

<http://peakclimbing.org/>

General Meeting

Date **May 11, 2010**
Time **7:30 – 9:30**
Where **PCC**
 3921 E. Bayshore Road
 Palo Alto, CA
Program **Favorite 14er Climbs**
Presenter **All Of Us!**



To get everyone inspired for the summer climbing season we will have a show on contiguous US 14ers. Bring 10 or so of your best pictures from 14er climbs over the years for all of us to see! Lower peaks (like 13500ft),

and peaks from other areas will also be gladly accepted. Bring your pictures to the meeting or feel free to mail them to the chair before the meeting.

Directions from 101

Exit at San Antonio Road, go east to the first traffic light, turn left and follow Bayshore Rd to the PCC on the corner of Corporation Way. A sign marking the PCC is out front. Park and enter in the back of the building.

Google <http://tinyurl.com/28ngaw>

Editor's Notes

Summer is coming! Yeah! But all the precipitation that we've had this winter means there will be plenty of (possibly deep) stream crossings for us peak baggers. So check out the links to trip reports on how to deal with those crossings, posted at the end of this issue. Happy climbing and be safe!

Breaking News!!! You can now join the Peak Climbing Section's Facebook Fan Page, <http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Peak-Climbing-Section-Loma-Prieta-Chapter-of-the-Sierra-Club/171564843888> (once a few more of you 'like' the page, we can give it an easier URL). There isn't much content yet, but it is an easy way to connect and communicate with other members of the PCS. Judy

Chair column

Well, several speakers were unavailable in May or canceled out, so instead of our regular slide show we will have an early Christmas. Bring your favorite pictures of 14ers to the meeting or tell me how to get them before the meeting.

The summer climbing season is getting ever closer. We still have a shortage of official trips. Many leaders signed up to lead trips, but few have submitted details yet. And it is not too late to sign up to lead more trips or to twist the arms of leaders to make them lead a trip your favorite unclimbed peak.

As always suggestions for future slideshows are most welcome.

PCS Trip Calendar

These are required statements.

Note: CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.

Note: All Sierra Club trips require you to sign a Liability Waiver.

<http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/signinwaiver.pdf>

May 29 - 31 - Sierra Ski Mountaineering
Leader: Louise Wholey

August 12 - 15 - Red and Gray Peaks
Leader: Debbie Benham

August 28 - 29 – Unicorn (10,880'),
Cockscomb (11,065'),
Echo Peak #4 (~11,000')
Leader: Ron Karpel

PCS Trip Details

Sierra Ski Mountaineering

Goal: Gould (13,005'), possibly also Rixford (12,887'), and Bago (11,870')

Dates: May 29 - 31

Leader: Louise Wholey

Difficulty: Advanced backcountry ski skills, experience with ice axe and crampons

This is a restricted trip requiring Sierra Club membership. Ski or hike/snowshoe into a Kearsarge Lakes camp from Onion Valley. Climb Gould from camp, probably the second day. The summit block of Gould is class 3 and getting to it or some other part of the tour may require ice axe and crampons and experience using them. Traverse to Rixford. We may include Bago or another peak in the trip if the group is strong enough.

Contact Louise Wholey at

louisewholey@yahoo.com

Red and Gray Peaks, Clark Range

Goal: Red (11,699') and Gray (11,573')

Location: Tuolumne Meadows, Yosemite

Dates: August 12 - 15

Leader: Debbie Benham

Difficulty: Class 1 and 2 (suitable for beginners with backpacking experience)

Starting at Mono Meadows trailhead, we'll venture forth to the Clark Range to climb two peaks that sit right next to each other. So, put on your leisure suits and get ready for a John Muir saunter through some of the most scenic wilderness of our beloved Yosemite. Permit for 5. This is an official Sierra Club trip. Contact Debbie Benham, H: 650-964-0558; email deborah05@sbcglobal.net

Unicorn, Cockscomb, Echo Peak #4

Goals: Unicorn (10,880'), Cockscomb (11,065'), Echo Peak #4 (~11,000')

Location: Tuolumne Meadows, Yosemite

Dates: August 28 - 29

Leader: Ron Karpel

Difficulty: Class 4, rock, rope

Driving through Tuolumne Meadows one cannot but admire the surrounding peaks. Yet we are often too rushed to reach mountains in faraway places. This time we will stop and enjoy the ones nearby. To add to our fun, we have chosen peaks that require a bit of technical climbing. To be able to use ropes and climb as a group, the technical section is limited to one short pitch of class 4 or so.

Participants must have previous mountaineering experience, must have experience with rock route of at least class 3, be experienced in tying in and giving top rope belay, and be in excellent physical condition. Not for beginners!!

This is an official Sierra Club trip. You have to be a Sierra Club member. You must include your Sierra Club number with your application to be considered.

Contact: Ron Karpel, ronny AT karpel.org

Co-contact: Charles Schafer, c_g_schafer AT yahoo.com

Private Trip Calendar

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

May 8 - 9 – Ice Axe and Crampon Practice
Leader: Kelly Maas

June 5 – Mt. Shasta
Leader: Ron Karpel

June 18 - 20 – Lyell and Maclure
Leader: Ron Karpel

June 19 - 20– Mt. Shasta
Leader: George van Gorden

October 2010 – Trek into Tibet
Leader: Warren Storkman

Private Trip Details

Ice Axe and Crampon Practice

Goal: Practice snow climbing techniques and maybe climb a peak

Location: Carson Pass

Dates: May 8 - 9

Leader: Kelly Maas

Difficulty: Intermediate Backcountry

Spend a weekend at Carson Pass brushing up on ice axe and crampon skills. All skill levels are welcome, including beginners, but you'll get the most out of it if you do some studying in advance. My favorite all-round mountaineering skills book is Freedom of the Hills. Participants must supply their own equipment. There is a good chance we'll climb a peak. Be prepared to spend full days away from the car, and a lot of time lying down in wet snow (full rain gear). We'll car camp in a dry campground. Contact Kelly for further details. (kellymbase-pcs@yahoo.com or my kamaas4.. address) or 408-378-5311.

Mount Shasta

Goal: Mt. Shasta (14,162')

Location: Mt. Shasta

Dates: June 5

Leader: Ron Karpel

Difficulty: Must be in good shape, and have experience with ice axe, crampons, and self-arrest

We will climb the mountain by the Avalanche Gulch route. Drive Friday afternoon to the trailhead, get up early Saturday (2 am) and start climbing. Come back down the mountain the same day and drive home. Participants need to have experience with ice axe, crampons, and self-arrest, and be in

reasonable shape to climb the mountain as a day hike.

Send email to Ron Karpel, ronny@karpel.org, with experience and conditioning, and ice axe/crampons experience, H & W phones, and ride share info.

Lyell and Maclure

Goals: Lyell (13,114'), Maclure (12,880')

Location: Tuolumne Meadows, Yosemite

Dates: June 18 - 20

Leader: Ron Karpel

Difficulty: Class 3, snow and glacier

These are Yosemite's most sought-after peaks, so expect the roster to fill up quickly. Friday hike about 10 miles in the relatively flat Lyell Canyon from Tuolumne Meadows TH. Saturday climb the peaks. Sunday hike out. Participants must be in good shape, able to climb snow and ice, experienced in using crampons and an ice axe (prior experience a must) and be able to scramble class 3 rock. We will not carry a rope. Not for beginners. One wrinkle to consider: it is possible, due to the early date, that Tioga Pass road will still be closed at the time of this trip. If this happens, we will try to decide on an alternate destination that will appeal to most participants.

Contact: Ron Karpel, [ronny AT karpel.org](mailto:ronny@karpel.org)

Mount Shasta

Goal: Mt. Shasta (14,162')

Location: Mt. Shasta

Dates: June 19 - 20

Leader: George van Gorden

Difficulty: Experience in ice axe, crampons, and self-arrest

We will climb the mountain by the West Face Gully. We will camp Saturday night at 9000 feet, attempt the summit on Sunday and return to our cars before night. The route is not nearly as crowded as the normal route and, although a little more difficult, the solitude and beauty make it worth the extra effort. Participants must have training in self-arrest

and feel competent that they can use their skills if needed. Contact: 408-779-2320; gvangorden@gmail.com

Trek into Tibet

Location: Tibet

Dates: October 2010

Leader: Warren Storkman

An 18-day trip including Kala Patar. For more details, email dstorkman@aol.com or phone 650-493-8959.

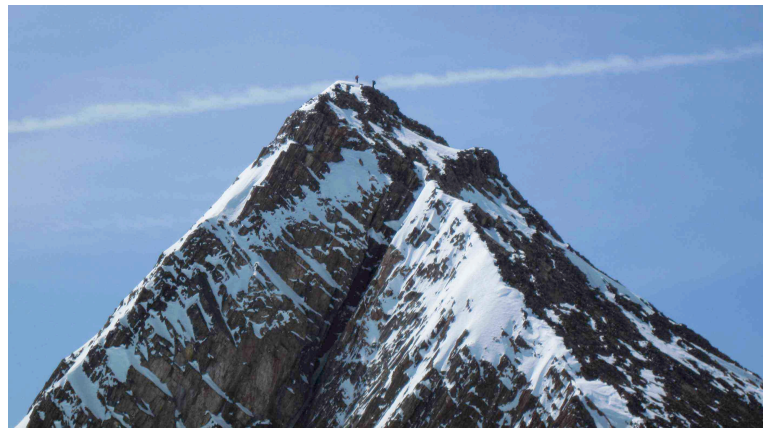
Trip Reports

Virginia Peak

April 16-18, 2010

By Louise Wholey

I finally found a cure for wanting to climb Virginia Peak. Here I am on top with Alex Sapozhnikov. The photo is by Jim Wholey from the saddle between Virginia and Twin peaks.



This peak has lured me from all directions for many trips starting with a side-trip to Twin Peaks on the Matterhorn Whorl trip in September 2009. I mistakenly thought the Virginia Peak was Stanton Peak (my map did not show it as I had no plan to climb it) and thus did not climb it. I returned in October 2009 following the first major snowstorm of the year. Observing bear tracks of the bears

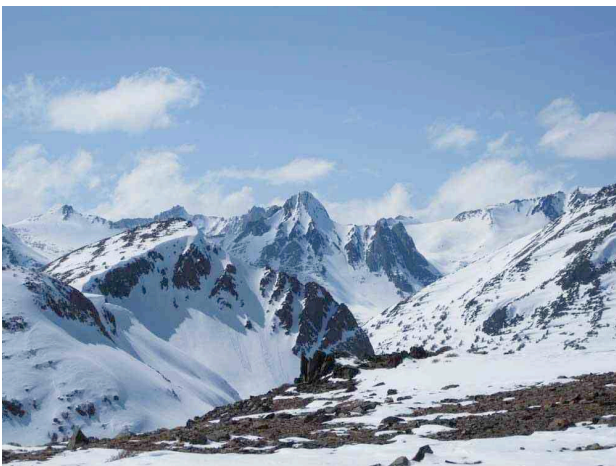
escaping the wintery conditions in the Yosemite high country was great, but I failed to get anyone on the trip to climb the peak with me. Both trip reports are in the Nov 2009 Scree:

http://www.peakclimbing.org/scree/2009/NOV_2009_SCREE.pdf

This past March I scheduled a ski trip to tackle Virginia from Twin Lakes, one of the few east side trailheads that are open all winter. The base is low at 7000 feet, making it a long way up Horse Creek. I chose not to cancel the trip despite a forecast storm which dumped over a foot of new snow on us Friday and left us with potential avalanche conditions, beautiful clear skies and horrendous winds Saturday. It was a fun outing but included no peak-bagging.

Constant checking with authorities about trailhead road openings led me to find out when the Virginia Lakes road would be passable. April 16 was the magic date, so I shifted the target of my Sierra Club mountaineering application to the new location. A bit of shoveling and chopping with an ice axe made the road passable by our Subaru – the first car to the parking lot this year!

Alex, Yu Sato, Jim and I found a spot where we could climb out of the parking lot, and we skied to the pass at 11000 feet. Virginia Peak appeared far away.

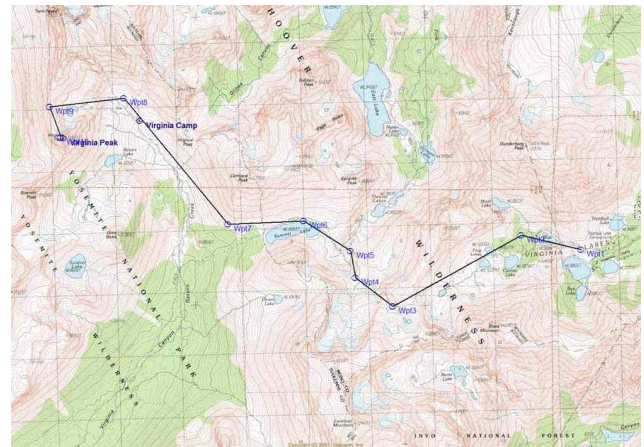


We cruised down the valley and final steep descent to the low point of 10000 ft just below Summit Lake. We rounded Camiace Peak and headed into the basin below Virginia Peak. I was very excited as we set up camp; the climb looked very tough.

In the morning we all set off to climb the steep snow just above camp. It was well frozen and presented no problem for our crampons and ice axes. Above was very pleasant snow climbing to the saddle then a rock rib (rated easy class 3) to the summit. The weather was superb. Many splendid snowy peaks lined the horizon.

We returned to camp and packed up in order to ski around Camiace Peak on the soft afternoon corn rather than the early morning frozen granular. Yu was not feeling well, but we managed to help her get to a camp at Summit Lake in time to enjoy dinner in the warm evening sun.

The morning brought another outstanding day for spring skiing. We climbed the pass and had a fine descent to the parking lot where many skiers were celebrating the fine spring day.



Exciting News!
**Team X Whisperers' Excellent
Adventure on Makalu
New Satellite Message
Monday, May 3
By Emilie Cortes**

As most of you know, our PCS Treasurer, Emilie Cortes, along with John Gray, left at the beginning of April on the quest to climb Makalu. Here's the latest satellite message from her:

"Big news here - on Friday, John, Will Cross and I made our way together to sleep at Camp 1. My 4th attempt was successful!! We arrived in good form despite whiteout conditions and having to jump across a few crevasses. The camp is around 6100m - equivalent to sleeping at the summit of Denali. We all three felt great and pushed on to Camp 2. The first obstacle was a 300ft fixed ice headwall (I was told it made the Denali Buttress headwall look like a cake walk in terms of steepness). It was a brutal intro to jumaring up a fixed line. To make it even better, there was a crew of 15 waiting to descend watching me suffer up the line, grunting and cursing. Fortunately, I had met most of them before and they were shouting jokes and words of encouragement.

The altitude was tough the rest of the way to Camp 2 - I slowed to a glacial pace (ha ha) and we made our way through a super sketchy but spectacular section of fixed lines over seracs. After 6.5 hrs we reached Camp 2. May not sound like an eternity, but others (I think I am the only one here without previous 8000m peak experience) can do it in 2.5 hrs. Will dropped his load and headed all the way down to ABC, going strong, while John and I set up camp. I got a light headache and John got some general altitude malaise, but not bad for my first time to a new altitude record. No one is exactly sure how high Camp 2 is but its around 6600m or 22,000ft - almost as high as the summit of Aconcagua.

The weather crapped out on us over night and we hurried down in windy flat light conditions.

Some of the scariest climbing I have done descending all those fixed lines, but it was all mental as the fixed lines keep you from falling very far if at all. I did punch through one crevasse thigh high but the line kept me from falling any further. I have been phenomenally impressed with John's strength and confidence on difficult terrain. Glad to have him as a climbing partner.

Looking forward to 2-3 rest days depending on weather and figuring out what to do next. I feel like I am off the hook now having broken 2 personal altitude records and really pushed my limits mentally and physically. Anything from here is just gravy! John says I've covered everything so no update from him. Hope you are all well!

Congratulations to Emilie and John!

Stream Crossings

With the likelihood that peak baggers will encounter some major difficulties crossing streams this year, below are some links to trip reports from previous years that should be mandatory reading for all:

** Tehipite Dome, Steve Eckert, June 22-23, 1995. Here's an excerpt:

"The hike in was pretty uneventful until Crown Creek. If you know RJ Secor personally, please thank him for mentioning this creek in his book! I should also thank Ron Hudson for relating RJ's story in more personal terms. Ron called the stream "life threatening", and he was not exaggerating!.....I took 100' of rope, and used every bit of it."

Read the rest of this report at:

<http://climber.org/reports/1995/76.html>

**Mt. Brewer Region, David Harris, July 8, 1998. Here's an excerpt from Maggie Hudson:

"The force of the water was incredible: far greater than I had imagined. I was approximately half way across when I was no longer able to maintain my footing.So I

suddenly found myself with my head under water, struggling to get above the surface to be able to breathe, still attached to the rope via webbing and carabiner. At this point I believed that I was about to drown."

Read the rest of the report at:

<http://climber.org/reports/1998/303.html>

**Tehipite Dome via a perilous crossing of Crown Creek, RJ Secor, August 4, 1999

"I made it out halfway through the now waist deep water to where the fixed rope assumed a V shape. The force of the moving water kept me from moving to the safety of either bank. While trying to release the "safety" carabiner I stumbled and my body folded itself in half, like closing a book...."

Read the rest of the report at:

<http://climber.org/reports/1999/431.html>

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Scree is the monthly newsletter 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.

Our official website is

<http://www.peakclimbing.org>. Joining the PCS is easy. Go to

<http://www.peakclimbing.org/join>

PCS Announcement Listserv

If you join the PCS Announcement Listserv you will receive announcements and updates of trips and meetings. Use the

<http://lists.sierraclub.org/SCRIPTS/WA.EXE?A0=LOMAP-PCS-ANNOUNCE&X=&Y=> web page.

Climbing Classifications

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

Class 1: Walking on a trail.

Class 2: Climbing using hands for balance.

Class 3: Climbing requires the use of hands, maybe a rope.

Class 4: Requires rope belays.

Class 5: Technical rock climbing.

Trips may also be rated by level of exertion: easy, moderate, strenuous, or extreme.

Deadline for submissions to the next Scree is Friday, May 28. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month.