as well as sign-in/off the trip. Mt. adventure waiver will be signed as well.

I have decided to take the peak-bagging ski mountaineering plunge (oh- there's a pun!) and want to take some semi-private lessons as well as climb a peak on skis so I have talked with a Pro at Mountain Adventure up at Bear Valley. Day 1 is basic ski instruction at \$55 day beginner package including rental and lift ticket. The 2nd day will climax with a negotiable peak bag trip in the back country which includes ski instruction and practice for \$95.

Three or more are need to drive the price down to the \$55 and \$95 level. If you are interested page me ASAP at 510.659-7546 or email. A hostel is available for \$22/night or I have snow-camped near Bear there are a ton of places. I was thinking Sunday-Monday or so- to avoid crowds and get a better discount. These prices are non-refundable but transferable and deposit is required. (This is a NON-COMMERCIAL trip announcement so please keep the

flames @ home <smile>, but if you have done something like this and know the idea is a bad one-or have suggestions let me know off-list-- thanks) We are also planning a winter ski-trip up White later in Jan. so this is a good time to get started!

Check out: <http://www.mtadventure.com>

Mount Wheeler, Nevada

Peak: Mount Wheeler(13,000)
Dates: Jan. 16-20, 1998
Contact: Pat Ibbetson, Tony Cruz, Rich Calliger
Info line 707-234-7331

What: Winter ascent of Wheeler (13,000+) then guided tour of the caves before heading home. (\$4)

Why: Its beautiful, it's cold, there's no bugs or bears or crowds, it's a challenge and IT'S THERE!

Where: GB National Park. GB has the distinction of being Nevada's ONLY national park. It was established as the Lehman Caves National Monument in 1922 and is over 77,000 acres in size. Also- the GB Park has Nevada's ONLY glacier as well. GB is located in eastern Nevada.

We will probably sample The Outlaw, a highly recommend restaurant in Baker, where purportedly they won't "let you leave hungry".

Climbing Plan:

Day 1: Drive to Great Basin NP. Find the proper canyon and drive as far up as we can. Roads are open, but the NPS doesn't maintain. Snowlevel and downed trees determine how far up we start. Camp where are able to. (Meeting place to be determined).

Day 2: Climb Quartzite peak using the canyon to the south, camp in the saddle north of quartzite. Snowshoes will be needed in the canyon where there will be up to 6 feet of snow in the shadows of the ancient bristlecone pine forest. Snowshoes will not be needed once we are above treeline, as the winds of the great basin are so fierce that the alpine country is either blown completely snow free or rock hard. Either way crampons or shoes work fine.

Day 3: Climb Jeff Davis and Wheeler Peaks. This is just one mountain, east and west summits respectively. This is the highest mountain in Nevada. Descend back to car.

Day 4: Guided tour of Lehman Caves. Drive home.

Coneheads atop Ventana

Peak: Ventana Double Cone, 4853 ft, Class 2
Dates: January 24, 25 1998.
Maps: Big Sur 7.5' and Ventana Cones 7.5'.
Contact: Bill Kirkpatrick. Home: 408-293-2447, Work: 408-279-3450

Meet at Botcher's Gap (2000 ft) Campground in Big Sur on Saturday morning, January 24; pack about 6 miles to Pat Springs Camp (3800 ft). We will start Sunday morning at dawn for the long hike to the top of Ventana Double Cone, then return to pick up our gear and return to the cars after dark on Sunday. This is only 1.5 hour drive from San Jose. Heavy rain cancels.

Around and Atop Roundtop Again

Peak: Roundtop (10600) Class 2+ snow
Date: Feb. 8 Sunday
Contact: George Van Gorden 408-779-2320

We will meet at the Carson Pass snow-park at 8:00 and on snow shoes or skies head for Roundtop. To the saddle above Lake Winumucca is easy walking and, crampons and ice axe are needed only on the last few hundred feet. Experience with axe and crampons is necessary.

It's A Cold, Cruel World

Peak: Matterhorn Peak (12,264') Class
3/snow
Dates: Feb. 14-16
Maps: Matterhorn Peak and Buckeye Ridge
Contact: Kai Wiedman 650-347-5234

Let's test our mettle against the elements. To reach a Sierra summit in winter is a major achievement. We may never climb in Alaska or the Himalayas, but a winter ascent of the Matterhorn could be our Everest. I would like to form two teams; one on skis and one on showshoes. Please give me a call if you would like to lead the snowshoe team.

Pakistan

Date: August 1998
Contact: Warren Storkman

Along the Afghan border from Chitral to Hunza. Duration of 28 days, with 20 trekking.

Nepal

Peak: Mera Peak (21,000)
Date: October 1998
Contact: Warren Storkman
4180 Mackay Drive
Palo Alto, CA 94306
650-493-8959(H)
650-493-8975(FAX)
Dstorkman@AOL.com

Mera Peak 21,000 also a trekking group to Tengbache. Trek from Arun River, a seldom traveled route. People and villages that are not accustomed to seeing Westerners. I'll retrace a 1983 trek.

Chance favors prepared minds. -Czech proverb

**"If you pick up a starving dog and make him prosperous, he will not bite you. This is the principal difference between a dog and a man."
-- Mark Twain**

**"Use email: Never send a tree to do an electron's work"
-- Rich Calliger**

Scree is the monthly journal of the Peak Climbing Section of the Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter.

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Subscriptions and Email List Info

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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.

In Upcoming Issues:

Feb 10, 1998: Butch Suits - Skiing the High Sierra
Mar 10, 1998: Dr. Mark Cole Cho Oyo

Deadline for submissions to the next Scree is Sunday 1/25/98. Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month.



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

"Vy can't ve chust climb?" - John Salathe

First Class Mail - Dated Material