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## General Meeting

**Date** August 9, 2011  
**Time** 7:30 – 9:30 pm  
**Where** PCC  
3921 E. Bayshore Road  
Palo Alto, CA  
**Program** Climb Take Action On  
Everest  
**Presenter** Georgina Miranda

In what has become an annual tradition – the Everest slideshow – this year’s presenter fits with Madame Chair’s “Year of the Woman” theme.

Join us as Georgina Miranda shares her experience on Everest’s South Side this past spring. Georgina was climbing Everest as part of her Climb Take Action 7 Summits Challenge.

After reading an article in Glamour in 2007 about the violence against women in the war-torn Democratic Republic of Congo, Georgina founded Climb Take Action in order to empower women in the region by climbing to raise funds and awareness of their suffering. Thousands of women have been neglected,

murdered, abducted, brutally raped, tortured, and overall forgotten. Congo Wars have claimed more lives than any conflict since the end of World War II, yet the crisis has received little attention outside of central Africa.



Georgina is a native Los Angelino currently residing in San Francisco. She is a business woman by day (MBA from Loyola Marymount and a full-time management consultant) and

an adventurer by night having climbed all around the world, including five of the world's tallest peaks on each continent.

Come hear Georgina's riveting story of her Everest climb and her amazing efforts to make the world a better place.

## 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

Check out our new column starting this month: **The Food Column**, featuring recipes for good and light-weight backpacking meals provided by our very own PCS members.

Thank you, Sonja, for the suggestion and the first contribution.

We also have some awesome trip reports, so just keep reading. And we haven't forgotten Emilie - can't wait to see you back in the mountains.

Happy summer, everyone, Judy

## 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>

August 5 - 7 - Deerhorn  
Leader: Louise Wholey

August 13, 14 - Iron Mountain - Louise's 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday and List Finish  
Leader: Louise Wholey

August 13 - 21 - Mather's Day  
Leader: Aaron Schuman

## PCS Trip Details

### **Deerhorn**

Goal: Deerhorn (13,281')

Location: Onion Valley, Eastside of the Sierras

Dates: August 5 - 7

Leader: Louise Wholey

Difficulty: Class 3

Access is via Kearsage Pass. Experienced class 3 climbers in good shape only.

Leaders: Louise Wholey

([louisewholey@yahoo.com](mailto:louisewholey@yahoo.com)) and

Lisa Barboza ([Lisa.Barboza@gd-ais.com](mailto:Lisa.Barboza@gd-ais.com))

### **Louise's 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday and List Finish**

Goal: Iron Mountain (11,149')

Location: Mammoth area, Eastside of the Sierras

Dates: August 12 - 12

Leader: Louise Wholey

Difficulty: Moderately difficult, 2D2

The climb of Iron Mtn will be on Saturday August 13 with a celebration following the climb in Mammoth, location TBD. This trip will be an overnight for some people and a day trip for others. We have permit space for 12 people to stay at Anona Lake Friday night. To reserve a spot on the wilderness permit for camping at Anona Lake, send \$5 to Louise at 21020 Canyon View Drive, Saratoga, CA 95070.

Overnight participants: Backpack from the ranger's station at Soda Springs (7400') to Anona Lake (9100') via Fern Lake, about 8 miles. Bring a treat to share for our pre-dinner party. Next day, climb the east slope (class 2) to the south ridge and walk the final ridge to the summit.

Day-hikers: The route is the same. We will leave camp ahead of you but expect to meet you on the summit.

We plan to reserve some campsites near Mammoth for the night of the party. Louise will collect in advance a reservation fee for a spot there.

Contact: louisewholey(AT)yahoo.com

### **Mather's Day**

Goals: Striped (13179'), Bolton Brown (13491'), Prater (14471'), The Thumb (13356'), Birch (13602'), Wynne (13179'), Pinchot (13494'), Perkins (12566')

Location: Above Independence, Kings Canyon National Park

Dates: August 13 - 21

Leader: Aaron Schuman

Difficulty: Class 2 with possible snow

Devote an entire week to exploring the High Passes region of the Sierra Nevada and climbing many of the spectacular, rugged peaks in the area. We'll begin with a grunt up Taboose Pass, from its desert trailhead (5400) up to the Pacific Crest (11400). We can climb Striped Mtn (13120) there. We'll move to the lovely and little visited Upper Basin (11599), from which we'll be in position to climb Mt Bolton Brown (13538) and Mt Prater (13329). We'll pack over Mather Pass (12080) and camp at Upper Palisade Lake (11767), in order to climb The Thumb (13665) and Birch Mtn (13665). Then returning over Mather Pass, we'll camp near Lake Marjorie (11440), from which we'll be set up to climb Mt Wynne (13179), Mt Pinchot (13495), and Mt Perkins (12591), with a day hike over Pinchot Pass (12500). We'll return the way we came, down the long, dry Taboose trail. The days will be strenuous, but the rewards will be incomparable.

Leader: Aaron Schuman 650-968-9184

### **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.

August 20 - 28 - Table, Thunder, Geneva, Ericsson, Caltech

Leader: Jim Ramaker

October - Mt. Kailash, Nepal/Tibet

Leader: Warren Storkman

October 8 - November 6 - Makalu Base Camp to Khumbu Trek

Leader - Tom McDonald

### **Private Trip Details**

#### **Table, Thunder, Geneva, Ericsson, Caltech**

Goals: Table (13,632'), Thunder (13,517'), Geneva (13,054'), Ericsson (13,583'), Caltech (13,832')

Location: Independence, Eastside of the Sierras

Dates: August 20 -28

Leader: Jim Ramaker

Difficulty: Class 3 and 4

Join us for a week-long trip to climb some challenging peaks on the Kings-Kern Divide. We'll hike in over Shepherd Pass and camp in the high basins near these 13,000-foot peaks. Expect challenging cross-country travel and class-3 climbing, except for Thunder, which is class-4.

Contacts: [ramaker@us.ibm.com](mailto:ramaker@us.ibm.com),  
[SuzukiR@sd-star.com](mailto:SuzukiR@sd-star.com)

## **Mt. Kailash, Nepal/Tibet**

Goal: Mt. Kailash - Lhasa

Location: Nepal/Tibet

Date: October 2011

Leader: Warren Storkman

October is generally the best month to travel in Nepal and Tibet - for weather and holiday events and particularly for the Kora around Mt Kailash.

Reason for starting the plans early:

To give the opportunity to arrange vacation time for the 21 day trek, the 7 days in KTM and air travel.

There will be two separate flights within Nepal.

The first flight will take us west to a large lowland airport with a hotel overnight. The

second day we'll fly in a smaller (20 seat) plane and upon landing will start the trek.

There will be 6 nights of camping, then on the 7th day the group crosses into Tibet with an interesting army border check. This entry is by foot - no roads in this area.

The group will then stop camping and use a hotel on the 14th night.

For those wishing to skip Lhasa a return to KTM is on the 16th day. The Lhasa group will return to KTM on the 21st day by international air.

Without a commitment or obligating yourself just let me know if this trip is of interest to you. If you change your mind, I'll drop your name. I'll e-mail more information and try for an early trip cost. Contact Warren Storkman (650-493-8959) or email: dstorkman@aol.com

## **Makalu Base Camp To Khumbu Trek Over East Col, West Col, and Mera La (6000+m passes x2)**

Goal: Mera Peak (optional ascent) 6476m

Location: Nepal

Dates: October 8 - November 6

Leader: Tom McDonald

Difficulty: This is a rigorous 4-week trek, with sustained altitudes over 5000m

I'm trying to put together a small group of like-minded folks for the "world's highest trek" in Nepal- the traverse from Makalu base camp to the Khumbu. Two passes over 6000M, option of ascending Mera 6476M. I'm a physician at PAMF and have no commercial interest in any trip. A few of my "patients" (fitter than me!) are members of the Loma Prieta peak climbing section. I will provide medical backup in route but will not be in any official role- just a participant. I have contacts with several Nepali guides and will act as intermediary for setting up the trip \*without\* any financial interest at all. I've recently trekked with a large mixed group that was ill-suited for the challenges we faced- I'm hoping to put together a great group with a good Nepali Sherpa crew.

Trek info: A rigorous 4 week technical trek with sustained high altitudes over 5,000M. Two passes over 6000m and option of ascending Mera Peak at 6400+M. Roped descents of two passes. Alpine experience with fantastic view of Makalu, Lhotse, Everest, Chamlang. and Baruntse. The road much less traveled into the over-traveled Everest area. Experience at altitude and glacier travel essential.

Maps:

<http://www.nepaltravelandtour.com/Trips/Nepal/Makalu+Arun+Valley/Trekkin...>

Leader and contact info: Tom McDonald;  
[mcdonald\\_tw@yahoo.com](mailto:mcdonald_tw@yahoo.com)

## **Advance Trip Schedule**

In addition to all these amazing trips, you can check out future trips on the advance trip schedule:

[https://spreadsheets.google.com/ccc?key=0AtE\\_Co39b8vfdGJTaWtBVTIpWHEtMjBubXZjZWdrQ2c&authkey=CM3z24AL&hl=en#gid=0](https://spreadsheets.google.com/ccc?key=0AtE_Co39b8vfdGJTaWtBVTIpWHEtMjBubXZjZWdrQ2c&authkey=CM3z24AL&hl=en#gid=0)

Thanks, Louise!

## Trip Reports

### Desolation Wilderness Peaks

July 2 - 4

Terry Kline

This was to be a trip led by Emilie Cortes to prepare for a summer hike of the John Muir Trail and was advertised as a "Desolation Death March" over the July 4th holiday three-day weekend. Her knee injury changed everything. Having wanted for a long time to explore these mountains I had so often driven past and being a sucker for death marches, it fell to me to take over as leader. Most people dropped out by the time the day of the trip arrived and in the end it was myself, Sonja Dieterich, and Larry Jang hoisting packs at the Pyramid Creek trailhead.



Pyramid Creek flowing fast near trailhead

The plan was completely unrealistic for this time of year and this year's snowpack. The plan was to climb Pyramid Peak (9983') and then follow the ridge line around the Lake Aloha basin climbing 7 summits in three days, the highest just under 10,000', all over 9000', with parts of the ridge being 4th class. The plan failed early when it was clear the first afternoon we would not get far enough to find a reasonable camping/bivy site (we needed to get over the first 3 summits the first day to have a chance for the plan to work). The post-holing in wet snow from the top of Horsetail Falls was just taking too long.



Horsetail Falls: the route ascended the steep slabs and blocks left of the falls to class 2 scrambling in talus above.

Instead, we dropped the packs in one of the rock bands below the east face of Pyramid and climbed it, just left of the edge of the NE Ridge. Steep snow, followed by 900' of steep loose talus and scree (some third class) next to snow even steeper than below. The ridge to peaks 2 (Agassiz 9967') and 3 (Price 9975') looked impressive from the summit of Pyramid; a knife edge most of the way with a dicy pinnacle along the way.



Threading our way through the rock bands on the way to Pyramid Peak.



Pyramid Peak from across the basin somewhere above Lake of the Woods. Our route up it skirted the right-hand snow field on the foreground ridge.

From the summit of Pyramid, we saw that the South Ridge was the easy way up, so we took it down. This made for a 4000' day, mostly with packs. On the cross country approach up the Pyramid Creek canyon, we scrambled left of Horsetail Falls. One short section involved low 5th class in a definite no fall zone, climbed with packs of course. This approach into the lake basin above is said to be 2nd class scrambling, and most of it was, but we couldn't find a way through the blocky cliff band left of the falls without this more difficult climbing; maybe further to the left goes, but the seams between cliffs were chocked with steep brush.

After descending Pyramid to our packs at a decent, but small, camp site near water melting out of the snowpack above, we set up for the night. It took us a while to find our packs, but that's another story. The lesson is to mark their location well. All bare tree snags begin to look alike after a while.

We had a clear, but not very cold night. Our neighbor, a plump marmot, remarkably kept to his lair in the boulders and didn't bother us. Quite surprising.

The second day was an exercise in alpine mountaineering travel as we descended into the lake basin and across to try to get within range of peaks 4 and 5 (Jacks 9856' and Dicks 9974'). Lots of steep snow slopes interrupted by cliff bands and soft snow trudging between, and an exciting log crossing of a lake outlet over a small waterfall (there must be two dozen lakes in this basin, in various stages of thawing from being completely frozen and snow covered).

Eventually, we concluded near the end of Lake Aloha that if we did even one of the peaks we would be too far from the cars to get out the next day given the navigational challenges presented by the snow conditions and the complex topography. So we reversed and headed back out toward peak 7 (Ralston Peak 9236') and the way out to the car shuttle, camping about 1000' below that peak below a saddle in the ridge in the general vicinity of the trail out (Ralston Trail, hidden by snow). After briefly finding the trail above Lake of the Woods, we had quickly lost it in the snow again. Ironically, the snow was heaviest in the forested sections that were mostly at lower elevations than the open areas.



Sonja crossing the log above the waterfall draining American Lake.



Jacks and Dicks Peak

Day three, we found our way up to the summit ridge of Ralston Peak, a walk up. The views in all directions are spectacular from this summit and included Lake Tahoe, Fallen Leaf Lake, the Echo Lakes, and beyond south to the Carson Range.



Lake Tahoe and Fallen Leaf Lake from the summit of Ralston Peak.

Summiting early and back at the dropped packs, the real challenge was just beginning.

We needed to descend about 3000' thru a complex of indistinct ridges and ravines, most of which dropped off over cliffs on the right side of the Horsetail Falls (Pyramid Creek) canyon (don't go there!). Snowpack was heaviest in the trees and lots of seasonal streams made things interesting. We caught about 200 yards of the trail near the top, then lost it under snow and started navigating by map and altimeter, getting too close to the cliffs, often backtracking; lots of up and down.

Finally at about 7800' we got out of the snow and after a bit of serious vertical bushwhacking stumbled onto the trail. The

rest of the way was straightforward trail walking down into 90+ degree heat and the shuttle car we had left at the Ralston Trailhead.

In the end, we got two summits and a bit of adventure, shared with good company. We got out in time for lunch at the Strawberry Inn below Lover's Leap and were able to get home for dinner.

A small footnote about the approach route: some parties have gone up Rocky Canyon to the South Ridge of Pyramid starting at the bridge and turnout for Rocky Creek on Highway 50, about a mile below the Pyramid Creek trailhead. Although this route is initially steeper and follows an unmaintained use trail, it probably is quicker and easier than the Horsetail Falls approach, but we didn't know it ahead of time when reserving wilderness permits. It looked to have less snow on it as well. By the way, Desolation Wilderness is subdivided into sections for which there are quotas for camping. When reserving a wilderness permit you must specify which section you will camp in the first night and are subject to the quota for that section. Overnight permits need to be reserved now online through recreation.gov.

### **Lessons Learned on Lamarck**

**Mt. Lamarck, 13,417'**

**July 4**

**By Debbie Bulger**

Richard Stover and I were treated to a night out near Mt. Lamarck because of some erroneous assumptions we made. You might learn something from our experience.

On July 4 Richard and I topped Lamarck Col and decided to climb Mount Lamarck. I had

passed this peak several times without climbing it. Now was the time. At the top of the Col there was a National Park sign and what appeared to be a well-engineered trail. We descended a couple of switchbacks and stashed our packs.



Debbie climbing Lamarck

You may know what they say about “assume,” ASS-U-ME. We got into trouble because of some foolish assumptions. Taking only rain jackets, one liter of water, and lunch, we headed along the ridgeline for Mount Lamarck. We made several mistakes:

- We assumed the built trail we left continued further down toward Darwin Lakes. Actually it completely disappeared a few feet below where we left it.
- We did not take a space blanket or other emergency equipment with us.
- We noted landmarks indicating where we had stashed the packs, however the reference points all assumed that we would be coming back the way we had gone. The reference points looked quite different from above or below.
- Our time spent climbing the more difficult ridge route (solid third class) was longer than the second class return route at a lower elevation.

The climb was good fun, although the sky became more and more threatening as the day progressed. After quickly signing the register and finding yet another balloon(!), we dropped elevation and headed back on easier terrain.



Richard and Debbie on summit of Lamarck

I assumed we'd cross the trail coming down from Lamarck Col and then head up to our packs. But of course, there was no trail. We travelled much more quickly on the easy slope and overshot where we should have started climbing back up.

Mount Darwin started looking wrong, viewed from the wrong angle. We took compass readings, we climbed to another well used but different col. It was starting to get dark. This was going to be a cold almost moonless night. Luckily it was one of the shorter nights of the year. Unfortunately, I was wearing my glacier glasses. Without them, the world was fuzzy; with them, the world was very dark.

Giving up on finding our packs that evening, we dropped 500 feet in hopes of a warmer night. We looked for a sandy area (Sand is warmer than rock) with larger rocks on two sides to shelter us from the wind. We built up a rock wall for more wind protection. We used Richard's camera bag as meager insulation.

No trees or duff to insulate us. We hunkered down. Richard at least had a warm cap; I only

a sun hat. Our rain jackets had hoods. The overcast sky helped. Thankfully, it didn't rain. We nested in a sitting position to share body heat, leaving only our noses exposed. We exhaled warm air into our jackets. We ate the rest of our lunches. Periodically we exchanged positions as one or the other started shivering. Once, when Richard was shaking uncontrollably, I got us up to do calisthenics.

Dawn came none too soon. With light it became safe to move. We reviewed Richard's photos of the Col and started climbing again. As we approached what we believed was the correct spot, Richard let out a shout, "I think I see our packs!" I burst into tears.

We're considering purchasing a GPS.

### **Sometimes A Great Notion**

**July 9 - 10**

**By Lisa Barboza, Photo by Linda Sun**

Trip leader Lisa Barboza, Participants Linda Sun, Eddie Sudol

Trip Abstract:

Day 1: Sabrina Lake Trailhead to Sailor Lake

Day 2: Climb Haeckel (13,418'), Wallace (13,377'). hike out

In this very heavy snow year, about 140% of normal in the High Sierra, the climbing season was short, with lots of snow. The snow was amazing. Our spring occurred in February, and it was a brief interlude between storms. Haeckel and Wallace had been a particular desire of mine. I had listed them as Memorial Day trips in both 2009 and 2010, both times defeated either by weather (2009, snowing and wind) or conditions (2010, very soft, unstable snow over dangerous run out on our chosen climbing route. I discovered why there were no trip reports on climbing these peaks in May – it just isn't done!. This year, we

decided to postpone the trip to July 9<sup>th</sup>, to avoid the conditions. But when we planned the trip, we sure didn't know that 2011 would be such an incredible snow year. Stephane Mouradian had planned to come, but work intervened, leaving the three of us. It turned out that the snow conditions were identical to Memorial Day conditions, so this report, written in July, can serve for those who want to climb this peak in May.

### **Saturday, Sabrina Lake to Sailor Lake**

We started hiking at 10 am after getting our permits and enjoying breakfast at Tom's place. The trail was free of snow up until just past Blue Lake. We met a band of backpackers who warned us, "cold freezing water, lot of stream crossings, snow and water, water everywhere!" and a panicked look in their eyes. We took heed of their warnings.

The 120' ford across Dingleberry Lake creek was deeper and colder than I remembered in years past, but it was tolerable. And past the lake, it was all snow. There was water, running water, and snow everywhere. The meadows were either snow or lakes, and the trail was hard to follow. We fell into deep, engaged conversation, focused on crossing raging torrential streams, and when we looked up, were at Midnight Lake instead of Sailor Lake – Ooops! Such a good conversation!

Thirty minutes later, and a short trip over a 200' high pass, (we were not the first to make this mistake this year) and we made camp, on some snow-free sandy spots next to Sailor Lake, just below snow-covered Moonlight Lake. We basked in the sunshine, enjoying the incredible view of Picture Peak, with Haeckel peeking out behind it, and went to bed early for a 5AM wake up call. The weather was fantastic!

### **Sunday, Sailor Lake to Haeckel and Wallace, and then hike out.**

We arose at 5AM for a 6AM start. The air temperature was surprisingly mild. We started up the small, snowy shoulder to the east of

Picture Peak, staying about 150' above Moonlight Lake. Echo Lake was frozen solid, amazing for this time of year. The snow was firm, and we didn't need crampons and ice axes until we got above Echo Lake. We stayed high; the snow was icy and the crampons were definitely required. Eddie was having trouble with his crampons falling off repeatedly. We stopped and tried to fix them, but nothing worked, as they were over 25 years old and non-functional. We started to have to climb about ten alternating bands of hard steep snow and bands of rock. Finally, we were in the bowl of Haeckel. The tarn below Haeckel was frozen solid, and showed the aquamarine blue of glacial silt. To my surprise, the climb of Haeckel on July 9<sup>th</sup> looked exactly like the climb of Haeckel on May 27<sup>th</sup> of 2010!

After some discussion (climb the snow to the middle of the ridge or start from the col), we decided to climb from the col, since we needed to know the route for our traverse back to Wallace anyway. Also, the snow conditions were poor. It went from hard, icy snow in the morning, to a soft slush by mid-morning. There were few suncups, but shallow snow over rock is something I try to avoid if possible, particularly in spring conditions, and with poor run out.

So, our route was to climb to the Haeckel Wallace Col and traverse over to Haeckel from there. Secor says the traverse is to stay 100 feet' below the ridge. But that was blocked by snow. We elected to climb the ridge. It went at CL3 with an occasional CL4 exposed move. We avoided the snow tongues by climbing above them. Initially, we were not sure if it would be possible to traverse, but about 1/3 of the way across the ridge, we were able to drop down about 100' to a rocky route that led below the snow tongues, in fact, there was a break in one of the snow tongues. We reached the end of the ridge.

Haeckel is a beautiful peak when viewed from any direction. The famous "CL3 ledges to the summit" were covered with snow. We were

able to climb the east side of the ledges with a few CL3, CL4 moves. We gained the top of the ledges. About 15-20 feet below the tiny pass that ends the ledges, there is a CL3 open chimney on the southeast face of summit block to the left. Climbing that chimney, after a few CL3 moves, leads to the summit, which we reached after an hour from the Haeckel-Wallace col, at about 11AM.



Our route on the ridge from Haeckel Wallace col to the summit of Mt. Haeckel. Note the CL3 ledges are covered with snow, so we went up to the right of the snowy part, and stayed as high as possible, in CL3-4 on the ridge itself.

On the summit, we found a canister with no lid, and just a notebook for a register. We placed an official SPS register in the can, and inverted it to protect the contents. We were the first to summit in 2011! We stopped for 30 minutes to enjoy the view, and then headed down to the ridge.

We worked our way back across the ridge to the col, and climbed Wallace using a CL3 and CL4 route. By this time, the snow had become quite soft, and the rock was solid. We summited at 1PM; and although we were not the first to climb Wallace, we were very pleased to have climbed both peaks. Finally, after 3 years of trying, I had climbed these

peaks. The mountains only let us gently climb them- hubris, and the world of humans, have no place here. The mountains only accept humility, grace, and peace. We glissaded down the snow slopes, and went down to Echo Lake for the hike back to camp. The heavy snow allowed us to avoid the usual talus field at the head of Moonlight Lake, where the ice was starting to break up.

We returned to camp after a long day, 9 hours. We decided to start hiking out, to see if we could get home early as all of us had commitments. We started hiking out at 4PM, and reached the Trailhead at 8PM.

After a wonderful dinner at Whiskey Creek, we drove to Obsidian Dome for a night's sleep, followed by a drive through Yosemite to home. Tuolumne Lodge was still closed, as was the campground. June-like conditions in July, as the Tioga Pass road opened late, on July 18<sup>th</sup> this year. Amazing conditions, and a good time was had by all.

## **East and West Videttes**

**July 22 - 24**

**By Louise Wholey**

Deerhorn Mtn was the primary objective for multiple trips that Lisa and I had planned over the past few years. None happened. With my list finish imminent this trip needed to happen and be successful. As luck would have it, however, on her previous trip Lisa broke her toe. Unbelievably she chose to try to do this trip anyway!

The first glitch was that she had a work commitment that she could not avoid. Oh, well, the best made plans... We cancelled our trip, but luckily heard of a group from the SPS (Angeles Chapter section responsible for getting us to climb so many peaks) that were going in to the same area and maybe even hoping to climb Deerhorn, the most technical of the 3 planned peaks.

We were off hiking out of Onion Valley at around 8 am Friday, July 22, with our newfound group. Near the junction of our trail with the PCT Lisa mentioned that she might not be able to climb any peaks. I knew what that meant; she would not be able to climb any of the peaks. A half mile later she stopped to tell everyone that she would leave the trip and hike out to Roads End. She felt terrible to abandon me in my quest, but hoped we might yet be able to do Deerhorn together.



East Vidette, Deerhorn, West Vidette (with snow ramp)

I stayed with the SPS group (Ron Hudson, Kathy Rich, Matt Hengst, Lisa Miyake, and Jason Stone). Camp was rather far up the valley beyond the climb of West Vidette. They recommended that I not tackle Deerhorn solo even though I would be signing out of the trip to do the peaks I wished to do separate from them. Saturday at 6 am I started down the valley to a beautiful snow ramp on West Vidette. It was very nice firm snow making a great climb. As it steepened to about 35 degrees I donned my crampons and took out my ice axe. From the top I followed the ridge to the top. The views were spectacular.



West Vidette Snow Ramp

Not wishing to travel further down the valley between the Videttes I chose not to climb East Vidette Saturday. Someone in the summit register noted that the south ridge was interesting so I went down that way, which was also toward camp. I had a wish that the other group would finish Stanford (S) and Ericsson early and be able to climb Deerhorn that day, so I went toward the base of Deerhorn. There was an amazing amount of snow, making travel free of talus and scree. Ledges and snow provided a fun route to the glacial tarn below Deerhorn.

I sat at the tarn having lunch and hoping to see the others. After all, Matt had speculated taking an hour and a half to the top of Deerhorn Saddle. They should appear any minute. Yeah, right; it was more like 8 pm when they got there after climbing only Stanford. Little did I know! I became curious about the route on Deerhorn, so I climbed up the snow, which was amazingly firm for having been in the sun all morning. As the slope increased I put on my crampons and drug out my ice axe. I reached the rocks and managed to transition to them without falling into a large moat between snow and rock.



Deerhorn From The Glacial Tarn

Looking above me the rock was very steep. The route was not obvious, nor did anything I had for a description tell which way to go. Descriptions about scree and talus were useless as there was none. All were covered with snow. Discretion got the better of me, especially since it was already 2 pm. After a snack I headed down. Deerhorn would have to wait for another day. At least if there are multiple climbers you can all discuss what everyone thinks might be the route. Probably I should have scoped it from below, but I did not expect to be here by myself.

I returned to camp, washed myself and my clothes, filled all my water, had dinner and wondered what to do next. Mosquitoes were coming out, so I lay down in my tent – and fell asleep. I thought I would hear the others return but by then I was soundly asleep. In the morning they said they had discussed rising at 3 am to go for Deerhorn and decided against it. They hiked out and I went down the valley and around to the east bowl route on East Vidette.

I found the snow good but it did not last long enough. The terrain changed to sloping scree and talus, then bigger talus. I did not want to

cross Bubbs Creek, so I ended up with an awkward route for the last mile or so. I needed to leave my camping gear and chose a spot on the creek, saving a GPS waypoint in the hope of being able to find it after the climb. I headed diagonally up ledges, nice climbing. At one point I was thinking I could see animal tracks in the slope so it must go and not dead-end at a cliff. Sure enough there was a beautiful brown bear and her cub ahead of me.

The mother bear turned to look at me and I said "Hi Mom!". She scooted on up the slope. Many stories had been exchanged a couple days earlier about bears being very hungry and attacking people. I decided it was a good time to eat lunch, leaving her plenty of time to gain distance away from me. I continued up the bowl looking at the big rounded gendarme discussed in all the reports and in Secor's guide. I saw no obvious route to the top of the ridge near it. I also looked up the bowl to where I expected to come down and similarly saw no obviously easy route, just one scree-filled gully route.

I first tried climbing a bit up on the Gendarme then tried to go left around it. Wrong! I looked at going to the right of it, but people had said to go south, left. I climbed down and went further up the bowl. A narrow gully appeared. I climbed it but it was terrible – a combination of the loosest rock I have seen in the Sierra and difficult climbing. But I got up it. Later, when I came down the bowl I saw another narrow slot gully further up the bowl. Perhaps that is a better way to go.

I continued up the ridge expecting very pleasant climbing but found it loose with much rubble along the way. Perhaps I had dropped too far off the ridge to the left to avoid the chasm on the other side. Further up I did get more onto the ridge and near the top I was forced onto a class 3 ridge. With some convoluted route-finding I was able to proceed upward. The top has a large flat area just

below the actual summit. I left my pack to look for the register. I had to climb over the highest blocks to reach it..

The route down says to use the ridge for a while then proceed into the bowl. That worked, but lower in the bowl cliffs blocked a straight-down descent. I moved left and found several sandy pathways avoiding cliffs. Finally one last section and I was free! Easy scree, talus, and snow led to my up-route where I had seen the bear. I continued down toward where I knew I had left my pack and reached the creek right at my pack without consulting my GPS. I loaded up, waded the creek using Crocs and took off onto the PCT toward Kearsarge Pass. I found a delightful camp by the creek just before the junction where the PCT heads north. I ate my excess lunch for dinner to avoid getting bitten while cooking.

In the morning I hiked out to Onion Valley, drove to Bishop and flew home. It was a rather fun trip.

## **Shasta, Skunks, And Bolam Gully**

**July 23 - 24**

**By Sonja Dietrich**

On July 23rd & 24th, Matt Noll, Magdalena Bazalova and I headed north to Mount Shasta for glacier travel practice in preparation for climbing Mt Rainier. We had decided on the Bolam Gully route, which is accessed from the North Gate trailhead. The dirt road from Weed, CA to the trailhead was cleared from brush, but still pretty rough going for my VW Jetta. Kudos for driving, Matt! We were joking about my GPS knowing about this road, although at one point the directions said "Skunk ahead".

On Saturday morning, we hiked up the gradual trail toward our campsite. It was a hot day, which made us appreciate the shady

woods. Around 9,500' the first remnant snowfields started covering the trail. We saw the first tents on the lateral moraine between Bolam and Hotlum Glaciers at 9,900.' Snow melt created a running stream for good water supply. We hiked to the upper reaches where the stream emerged from the glacier at around 10,100' and found some good tent sites. There were flat tent spots with some wind-protection rock walls up to 10,400.' A little bit further away from the trail and lower is a wide, flat bench created by an old lava flow. Runoff created a few little tarns there. These are the most luxurious camp spots I have seen on the mountain.



At 3 am, we woke up and shortly after started our ascent on a clear, but very windy day. We were the only group making a summit attempt on this route that day; a skier climbed the Hotlum-Bolam gully solo. At sunrise, we had finished the traverse to the Bolam glacier and got to admire the first crevasse. Time to rope up! This was the first time for us to do an unguided glacier travel, and the first time on a rope team for me. Matt led, I was in the middle, and Magdalena got the good views from the back.

I have a question for you more experienced glacier travelers: I had difficulties with the rope connecting me to the person behind me. If there was just slightly too much slack, I had to change my gait or would risk stepping on the rope with my uphill foot. Is there a way to fix this?

At the upper end of the Bolam Glacier we got a view of the massive bergschrund, which is even visible from I-5. We bypassed the bergschrund on the left and headed up the steep class 3 gully staying on climber's right to avoid rockfall coming from the Hotlam-Bolam ridge. The snow was solid, provided good grip, and had not quite started to form ice yet. At the top end of the gully where it meets with the Hotlam-Bolam gully, the slope leveled out for a bit before reaching the pinnacles 600' below the Shasta summit. At this elevation, I ran out of steam and decided to wait for M&M, who ran up to the summit and back down again in 45 minutes. I, however, was glad to be on rested legs for the descent. The wind had prevented the snow from softening up, which meant we had to hike down an icy slope with crampons on. I really did not care to slip in those circumstances!

Once in the Hotlam-Bolam gully, the snow started softening up. There were a few glissade chutes above the Hotlum crevasses, but we decided to resist temptation, stayed on the safe side and heel-stepped down. Once we got lateral to the crevasses, we enthusiastically glissaded.



Here is the video:

<http://youtu.be/NeDRkx4YF74> By 5 pm, we made it back to the car, had dinner in Weed, CA. Back in Palo Alto at 2 am, there was indeed a (dead) skunk ahead. My GPS did not warn me, and I promptly ran over it. I still think the skunk smell on my car was not as bad as my socks when I unloaded the trunk Monday

evening after work! Matt reports his legs were functioning normally by Wednesday. Magdalena rated this as her 3rd most strenuous trip, including her recent summit of Aconcagua.



### **Stanford (N) (12,838')**

**July 23 - 24**

**By Linda Sun**

I was going to climb Black Hawk with Harry. However, the ranger said the summit creek, required to get to the peak, was not crossable. What to do? What to do? Arun suggested that we try Stanford, the one near Mono Pass. I was happily surprised when I called and got a permit for Hilton Creek Lakes, just a few days before the trip.



We started at the TH near Rock Creek Lake around 930am. There is parking, an outhouse and a bear box there. And after 5 relatively flat miles, we got to camp around

12:30pm. There is a trail junction: right goes to Davis Lake and Hilton Lake 2, left goes to Hilton Lake 3, 6. We camped at the first lake after going left and up the switchbacks. There were lots of campsites, and also lots of mosquitoes, so we spent the afternoon napping in our mesh tent.

Sunday we started around 530am, at first light. We went along the trail to lake 10353. You can actually camp at lake 10353, but we didn't know. Then we followed the drainage that goes into lake 10353, staying on the right side of the creek. There are a couple of little ponds along the creek, and lots of water. We hit snow around 11,500.' Once we hit the head wall, there was steep snow on the right side to gain the saddle. This is steep and icy, early in the morning. Luckily we had brought crampons for this.



From the top, we cut between Stanford Lake and the tarn above it, due west; the first part had snow cover, then we hit some nice sandy class 1 terrain, reaching the summit around 930am. We retraced our steps, camp at 1pm, car at 4pm.

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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 Thursday, August 25. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month.