

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

## General Meeting

**Date:** July 8, 2007  
**Time:** 6 - 9 pm (available at 5 pm for kids)  
**Where:** Wildwood Park  
20764 Fourth Street, Saratoga

### Program: Outdoor BBQ and Gear Swap

The July meeting is our annual BBQ and gear exchange on July 8 at 6:00 at Wildwood Park BBQ area A. See <http://tinyurl.com/6qpm4p>.

Bring a dish to share, your own specialty, or choose according to first letter of your last name:

A-G Main course (think grilled items)  
H-M Appetizer  
N-S Veggie or Fruit side  
T-Z Dessert

Bring your own beverage (alcohol is ok), \$3, dinnerware, friends and family.

Bring the kids to climb on the play structures. BBQ should be hot by 6 pm for families on an early dinner schedule. Our reservation is 5–9 pm.

Bring whatever gear you find cluttering your garage or closet. Someone may want or need it. You can even charge something for it, but experience indicates that the lower the price the more likely for a sale. Free is best!

**Directions:** From 280: Exit at De Anza Blvd; go south for about 5 miles, crossing Hwy 85 about half way to Saratoga. The road changes name at Prospect Rd to Saratoga Sunnyvale Rd.

At the village traffic light at the intersection of DeAnza Blvd, Big Basin Way, Saratoga Ave and Saratoga Los Gatos Road, turn right on Big Basin Way and drive part way through downtown Saratoga. Turn right on 4th St, the first through street on the right. The park is at the bottom of the hill on your right. Park in park parking (appears to be mostly hotel parking for Saratoga Inn), or park across the road, or along the road, where-ever parking is allowed.

Google driving map: <http://tinyurl.com/6cpch4>

## Editor's Notes

Here are some **trip reports** showing what people belonging to the section do in their well-coriographed "leisure" time.

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## Gear Swap

Do not forget that the picnic Tuesday July 8 includes a gear swap so that you can clean out your garage, closet, or cellar (really, there are some in California) of gear that you do not use but someone would love to have. You can even charge a little if you think it is a good value.

## From the Chair

**Lisa Barboza**

**High Season**

It's climbing season, and the time when I'd rather be sleeping on the ground than typing on my laptop in a Boeing 777 at 35000 feet on a trip back from the East Coast. But as I fly over the Rockies, with snow below, and wide untrammelled spaces beyond, I can't believe how beautiful our earth is – and how many peaks remain to be climbed. And many are in our beloved Sierra. We have a full roster of peaks on our climbing list this year; to get on a trip, contact a leader. Many of our trips are going out full and we need more trips. Leaders, I'm calling on you to add 10 more trips to our summer/fall listings.

Peak registers – a vanishing phenomenon – The June issue of Sierra magazine had an article about peak registers, and their puzzling disappearance. Indeed, many of the old ones are disappearing, and I caution you to not say too much about the really old ones. I myself have signed into the oldest one in the Sierra, circa 1894, which has since been taken away for safekeeping to the Bancroft library. In some cases, the books are gone, in some cases, the entire register is gone, in others, they've been taken away for safekeeping. I fear that this recent article may only accelerate the phenomenon. Harry Langenbacher of the SPS is the official guardian of peak registers and maintains a running list at the SPS website <http://angeles.sierraclub.org/sps/>.

We have arranged to acquire several official peak register books. Leaders, see me to pick up a few of the books. Before you climb, check out Harry's list, and take along a register to place at the summit. It's a great thing to do to place a register at a summit where one has disappeared.

Summer Picnic – July 8<sup>th</sup> – Mark the date! So.... Why are we changing the location – We wanted a more bucolic site, with more trees, away from the hustle and bustle yet still centrally located. The site in Saratoga has a creek running through it and I think you'll like it. Bring your own beverage, alcohol is OK, and a meal to share. I hope to be bringing some of our own organic home-grown cucumbers, zucchini, and squash from our summer garden. Bring along gear to swap, or to sell. I don't know about you, but I have 5 backpacks, 6 sleeping bags, 6 tents, and a wide array of miscellaneous gear and some of our new folk wouldn't mind some gently used (hah!) gear.

Some events of note this past month – Emile Cortes gave a great slide show on June 10<sup>th</sup> of her climbs of the Mexican volcanoes – Now I want to go and climb them – And Kelly Maas led an ice axe training in the Dana Couloir, with 12 participants – a great show of interest that we're getting some traction (no pun intended) on the snow and training committee! Thanx very much to Emile and Kelly.

Steering Committee – we have monthly steering committee meetings and everyone is welcome to attend. We talk about club business, try to improve our service to all of you. We do

this because we love it, and because nobody else is nutty enough to climb peaks every weekend for all summer long. We have a nearly full roster for our steering committee with the recent addition of Jespers Schou, who is our new publicity chair. Along with Louise Wholey, Scree Editor, Joe Baker, Webmaster, Rod McCalley, Vice Chair, Alex Suphoznikov, Treasurer, Kelly Maas, Training Chair, and Charles Shafer, Mountaineering Committee chair, we have a great team providing the best climbing experience that we can. Our value proposition as a club: NOLS for free – introducing people the mountains is our mission and we've gotten some great new members lately. Our goal for new members for 2008 is 50 new members and we're close the getting 25, and we're on track. I want to thank all of the people on the team who put all of this together for you.

Happy climbing, and hope to see you on the trail above 10,000 feet. That's where my summer office will be. LISA

## Gear

### Water Filters

**By Louise Wholey**

New tools continually make life easier backpacking and surviving in the backcountry. Recently MSR released a water filter that is the lightest I have seen at <8 oz. It is the MSR Hyperflow Microfilter. It is quite compact, pumps about 3 liters/min, is field testable and can be back-flushed in the field when pumping begins to get difficult.

Features that are very handy are an attachment to wide mouth water bottles (though it does not fit my Nalgene bottle without leaking – seems to need an O-ring for the Quick Connect Bottle Adapter to keep it from being so lose – maybe I lost it), and can be pumped right into a bladder without removing it from the backpack. Just take off the mouth piece and connect the outlet hose (I cut a short piece off the inlet hose for that). I love pumping directly into my bladder!

A feature that worries me is the "Hollow fiber technology" material is breakable upon dropping or freezing. I have dropped it without a problem but there is one of those warnings...

The filter physically removes particles, protozoa, and bacteria down to 0.2 microns in size, including giardia, salmonella, cryptosporidia and others.

The pre-filter is a little pouch which attaches to the end of the intake hose and blocks larger contaminants from entering the micro-filter. It floats near the surface of the water to avoid intake of contaminants located at the floor of your water source

I bought mine at REI for \$80, a good item on which to use the 20% discount. See <http://www.rei.com/product/767564>.

## PCS Trip Calendar

**July 2-7** – South and West of Whitney (Choice of Guyot, Hitchcock, Young, Hale, Chamberlain, Newcomb, Joe Devel, Pickering, McAdie)

**Leaders:** Lisa Barboza, Louise Wholey

**July 4-6** – Pilot Knob, Goethe

**Leader:** Tim Hult

**July 18-20** - Junction, Keith, Bradley from Onion Valley

**Leader:** Lisa Barboza

**July 26-27** – Mt. Morgan (S)

**Leader:** Joe Baker

**July 31 – Aug 5** – Kaweahs (Big, Black, Red)

**Leader:** Lisa Barboza

**Aug 1-3** – Sequoia / Kings Canyon Car Camping

**Leaders:** Debbie Benham, Chris MacIntosh

**Aug 2-3** - Mt. Davis via Rush Cr

**Leader:** Louise Wholey

**Aug 9-10** - Mt. Baldwin

**Leader:** Charles Schafer

**Aug 22-24** - Rixford, Bago (Kearsarge Pass)

**Leader:** Charles Schafer

**Mid August** - Evolution loop – Darwin, Mendel

**Leader:** Kelly Maas, Landa Robillard

**Aug 29-Sep 1** - Rodgers, Foerster, Electra

**Leader:** Tim Hult

**Aug 30- Sep 1** - Tower Peak

**Leader:** Stephane Mouradian

**Sep 5-7** - Mt. Russell (maybe Carillon)

**Leader:** Lisa Barboza

**Sep 19-21** - Twin Peaks, Virginia

**Leader:** Tim Hult

**Sep 27-28** - Florence, Vandever

**Leader:** Lisa Barboza

## Private Trips Summary

**Important:** Private trips are not insured, sponsored, or supervised by the Sierra Club. They are listed here because they may be of interest to PCS members. Private trips may be submitted directly to the Scree editor. Details on these trips follow the trip reports. In this issue.

**Jul 3-6, 2008** – Disappointment

**Jul 12-13, 2008** - Iron Mountain

**Aug 16-24, 2008** – Wind Rivers

**Aug 29-Sep 1, 2008** – Clarence King, Gardiner, Cotter, & Fin Dome

**September 6-7, 2008** – Tenaya Canyon

**October, 2008** – Kanchenguna Trek

**November 8-9, 2008** – Pinnacles: Hike, Bike or Climb

## PCS Trip Details

### South & West of Mt. Whitney – Pick your Peaks

Peaks: Guyot (12300), Hitchcock (13186), Young (13176), Hale (13494), Chamberlin (13169), Newcomb (13422), Joe Devel (13327), Pickering (13474), Newcomb (13422), McAdie (13799)

Dates: July 2-7

Leaders: Lisa Barboza ([pcs.chair@lomapieta.sierraclub.org](mailto:pcs.chair@lomapieta.sierraclub.org))

Louise Wholey ([louisewholey@yahoo.com](mailto:louisewholey@yahoo.com))

We'll attempt to climb several peaks ranging from the south to the west of Mt. Whitney on this 6 day trip. From Cottonwood Lakes trailhead, we'll go over New Army Pass and drop down to head north on the PCT or into the Sky Blue Lake basin, depending on which peaks people want to climb. The peaks are all class 1 or 2, except McAdie, which is class 3.

This will be a great trip to start the summer climbing season if you are in or near good physical condition. For the western peaks option: Day 1 is 15 miles with 3800 ft gain. Day 2&3: camp at Crabtree Creek, climb Hitchcock, Chamberlin, Newcomb. Day 4: climb Hale, Young. Day 5&6: climb Guyot & hike out. Send climbing resume with conditioning and recent experience plus peaks of interest. We will carpool from Bay Area. Permits for 10.

### Pilot Knob, Goethe

Peaks: Pilot Knob (12,245), Goethe (13,264)

Dates: July 4-6

Leader: Tim Hult, 650-966-2215 (w)

This is an ambitious trip targeting two peaks in the Piute pass region over 3 days.

We will hike up to Piute pass and make camp at one of the lakes near there with a possible reconnaissance of the 3rd class route of Goethe peak in that afternoon. Saturday we will climb the previously scouted 3rd class route up Goethe and on the descent cross over on trails and cross country to do the easier 2nd class Pilot Knob returning to camp via headlamps. Participants should bring a good headlamp, GPS, and be self-sufficient for camping.

### **Center Basin Peaks - Junction, Keith, Bradley**

Peaks: Junction (13,845+), Keith (13,976), Bradley (13,264)  
Dates: July 18-20  
Leader: Lisa Barboza ([pcs.chair@lomaprieta.sierraclub.org](mailto:pcs.chair@lomaprieta.sierraclub.org))  
Co-lead: Louise Wholey ([louisewholey@yahoo.com](mailto:louisewholey@yahoo.com))

Trailhead: Onion Valley. Leave Bay Area afternoon of July 17th, drive to Independence, camp at Onion Valley. Friday 7/18 Climb over University Pass - drop packs, climb University (13,589). Descend to Center Basin, camp above Golden Bear Lake. Saturday 7/19 Climb Bradley (13264), traverse to Keith (13976), return to camp. Sunday, Climb Junction (13845, class 3) and hike out.

Send qualifications, climbing resume, including recent experience to trip leader. Carpool from Bay Area.

### **Mt. Morgan (S)**

Peaks: Mt. Morgan (13748)  
Dates: July 26-27  
Leader: Joe Baker ([pcs@joebaker.us](mailto:pcs@joebaker.us), 650-261-1488)  
Co-lead: Judy Molland.

This is a great introduction to climbing Sierra peaks. The views from Mt. Morgan (S) are spectacular, with Bear Creek Spire, Mt. Humphreys, and the Pioneer Basin in sight. On Saturday morning, we will meet at Rock Creek Lake in the Eastern Sierra, hike to Francis Lake, and set up camp. On Sunday, we will climb the ridge to Mt Morgan at a moderate pace, return to camp, and head back to the trailhead. The peak is quite high, so you should be in good condition and have spent some recent time at altitude.

### **Exploring the Big Arroyo and the Kaweahs**

Peaks: Mount Kaweah (13,802), Black (13,720), Red (13,720)  
Dates: July 31 - Aug 5  
Leader: Lisa Barboza ([pcs.chair@lomaprieta.sierraclub.org](mailto:pcs.chair@lomaprieta.sierraclub.org))  
Co-lead: Needed

Trailhead: Mineral King. Leave Bay Area Thursday afternoon July 31 and camp at Trailhead. Friday Aug 1 hike over Sawtooth Pass to make camp in Big Arroyo - 16 miles, 4500 feet of gain! Saturday Aug 2 climb Mt. Kaweah (class 1). Sunday Aug 3 climb Black Kaweah (class 3). Monday Aug 4 climb Red Kaweah (class 2). Tuesday Aug 5 hike 16 miles out to TH and drive home.

Send qualifications, climbing resume, including recent experience to trip leader. Carpool from Bay Area.

### **Sequoia / Kings Canyon Car Camping**

Peaks: Silliman 11,188' (class 1,2),  
Alta 11,204' (class 1) or Mitchell Peak 10,365' (class 1)  
Dates: August 1-3 (Fri-Sun)  
Maps: Mt Silliman, Lodgepole: 7.5'  
Leaders: Debbie Benham ([deborah05@sbcglobal.net](mailto:deborah05@sbcglobal.net), 650/964-0558)  
Chris MacIntosh, ([cmaci@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cmaci@sbcglobal.net))

Enjoy the beautiful forests and peaks of our national parks. I've reserved two side-by-side campsites at Lodgepole Campground. \$8 nonrefundable fee holds your spot for 2 nights (Fri/Sat). Saturday, we'll hike up Mt Silliman (expect a long day). Sunday, we'll decide on either Alta Peak or Mitchell Peak. Legendary group appetizers Saturday night.

This is a car camp with dayhikes. No overnight, backcountry wilderness travel.

### **Mt. Davis - via Rush Creek**

Peaks: Mt. Davis (12,303, class 2)  
Dates: Aug 2-3  
Leader: Louise Wholey ([louisewholey@yahoo.com](mailto:louisewholey@yahoo.com))  
Co-lead: Needed

Backpack 8 miles, climbing 2600 ft, from Silver Lake to camp at Thousand Island Lake, higher at Lake Catherine if possible. Climb Davis on Sunday, 10 mi, 2400 ft, then hike out. Peak wildflowers. Intermediate skills. Permit for 6.

### **Mt. Baldwin – via Convict Canyon**

Peaks: Mt. Baldwin (12,615)  
Dates: Aug 9-10  
Leader: Charles Schafer ([c\\_g\\_schafer@yahoo.com](mailto:c_g_schafer@yahoo.com), 408-354-1545)  
Co-lead: Needed

This will be a relatively slow paced backpack to climb Mt Baldwin in the Eastern Sierra via Convict Canyon. We'll hike in and set up camp on Saturday, then climb the peak and hike out on Sunday. This will be a very scenic hike through country with a variety of colors of rock.

### **Rixford, Bago (Kearsarge Pass)**

Peaks: Rixford (12887), Bago (11870)  
Dates: Aug 22-24  
Leader: Charles Schafer ([c\\_g\\_schafer@yahoo.com](mailto:c_g_schafer@yahoo.com), 408-354-1545)  
Co-lead: Needed

No details at press time...

### **Evolution Loop – Darwin, Mendel**

Peaks: Darwin (13831), Mendel (13710)  
Dates: Mid-August  
Leader: Kelly Maas (408-378-5311, [kellylinda@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kellylinda@sbcglobal.net))  
Co-lead: Landa Robillard

No details at press time...

### **Rodgers, Foerster, Electra**

Peaks: Rodgers (12978), Foerster (12057), Electra (12442)  
Dates: Aug 29-Sep 1  
Leader: Tim Hult, 650-966-2215 (w)  
Co-lead: Needed

This trip is to climb these three class 2 / 3 peaks on the "back side" of the Ritter Banner massif. We will begin Aug 29th (Friday) at the Agnews meadows trailhead with the goal of hiking in over the 2nd class pass between Banner and Grey. The hanging valley behind Ritter and Banner is one of least visited in the Sierra and very beautiful. Much of the trip will be cross country over old mining trails, with route finding difficulties and long days. Milage will be 12-14 per day including elevation loss or gain of 3000'. Participants should be comfortable in these situations.

## Tower Peak

Peaks: Tower Peak (11755)  
Dates: Aug 30 – Sep 1  
Leader: Stephane Mouradian (smouradian@hotmail.com)  
Co-lead: Needed  
No details at press time...

## Mt. Russell (maybe Carillon)

Peaks: Mt. Russell (14088), maybe Carillon(13517)  
Dates: Sep 5-7  
Leader: Lisa Barboza ([pcs.chair@lomapieta.sierraclub.org](mailto:pcs.chair@lomapieta.sierraclub.org))  
Co-lead: Needed  
No details at press time...

## Twin Peaks, Virginia

Peaks: Twin Peaks (12323), Virginia (12001)  
Dates: Sep 19-21  
Leader: Tim Hult, 650-966-2215 (w)  
Co-lead: Needed  
No details at press time...

## Mineral King - Florence & Vandever

Peaks: Florence (12432), Vandever (11947)  
Dates: Sep 27-28  
Leader: Lisa Barboza ([pcs.chair@lomapieta.sierraclub.org](mailto:pcs.chair@lomapieta.sierraclub.org))  
Co-lead: Needed

Be prepared for fall mountain conditions with possible cold temperatures. Suitable for beginner-intermediate climbers.  
Friday 9/26/08, drive in carpools from Bay Area to Mineral King.  
Car-camp at 8000' trailhead.  
Saturday, dayhike both peaks. 3.5 miles to Farewell Gap, 2700 ft. gain, climb both peaks (about 3 miles and 2000 feet of gain).  
Sunday, drive home. Contact Leader with experience.

## Gear Swap

Do not forget that the picnic Tuesday July 8 includes a gear swap so that you can clean out your garage, closet, or cellar (really, there are some in California) of gear that you do not use but someone would love to have. You can even charge a little if you think it is a good value.

## Historical Events

### Yosemite Gold Rush

In the early Spring and Summer of 1977, Yosemite climbers and valley rats discovered a windfall under the ice of Merced Lake, giving new meaning to the moniker "High Sierras."

On a recent trip PCS member Tim Hult retold the story of a friend of his who, as a young employee of the Yosemite Park and Curry Company that year went on a hike with friends and discovered the crash site of a plane loaded with 6 tons of high grade Marijuana. Once the word got out, the ensuing gold rush was on for anyone with good legs, a big pack and the inclination to score some really big illicit money. Tim's friend hauled enough of the \$400/lb weed out of the high country to put himself through college. A book on the story is apparently in the works, but a link to an old article is here:

[http://www.supertopo.com/climbing/thread.html?topic\\_id=68674&tn=0](http://www.supertopo.com/climbing/thread.html?topic_id=68674&tn=0)

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My name is Ron, I lived in Yosemite in 1976 and 1977, worked at the Ahwahnee Hotel. I am one of the so called "hikers" actually on snowshoes, who found the airplane, or the wing as it turned out along the trail to Lower Merced Pass Lake and our ultimate destination, Ottoway Lake, in the Clark range. We never made Lower Merced Pass Lake, pity, I often wonder what would have happened if I had and figured out what happened. When we returned to the valley after camping on Ottoway Lake I reported to the Rangers that we had found a wing in the high country and gave them the numbers from the wing. Well all hell broke loose and in the next few days the entire Valley knew the story of the plane crash.

In April 1977 I returned with seemingly the entire Valley and returned with a backpack full of pot. Which I quickly dried and sold to a friend in San Jose. The next year I went back to college and used the airplane money to make the move to San Diego and pay for my first two years of college. Something good did come from the "Loadstar Lightning". Rich Schloss is a good guy and has interviewed me and we have spoken on the phone a few times since. He is trying to piece the story together from several angles. I personally don't think there is any need to be fearful, statute of limitations having long expired. If you really know something first hand, NOT HEARSAY, (there are all kinds of Valley myths), then I would encourage you to come forward and let's get the whole story out. I have learned so much from him and cleared up some of the myths I still believed about the event. I HAVE PHOTOS FROM THE SHOWSHOE TRIP TO OTTOWAY LAKE WHEN WE FOUND THE WING AND THE POT SALVAGE IN APRIL ON-LINE at: [http://public.fotki.com/RonLykins/travel/airplane\\_1977/](http://public.fotki.com/RonLykins/travel/airplane_1977/)

The first 7 or so are at the lake in April (chopping pot out of the ice) the others are the snowshoe trip when we found the wing, shots of the wing included.

I look forward to reading Ricks book when it is released.  
Ron Lykins

## Trip Reports

### Dunderberg, Excelsior, June 7-8, 2008

By Louise Wholey

Eight of us, Dale Matsuda, Joan Marshall, Chris Franchuk, Stephane Mouradian, Arun Mahajan, Dee Booth, Remy Goglio, and leader/scribe Louise Wholey, climbed Excelsior on Saturday. Almost everyone carried snowshoes but did not use them. The snow was consolidated, good corn actually. Stephane and I took skis and had a good spring snow run down. Skis were way faster than walking. Stephane and Remy (without skis) shot down quite fast and had a nap in the parking lot waiting for everyone.



Arun and Dee only stayed for Saturday. We went to the Bridgeport inn for dinner - expensive but not great. Stephane and Remy left after dinner seeking skiing like they wished they had done last week at Tioga Pass. Virginia Lakes actually offered some of the best skiing judging from the tracks I saw above Virginia Lake on Sunday.

Sunday, Joan, Chris, Dale and I climbed Dunderberg up the ridge directly above the parking lot. It was some easy small talus climbing along with quite pleasant class 3 rock climbing.



On the descent we moved off the ridge to the right at the wrong place and into more difficult and looser debri-covered ledges. There is a tricky red rock band about 1000 feet up where we went wrong coming down. Here is Dale on it.



We passed very near a nice obelisk but Joan did not wish to lead us up it. We finally got back on route below the rock band. Looking back up, I could see the small patch of snow that we had climbed past - way further right than our descent route. We should have descended straight down. It would have been tricky but the group did quite well with the climbing. I skipped skiing down the "Grand Central Couloir" which appeared to still be ski-able. Rock climbing with ski boots is quite tough. Mixing ski and foot descents do not work well so I passed on it.

Rémy and Sephane skied Dana on Sunday. See picasa site: <http://picasaweb.google.com/Remy.Goglio/ExcelsiorDana>

## Mineral King, June 13-15

### A Photo Essay by Louise Wholey

Spring in Mineral King is a time for hiking through beautiful flowers, snowy mountain vistas, and spectacular waterfalls. Though we, Lisa Barboza, Tim Hult, Monique Messié, Christopher Franchuk, Steve Eckert, Louise Wholey, all thought we would be bagging lots of peaks, snow thwarted even the most modest attempt. The result was a long hike over 4 passes observing the many beautiful flowers, snowy mountain vistas, and spectacular waterfalls.

In good Sierra Club form we squeezed 7 people and overnight packs into two tiny cars. The trick on parking at the trailhead is to protect the cars from vicious engine-eating marmots. We stopped at Home Depot in Los Banos for crucial equipment, 16x20' tarps to wrap the cars. This is the scheme currently recommended by the rangers. We forgot the bows for the top of these neat packages.

**Mineral King Photos**



Packaged cars hoping to survive the engine-eating marmots  
*(Photo by Steve Eckert)*



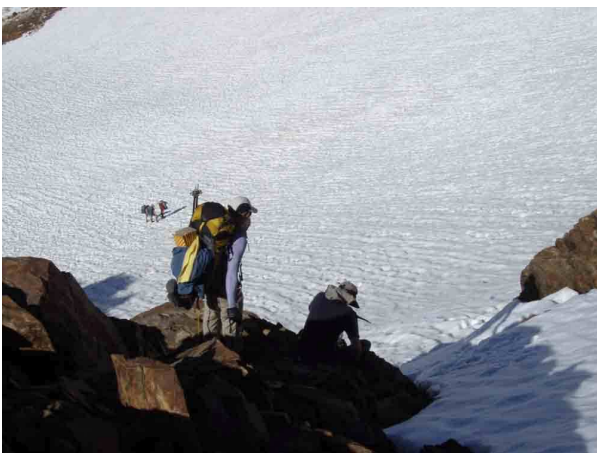
Glacier Pass descent was the center gully. We stopped to camp was at Spring Lake far short of our plan.



White Chief Bowl (center) where we skied a month earlier



Ascending Hands and Knees Pass we saw eggs in the ground.



Steep Snow Descent of Glacier Pass



We tried but failed to reach Lippincott. After a long day we returned over Black Rock Pass viewing the Kaweahs

## More Mineral King Photos



The hike out down Cliff Creek Trail was spectacular



Waterfalls and flowers were aplenty



Bluebells



Ultimately we had to cross the roaring Cliff Creek. We did it barefoot but failed to get a photo – too busy surviving!

The uphill to Timber Gap was just beautiful with everything from fungus to desert paint brush, and even more waterfalls.



It is hard to describe just how incredible this area is, but seeing it is believing it. We have more trips scheduled to Mineral King with full expectations of climbing some of these elusive (when in extensive snow) peaks.

# The Unconsolidated Inconsolable Range Clouddripper 13525, May 31-June 1

By Alex Sapozhnikov

(Photos by Louise)

The trip started by walking along the long water pipe.



It was a good balance practice and a sort of fun. After a couple of hours we started seeing the patches of snow and when we arrived to the Green Lake, the snow was all over the place with scattered patches of land.

We camped at the Green Lake to be as close to our destination as possible and started looking for the camp site. After a lunch, we quickly started approaches to the peak. Surprisingly enough the snow level was perhaps 2000 feet above the 7.500 feet estimated by park service employee.

When we went above 9500 feet, we entered the mixed snow and rock field. The snow was soft and unconsolidated underneath and every step could punch it through making hiking a challenge.

Moving close to rocks were especially complicated since snow made even softer gaps (boobie traps) near the rocks.



Whenever we step on the snow we could fall through almost to the waist level. Meanwhile, the rocks were too far from one another for boulder hopping, so we scrambled to make a slow progress.

After a while we opted to move as far from rocks as possible, and this worked a little better until we had to change our course to make further progress. When we plunged into the mix of rocks and snow, we started punching through snow

again.

We continued stepping between rocks and snow while climbing a slope that seemed to be the last move before we reach the summit. When we reached the top of hill, we found to our surprise that actual summit was on the other side of valley and we would have to first descend down and then climb another slope.

We hurried down the hill wanting to summit before turn-around time. When we checked time, it was 5PM. We weighed our choices: If we would turn around right away, we would have come back to camp before dark, but we missed the summit.

If we had attempted the summit, we would have returned after dark. Since all of us had headlamps, we decided to storm the summit.

The shortage of time multiplied our energy and we started ascent in a brisk pace. In the middle of climb I offered to break steps and went up with steeper angle. This accelerated our uphill progress and we reached the summit at 5:30 PM.



We were really close to the summit block, but it was treacherous class 3 with the snow cover; we decided to turn around so we could pass the most difficult part of hike before dark.

On the way back we retraced our steps. The temperature was colder in the evening and the snow became firmer. This made it easier to walk on the snow and our feet did not punch snow. We passed the snow field fairly quickly and reached the trail at the dusk.



The rest of hike was pretty easy as the trail took us right back to the camp.

It was a very long day however we were glad to accomplish very challenging expedition.

## **Ice Axe Training, June 21-22, 2008**

**By Kelly Maas**

Here's the full list of suspects:

Rudy Ortega, George Van Gorden, Sandra Hao, Kelly Maas (leader), Landa Robillard, Joe Baker, Judy Molland, Andrea Drane, Toinette Hartshorne, Sassan Hazeghi, Dara Hazeghi, Martin Alkire, Chris Prendergast

We spent Saturday practicing with ice axes on the slopes of Mt. Dana. The snow was soft from the warm weather. This made the glissading and self arrest practice safe, but it meant we needed to find a relatively steep slope for sliding. It also meant that crampon practice wasn't very practical. An amazing squall ripped through camp that evening, dumping some rain, and nearly blowing us all the way to Mono Lake. We took that as a sign that we should head to the Mobil station for some chow. A birding event and a wedding combined to make the Mobil station incredibly crowded. The food, however, was as good as ever.

Sandra, Martin and Rudy had never been up Mt. Dana, so on Sunday morning George led them up it. The rest of us gathered on Hwy 120, across the road from "Camp 9".

For those not familiar with it, this is a wide pullout where the Warren Fork crosses Hwy 120 in Lee Vining Canyon, a mile or two below Ellery Lake. The "9" comes from the 9000 ft sign, which has been missing for a few years.

The goal for the day was Mt. Warren, with Lone Pine Peak as a secondary goal. We walked past the locked gate and up the Warren Fork. Four minutes of walking took us past a nice camping area with 3 picnic tables. This seems to be an unadvertised, minimally maintained and underutilized camp/picnic site. There are no fire pits, toilets or piped water, but water can be had from the creek.

On we went, up the beautiful trail, before eventually making a hard right turn and heading cross country in the general direction of the peak. We struggled up a steep hillside of talus and enduring a relentless wind before finally topping out at the edge of a level forest. In the distance, large talus slopes angled towards the heavens. The actual summit wasn't very obvious, but we decided to head up a drainage. To make a long story short, we eventually headed left, crossed a false summit, and eventually found our way to the true summit of Mt. Warren. The wind continued, so it was appropriate that we found a weather station on the summit. (You can find the on-line weather data by googling Mt. Warren weather. The previous evening the wind had gusted there to 76 mph.) We later discovered that numerous forest fires had started that

weekend, which explains why we were disappointed with the visibility. Even so, everyone was impressed with the awesome view of Mono Lake. I can't wait to go back on a clear day.

It had taken us 4.5 hours to reach the top, so we didn't have the time to go after Lee Vining Pk. Anyway, we were all tiring of the wind. The trip back, which provided us with a greater variety of terrain, took a bit under 3 hours.

Thanks to all of the participants for making the weekend fun. It was great to see so many new faces. I hope to see all of you on future outings.

## **SPS Merriam, Royce, June 21-22, 2008**

**By Louise Wholey**

SPS is the Sierra Peaks Section from the Angeles Chapter of the Sierra Club. These are the folks that invented "the list" that ensnares so many California climbers. The trip was led by Barbee Tidball and Tina Bowman, names I had seen many times on peaks. "Who are they?" I wondered. I was also curious what differences existed between trips approved by the Sierra Club MOC (Mountaineering Oversight Committee) and regular trips where the use of crampons and ice axe is forbidden due to insurance requirements.

Saturday the hike to camp started at 7 am. Oops, I overslept badly but they would not go without me and waited a half hour for me to get my act together. Yikes! Not a good way for them to meet me. A different kind of dark clouds formed before noon. Showers hit, some with hail, none forecast for the area. Northern California got some very severe storms with numerous fire outbreaks, closing the PCT in places.

We reached camp at Honeymoon Lake around 1pm. Jim went fishing; I slept; others simply enjoyed the beautiful area despite the heavy crop of mosquitoes. Jim produced a couple of fish that enhanced our homemade beef dinner. Surprisingly cooking pea soup (Thank You Los Gatos Whole Foods for still carrying this wonderful green pea soup; please buy some there), beef entree, and coffee in the morning used only 1 oz of canister gas. Cooking fish takes a lot more ounces of alcohol.

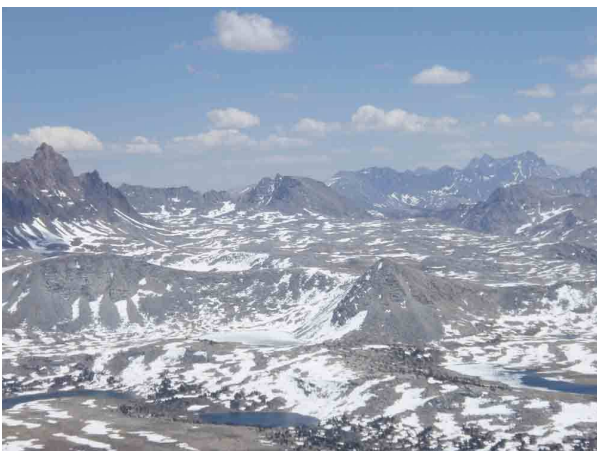
Sunday we scooted up a short way on the Italy Pass Trail and broke off to climb up to the notch between Treasure Peak and Peak 12470. From there we could see our targets just to our left. We hiked along the east side of the Royce Lakes. The upper lake was still mostly frozen, the middle was half open and the lower lake was fully open; sounds like Goldilocks and the Three Bears, but it actually mattered to Jim who came to fish in these lakes. He forgot his helmet and could not climb, according to MOC rules. He really wanted a rest weekend to be ready for the Climb to Kaiser (Pass), the toughest road ride in California. Fishing did work; he brought home some wonderful large trout for a family feast.



The climbing party of 10 donned crampons at the base of the snow slope above the lowest lake. Using ice axe and crampons on an official Sierra Club trip was allowed because the trip and its leaders had applied to the club's MOC for approval of the trip. Such approval means the trip is covered by Sierra Club insurance, a definite benefit to the leaders.

The short soft snow slope went easily despite its reaching close to 45 degrees at the top. One could debate whether crampons were the best choice, because the snow was soft enough to ball up under the foot. It feels more secure which helps less experienced people negotiate slopes that would scare them half to death without the snow-climbing tools. Helmets are required any time ice axe and crampons are used. The idea is to protect the head of a fallen climber.

At the saddle between Merriam and Royce we dropped our technical gear and headed up the class 2 slope of Merriam. I thought that the climbing was challenging in places, considering its rating. Perhaps the thought is that one does not tumble beyond 20 feet on a fall, so that makes it less than class 3. But a fall would be very serious! And some of the steps were tricky! We identified the highest peak as the one further north and found a register there. The views were spectacular. Dominating the landscape was Humphreys, but the visibility was excellent in all directions, allowing people to pick out peaks of many exciting previous climbing trips.



After descending to the saddle, we tackled the scree and talus slopes of Royce, much less challenging than Merriam but

also rated class 2. The group had become quite spread out on both climbs making the breaks very long for the faster climbers and rather short for the slower climbers. But the clock does not stop to wait for anyone; we still had to descend, return to camp, hike out, and drive or fly home. Some people found descending the extremely soft steep snow far more challenging than ascending. Crampons would have created a false sense of security; they can suddenly ball up without their user realizing it, causing an unpredicted fall.

For our route back to camp leaders chose to hike to the Pine Creek Pass Trail. The route was substantially longer than our ascent. Soft snow actually helped; it was firm enough to prevent post-holing and far better than talus hopping. By now everyone was feeling quite skilled on steep snow.



Time, however, was not in our favor; we arrived back to camp at 4:30 pm. Even packing and hiking quickly was not going to change our late night completion, but people were very happy about a successful and fun trip.

Jim carried his trout down the trail wrapped in snow and stopped at the end of the snow cover near the 9000 foot level to refresh his bundle. After a 16 hour day having arisen at 4:30 am, I was unwilling to fly home, but Jim had his fish to protect and chose to fly home despite the very dark skies of a remote place like Bishop. The fish made the trip safely and were half frozen upon arrival in their snowy transport package. Jim was the family hero for bringing home fresh mountain trout. The only request for the future was "Could you get boneless trout next time?"

## Wild Rumors about June 21-22, 2008

We heard via the grapevine that Mike Snadden and Jules enjoyed some fine 5<sup>th</sup> class climbing in Tuolumne Meadows while Lisa and Brian enjoyed quality time together climbing Excelsior and Dunderberg. Bob Suzuki and Linda Sun climbed the snow-covered right side of the Dana couloir, skipping the left side which was all ice.

## Private Trips

**Note:** Private trips are not insured, sponsored, or supervised by the Sierra Club. They are listed here because they may be of interest to PCS members. Private trips may be submitted directly to the editor.

### July 3-6, 2008 – Disappointment (13,917)

**Difficulty:** Class 4, ice ax, crampons, rope

**Contacts:** Bob Suzuki ([SuzukiR@sd-star.com](mailto:SuzukiR@sd-star.com))

Jim Ramaker ([ramaker@us.ibm.com](mailto:ramaker@us.ibm.com))

This is a technical trip requiring a high level of skill.

To avoid holiday traffic we'll leave the Bay Area on Wednesday, and hopefully celebrate July 4 on the summit of Disappointment Peak. Experience with ice ax, crampons, rope, and loose rock required for this strenuous class 4 couloir climb. We will drive home Saturday, or possibly climb Middle Palisade. Permit for 5.

### July 12-13 – Iron Mountain (11,149)

**Difficulty:** Class 2, ice ax, crampons

**Contact:** Charles Schafer ([c\\_g\\_schafer@yahoo.com](mailto:c_g_schafer@yahoo.com), 408-354-1545)

**Assistant:** Needed

This will be a relatively slow paced, weekend climb of Iron Mountain. Saturday we'll hike in via the Beck Lakes trail and we'll set up camp. Sunday we'll climb the peak, and hike out. We will be using ice axe and crampons so some experience with them will be necessary, but it will not be a difficult climb.

This region of the Sierra is one of my favorites because of its scenic beauty. Map is Cattle Mountain 7.5 or Topo!

### Aug 16-24, 2008 – Gannett Peak, Wind Rivers, Wyoming

**Peaks:** Gannett (13804), Fremont (13745), Ellingwood (13052)

**Difficulty:** Class 3-4, ice ax, crampons

**Maps:** Bridger Teton NF, Pinedale RD, North WR

**Contacts:** Bob Suzuki ([SuzukiR@sd-star.com](mailto:SuzukiR@sd-star.com)),

Tim Hult ([timdhult@sbcglobal.net](mailto:timdhult@sbcglobal.net))

From the Elkhart TH (near Pinedale) we'll dash up to Titcomb Basin with our primary focus on bagging the state highpoint of Gannett. Following easy climbs of Fremont and Jackson, we may try a couple of different routes (cl. 4, 5.6) on Ellingwood Peak.

Ice ax, crampons, recent climbing resume, and confidence required.

Leaders will be driving from SF Bay Area.

### Aug 29 - Sept 1, 2008 – Clarence King, Gardiner, Cotter, & Fin Dome

**Difficulty:** Class 3-5, rope

**Contacts:** Bob Suzuki ([SuzukiR@sd-star.com](mailto:SuzukiR@sd-star.com))

Jim Ramaker ([ramaker@us.ibm.com](mailto:ramaker@us.ibm.com))

This is a technical trip requiring a high level of skill.

To avoid holiday traffic we will leave the Bay Area on Thursday. After a long, strenuous backpack to camp, we will have 2 fairly difficult climbs each day, with short belayed climbing on Clarence King and possibly on Gardiner. If interested please be in very good shape with confidence on class 3 & 4 and with some roped climbing experience.

### Sep 6-7, 2008 – Tenaya Canyon

**Difficulty:** Class 4-5, rope, rappel tools

**Contact:** Kelly Maas (408-378-5311,

[kellylanda@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kellylanda@sbcglobal.net))

**Assistant:** Needed

This is a technical trip but no further details were available at press time.

### October, 2008 – Kanchenguna –

North and South Base Camp

**Contact:** Warren Storkman (650-493-8959,

[dstorkman@aol.com](mailto:dstorkman@aol.com))

This will be a 20 day trek in Nepal.

This is my 30<sup>th</sup> year leading treks in Nepal and Tibet. I do not handle any of your funds. We pay the trip provider in Nepal.

### November 8-9, 2008 – Pinnacles

**Difficulty:** Class 1-5, rope, bike or walking shoes

**Contact:** Rick Booth ([rwdbooth@gmail.com](mailto:rwdbooth@gmail.com)) or

Jeff Fisher ([jeff\\_fisher\\_5252@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jeff_fisher_5252@sbcglobal.net))

Hike, Bike, and Climb at Pinnacles National Monument. Come to the interesting and popular Pinnacles National Monument for a Fall trip. A group camp site has been reserved at the campground for Saturday night, November 8.

This is a great area where you can hike, bike or rock climb. Plenty of good hiking and road biking. This is a private trip; no rock climbing instruction is available so be prepared to operate on your own.

## Elected Officials

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**Scree** is the monthly journal of the Peak Climbing Section of the Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter. Current and back issues are posted on the web in PDF and html.

## PCS Official Website

Our official website is <http://lomaprieta.sierraclub.org/pcs/>.  
Joining the PCS is easy: <http://lomaprieta.sierraclub.org/pcs/join/>

## PCS Announcement Listserv

If you join the PCS Announcement Listserv you will receive announcements and updates of trips and meetings. Use <http://lists.sierraclub.org/SCRIPTS/WA.EXE?A0=LOMAP-PCS-ANNOUNCE&X=&Y=> web page or send an email with the message body "subscribe lomap-pcs-announce" (no quotes) to [lists@listserv.sierraclub.org](mailto:lists@listserv.sierraclub.org).

## 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 Monday, July 28th. Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month.



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