

THE



BOULDER

motherlode chapter-sierra club

MARCH - APRIL 1988

ISSUE #26

THE CHAIR'S CORNER

The section's news centers around the chapter's financial support of the outings program. You will shortly receive the chapter membership survey, asking for suggestions on how the chapter can lower costs or raise revenue overall, and how to lower outings programs costs in particular. One proposal involves charging separately for the outings schedule, which is likely to result in smaller participation in trips and greater communications problems between conservation and outings-oriented factions within the chapter. While Peak & Gorge is largely self-supporting, I strongly urge each of you to respond to the survey (a donation is not required) to make your ideas and feelings known to the Executive Committee. A tremendous impact on the chapter's philosophy and future unity is possible.

The section's spring training series begins with this schedule. Map and compass, ice axe, rock climbing and beginning peak climbs have been scheduled - see the calendar below. I would like to point out that these trips are all designed to be interesting reviews for our regulars as well as introductions for beginners. For instance, a mountaineer must be able to apply the correct ice axe self-arrest instantly, and how many of us have practiced all nine arrest positions in the last few months? Also, Preston and I would greatly appreciate having some help from other instructors. Please build your teaching experience this spring - Preston will be in New Zealand for the next two to five years. A well-trained section membership is a great safety asset for both private and Club trips.

Finally, I'd like you all to notice that only five leaders are responsible for all the trips scheduled this spring. Expecting even more trips from so few leaders is an invitation to burn-out. I sincerely hope more of you will volunteer your leadership for summer trips - most of you are qualified to lead at some level. Outings Guidelines requires you to have a current Basic first aid card (see the 3/19 class). This summer's Sierra trips in the National Forests need wilderness use permits, which should be requested immediately from the managing ranger district. Get in touch with me if I can help you in any way. Peak climbing trips are what we're about. D. Joy

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

3/10 Thur. 7-10pm. Chapter Leadership Training Class, one-time requirement for trip leaders. Garden and Arts Center in McKinley Park.

3/15 Tues. 7:30pm. A Hiker's Eye View of Great Basin Geology, slides by John Watters. Bring a snack to share. At Doug Joy's, 570 39th between McKinley and H at the lamp post. 452-7126.

3/16-17 7 to 10 pm (classroom) and 3/20 field trip. Wilderness navigation using topographic map and compass. Advance sign-up required, \$6 fee. Douglas Joy, 452-7126 (6 pm to 10 pm).

3/19 Sat. 9am-5pm Red Cross Multimedia First Aid course resulting in Basic card required for trip leaders; instructor very good with wilderness questions. Fee \$15, financial aid available. Instructor: Tony Nitz, 344-1156.

3/19 Sat. North Desolation Wilderness Peaks. A long loop tour from Eagle Falls to Phipps (9234' Ogul), Rubicon (9183' Ogul) and several other high peaks. Mileage and gain similar to 3C hike. Call ahead for meeting time and place, and additional details. Jack Rankin, 457-0776.

3/26-27, Sat.-Sun. Pinnacles National Monument: North Challone Peak (1007 m) via trail with optional Class 3 ascents of Anvil and Sponge. 655 m gain in 14.5 km round trip. Limited to 12. Rex Smith, 443-1312.

4/17 Sun. 6am at CSUS Arboretum Ice Axe Training. Snow climbing, ice axe self-belay and self-arrest will be taught. Ice axe, lunch and layered clothes (slippery outer) required. For details: Doug Joy, 452-7126.

4/19 Tues. 7:30pm Knotcraft, coil finishes, rope care and handling. Bring your harness and slings and a snack for the social hour. At Doug Joy's, 570 39th between McKinley and H at the lamp post. 452-7126.

4/27 6pm and 4/30 Rock Climbing Training. Principles of movement, rope management, belaying and rappelling. 4/27 session required for all beginners and will meet in McKinley Park, just south of the tennis courts near McKinley and 33rd. Bring 20 feet of 1-inch tubular nylon webbing for making a seat harness. 4/30 will be spent on the rocks. Experienced climbers are needed to help instruct. For information and meeting place call Preston Andrews, 758-0374.

May 15 Sun. Beginning Peak Climb: Pyramid Peak (9983', Class 3-5, NAS) via N. Face. Basic ice axe and scrambling skills required, beginners and veterans welcome. Approach up Lyons Creek gains 4 miles and 2500 feet. Call Preston Andrews, 758-0374 by May 12 for meeting place and equipment requirements.

5/17 Tues. 7:30pm Hiking and Climbing in Spain's Pyrenees, slides by Barney Jones. Bring a snack. US 50 east, north on Sunrise, left on Zinfandel (first signal). 2 blocks then right on Cobblestone; cross Bridlewood, 11008 Cobblestone is 2nd house on right in cul-de-sac. Barney, 638-2519 or Doug, 452-7126 for help.

5/21 Sat. Dry Traverse of Giant Gap (Scramble IV?). Green Valley Trail into N. Fork canyon; then traverse several hundred feet above river for several miles to Canyon Creek Trail and Moody Ridge. Steep and exposed areas, and class 4-5 rock. Call leader for details, meeting time and place - Jack Rankin, 457-0776.

5/22 Sun. Mt. Fillmore (7716', Class 2, Ogul Star). Beginning peak climb, route should only require 1300' gain, but approach distance depends on snow (or mud) conditions. Bring gaiters. Call ahead for road conditions, meeting time and place, limited to 15. Leader: Debbie Bulger, 454-5140.

6/11-12, Sat.-Sun. Peak Climb and Backpack: South Yolla Bolly (8092', Class 2) and neighboring peaks in the Mendocino Nat'l Forest. Scenic views and spring flowers. Moderate trip, limited to 12. Leader: Rex Smith, 443-1312.

6/21, Tues. 6:30pm Potluck and Gorge Scrambling Clinic. We'll show you what to bring and how to keep it dry, then share slides from past trips. Bring an appetizer, salad or dessert - hot dogs and drinks provided. 2717 17th Street, Sacramento. Call Fred Fischietto, 985-7587 or Barb Beddow, 444-7774 with questions.

PRIVATE TRIP

March 26 - April 3 Joshua Tree Rock Climbing
Looking for interested climbers with basic rock skills to spend

a week climbing the bizarre rock formations in Joshua Tree National Monument. The climbs are short on excellent granite. Plus wildflowers and lots of exploration potential. For more info call Preston or Anne, 758-0374.

JEFF DAVIS - FALL '87

Jeff Davis is an Ogul peak, elevation 8990 feet at the summit, a decomposed volcanic plug with forbiddingly steep walls. At September's meeting, Boris Nahlovsky asked me to assist with the technical climbing on a try for it. I was more than a little reluctant to undertake this climb, having heard of its loose rock - my particular terror in rock climbing is a fear of hidden instability in the rock, which fools me into getting committed on a pitch. Then, with little or no protection in place, I find myself high up on the route, the rock coming apart in my hands and under my feet, and facing the prospect of backing off down the unstable face, or continuing further up, hoping for better rock while getting even more committed - or taking that last ride down. Inquiries with Andy Sawyer, who led a successful group up in 1985, bore out part of my fears when he described the route's protection as either worthless or nonexistent. Two factors finally persuaded me to go. Foremost was that Andy also rated his route as barely class five, and that only for a few feet. I trust Andy's judgement although I remained psychologically uncommitted. Boris's desire to make the peak also swayed me, in part due to the fun and sometimes challenging trips we have shared, and partly because he had by that time climbed every Ogul peak except Jeff Davis and one other. Boris would be the first person ever to complete the Ogul list, and Jeff Davis was the only serious obstacle.

Our group consisted of Boris, Robin Reed, John Sarna, and myself. Camille joined us for the hike in, but chose to read, relax, and take in the sun rather than climb. Starting from Blue Lakes Road, the peak was constantly in view as we hiked a dirt road through grass and scrub to within a few hundred meters of it. We scouted around the south side of the plug, finding the deep chimney/gully leading to a high sloping ledge - Andy's route. We scrambled unstable scree and occasional bedrock into the gully, and set out the gear. My fears seemed well founded. There were cobble-sized solid rocks alright, but the matrix holding them together seemed to have the consistency of dried mud. The rocks that were more than half buried did seem to stay put however, so I felt that a cautious, uncommitted attempt was justified. The climbing looked mostly like smooth class three, which was as well, since no protection was in evidence. We ate lunch in the gully, while I tried to talk myself into starting up the first pitch.

It was like climbing on eggshells. Half-buried rocks usually held, but they were easily dislodged by upward motion. Fortunately, Boris was belaying me from an alcove, and John, Robin and Camille had moved out of the gully - the rockfall bounced from side to side on its way down. Each of us also got a chance to appreciate our helmets. Except for the extreme care required to avoid sending down rocks, the climbing was as easy as it looked. I had found two protection points early on the pitch, but at fifty or sixty feet I was facing a groundfall if I screwed up. At least my rockfall no longer pitched straight at Boris. This was the section of genuine class four, maybe even 5.1, and although the holds were large and obvious, the consequences of one breaking would be painful at least. After some twenty minutes' effort, I was finally able to toss a sling over a poor horn above me. With my confidence thus bolstered, I could face the last few moves onto the giant ledge. The horn was really poor, but I was on easy ground before I could tell.

The horrible part was over then. I worked out an anchor at the ledge, and brought Boris up. While he belayed, I checked out the chimney that led to the top, finding it to be a hard class three. I led the chimney, but it was Boris who first crossed the ledges to the plug's true summit. We three stragglers gathered there a few moments later, finding only a handful of signatures in the register since Andy's group placed it two years before. The descent was a race against darkness, and we copped out and rappelled the lower pitch, but we had gained the summit safely. I took considerable satisfaction from having overcome my fears on that route, I find that the hardest part of climbing. And of course, Boris climbed Old Man Mountain the next weekend, completing the Ogul list.

ATTEMPT ON MT STANFORD - SUMMER '86

A Personal Account

Today, the sickness is gone. But it was just the day before yesterday that I kept wondering if they would find me face down, under my pack, on a sun-blasted stretch of sandy trail in King's Canyon National Park. You might say it had all started 3 days before when me and my 3 companions had hiked so buoyantly out this same trail. But in reality, it started 18 years ago when I had tried to climb Mts. Stanford and Ericsson, but been turned back because of my lack of climbing experience. Now, with more climbing experience, I had returned to complete the unfinished business.

Actually, the first day of this trip hadn't been too bad. There were the usual discomforts of the seemingly endless miles of hot and dusty trail, but nothing serious happened until the crossing of Bubbs Creek at Junction Meadow. This is a feature I have no recollection of from 18 years ago. The water is very fast, and probably 2-3 feet deep--way too much power to try to wade. The log crossing the creek is 16-18 inches in diameter at my end, and gets smaller, much smaller, by the time it intersects another log 30-35 feet on the other side. I unbuckle the waist band on my pack to make it easier to get out of if I fall into the raging torrent, then get up onto the log and balance. Carefully I start inching forward. The first 4 feet are slightly downhill. The racing stream is licking the bottom of the log and flicking drops of water onto my boots. I freeze. The ranger's warning about drowning danger, the warning sign at the start of the trail with a picture of a body face down in the water, these become a sudden reality for me! Very carefully, heart racing, I slowly move one foot back a few inches. Careful, Roger. Don't turn your head, or do anything that might make you lose your balance. Ignore the water. Slowly the other foot follows. Now, shuffle the other foot slowly back a few more inches toward shore, followed by the right foot. My terror is shared by no one, as my companions are still resting and rehydrating a ways back in the woods. I had gone searching for the log crossing and had found it. Finally, after a mini-eternity, I had retreated far enough to very carefully turn around and thankfully grab the root sticking up and forming a convenient handhold. Whew!!!

I am a climber. I have climbed many mountains, many of which are just relatively easy walk-ups. Some are more technically demanding. Often, the long drive home, sleepy and tired after a climb, is more dangerous than the climb itself. Many mountains would be inaccessible to amateur week-enders like me, were it not for the bridges and trail system maintained by the Forest and Park Services. But this log was the poorest excuse for a crossing I have ever seen. But I am a climber. And mountains are not climbed by wishful thinking. The mountain is on the other side of the stream. There is no other way across the stream.

Finally I regain control and start inching my way back out over the stream. Concentrate, Roger. Ignore the whiteness flying by beneath your feet. Ignore the roaring it makes in my ears on its way by. Concentrate, Roger. Make the log, and my boots, my total universe. Slowly. Carefully. Move one foot in front of the other. Now I'm past where I turned around the first time. The texture turns to mixed bark, so the feet have to be lifted to avoid catching the vibram soles on the bark. The motion of

the log from the water drag is becoming more pronounced. Ignore it. Now it goes uphill. Slowly continue. Step over the limb stubs. Don't walk too fast, or it will set it to swinging more. Ahhhhh!! Finally the other side. I dump my pack, and wait for the others. Never, have I been so terrified for such a length of time. Slowly the adrenalin subsides. I get pictures as the others come across.

Our timeline, already late, is now much later. It is still 3 miles of uphill to our intended camp at East Lake. I was hoping to be in camp by 6. It is now already 5:30. But Mother Nature still has some things to teach us. Things about Power (on her side). Things about Puny (on our side). We had been warned by the ranger about all of the downed trees covering the trail, but she had said many of them were parallel to the trail and could be used as "sidewalks". This turned out to be true for 2 or 3 of the hundreds that were down. The Park Service was in the process of cutting a path through them, but so far were just getting started. Never have I seen such destruction caused by an avalanche. Trees 6 feet in diameter had been snapped off and were laying across the trail. These were too big even for the chainsaws of the trail crew, and had to be circumvented. Some we could squeeze under on our bellies. (Sorry I was wearing shorts--my knees started to suffer.) The next half mile took nearly an hour. It was here that Jackie Stroud twisted her knee while stepping off of a log.

We set up camp at East Lake just as it was getting dark. Jackie Stroud decided not to climb, leaving just Charlie and me for the summit attempt the next day. Charlie told me that he had just had his most strenuous single-day backpack ever.

Twenty minutes out of camp the next morning, Charlie and I came to another deadfall area. Before we got above timberline we had to negotiate 2 more. By lunchtime we were only at 12,000 feet, about where I had camped 18 years ago. We both estimated 3-4 hours more to the summit 2,000 feet above us, which would put us back into camp after dark. It had taken us over 5 hours to hike the 3 miles from camp. We were both impressed that I had gotten that far in one day of hiking 18 years ago. Not wanting to navigate through the deadfalls after dark, we gave up and returned to camp.

It was about here that the sickness started. Jackie and Jolie had decided to return slowly to the log crossing, to give Jackie time to favor the hurt knee. Charlie and I broke camp and hurried on down the trail after them. By this time I have begun to experience more and more nausea, and couldn't get my planned meal down. I have begun to have trouble keeping up with Charlie. The upcoming recrossing of the stream is gnawing at the back of my mind. The consequences of the missed meal on my diabetic control are also a concern. Every little uphill stretch causes me to slow way down, and feel the sickness at the base of my throat.

We catch up with the ladies at the infamous log. Jackie has already contacted the Park Service (through the trail crew) and checked regarding getting a horse to ride out. She was also trying to get information on alternate ways across the stream. Not being able to bend her left knee was going to make it much harder to get across. We finally found out by radio

that a horse could be brought up the next day (Sunday) and she could ride out, for \$85. But no one involved thought a horse could get across the stream. She finally decided to try to get across before setting up camp. Since she was injured, both Charlie and I had to take 2 packs across. The water level was even higher than the previous evening. I decided not to even try it standing. Shouldering Jackie's pack first (because it was lighter), I put a leg on each side of the log and started shinnying across on my crotch. Holding my feet as high in back of me as possible I still got wet from mid-thigh down, as the racing water licked at the upstream side of the log. The level of adrenalin was much less crossing in this manner, but the physical exertion was tremendous. I was exhausted by the time I reached the other side. Jackie did it on her stomach, while the rest of us held our breaths. Jolie did it more like I did, with a leg on each side. We all really held our breath when Jolie did it, because she only has one arm.

We set up camp a short distance from the stream crossing, much relieved that the experience is behind us. The rangers warn us that there is a real problem with the bears getting our food in this area, so we do the best job we can at swinging our food from a high limb. I try to eat again, but can't. The sickness wells up inside again. I lay down on the ground in front of the tent, and start to shake almost uncontrollably. I am in Hell! I am probably having an insulin reaction, but can do absolutely nothing about it. After a while I can control the shaking. I get into the sleeping bag and fall asleep almost immediately.

The trip back the next day was relatively uneventful. There was the rattlesnake to go around, and the nausea welling up in my throat every time a slight uphill stretch caused additional exertion. My feet got very sore long before I got to the car. Jolie said she had a completely new set of blisters on the bottoms of her feet that she had never had before. It was close to the hottest part of the day when I got to the last 2 miles to road's end. The trail is almost level, and mostly open to the burning rays of the sun. I am too hot and too dehydrated and too sick to stop and put on sun screen lotion. All I can think of is the water at the end of the trail, and the food in the car. I have been on the verge of an insulin reaction for 4 hours, and have only one candy bar left for quick energy. Is it enough? I wonder. If I had to have it, could I get it down without water, and my mouth so dry? Could my body assimilate it in its dehydrated condition, even if I did get it down? I have been tasting the gorp I ate at lunch, almost unchanged, for 4 hours now, when I burp. I plod on, telling myself not to panic, as the nausea keeps welling up higher and higher in my throat. I change sides in the trail every time it seems that the few shady patches are longer on the other side. I monitor the heat buildup in my body, and force myself to move more slowly over the blistering sand. Finally, I am at the water faucet at the trail head. What a blessed relief. I made it.

Nine hours later I am home.

Roger Rollins

Private trips:- Santa Rosa Range, Nevada, sometime in April
- Eastern Nevada Ranges, May 25 - June 5
Call Boris or Camille Nakhovskiy, 677-4600

CLIMBS OF LASSEN NATIONAL PARK

by JOHN BALD

After moving to Redding, I started to wonder what adventures were to be found in this area. So I started to hang-out at High Adventure a local climbing shop. They directed me to a few good areas for hiking and climbing. Then I discovered a book called Climbs of Lassen National Park and Surrounding Areas. I have not been able to do any of the climbs but I would like to share this book with my fellow climbers.

This book is mainly concerned with rock climbs that occur in Lassen National Park. The peaks that it covers in the Park are; Raker Peak, Eagle Peak, and, of course, Lassen Peak. It also describes climbs at Clear Creek, a practice area near Redding, and at Bear Creek Falls. These climbs seem to offer some good challenge and also very good views of the surrounding area.

Mr. Bald does offer some advice and one warning when climbing in this area. He is always offering advice on what size of protection that most routes will require. To understand the warning, it would be best to quote him.

"Many are unexplored and overlooked, and for good reason. Upon close inspection of the rock one soon realizes why climbing here has not surfaced until recently. Due to varying states of vulcanism and extreme weathering, the reliability of holds, on the most part, is less than desirable for rock climbing. Though thanks to a few diligent climbers, good spots were sorted from bad, and vertical rock was cultivated into safe, enjoyable routes."

So while climbing in the Lassen area watch out for falling rocks and stay on route. Of course, it does take some skill to follow most of these routes.

Most of the routes that are found in this guide are rated at the 5.9+ level. Luckily, there are five 5.8 routes, two 5.7 routes, and two 5.6 routes listed in the guide. So there are levels of routes that almost everyone can climb at and, at Clear Creek, all routes can be topped roped.

If you would like to receive more information about this guide please write to the following address.

HIGH ADVENTURE
1600 E. Cypress #8
Redding, CA 96002
(916) 222-4606

Howard Cole

EQUIPMENT FOR SALE

Skis: Epoke 900's with bindings, waxable, 195 cm \$60
Trak Tremblant with bindings, waxless, 195 cm \$40

Swix Fiberglass Poles, 130 cm \$5

Sierra Designs, 2-person, A-frame Tent \$60

Call Preston or Anne, 758-0374

DRAGTOOTH (12,160) - JULY '86

This peak in the Sawtooth Ridge, out of Twin Lakes, offers an excellent, clean, class 4 alpine climb on its northeast buttress. A third of a mile away, and but 100' lower than its more popular neighbor, Matterhorn Peak, Dragtooth was excluded from the NAS list for reasons only its compilers would understand. (The south side even has a class 2 talus-grind for peak baggers.)

Roger Rollins, Doug Joy, and myself got an early start up the Horse Creek Trail, which takes you up about 1300' before petering out into use trails. At the top of a steep talus slope (basically the second step up from Twin Lakes) we turned right & climbed higher (straight ahead leads to Horse Creek Pass) to a small tarn around 9800'. Although we went higher, this is probably the last environmentally sound campsite unless one goes up to the snow line. After setting up camp, we climbed as high as we safely could without equipment on Horse Creek Tower, and scouted our route for the next day.

An early morning start brought us up the Dragtooth 'glacier' (ice axe & crampons necessary) to where the ridge dividing the Dragtooth & Matterhorn 'glaciers' steepens. Easy, though somewhat exposed, class 3 climbing took us two-thirds of the way up, offering splendid views of the surrounding area, & allowing us to spot the progress of 2 climbers on the north arete of Matterhorn (5.5).

After a lunch break, we roped up with Doug leading for the remainder of the climb, which features a prominent open-book that is easier than it might look. We took turns belaying each other for glory-shots on the summit boulder, which is perched over the north face 1000' above the snow.

Next, we made two big mistakes: first was choosing to descend the notch between Dragtooth & Matterhorn rather than using Polemonium Pass between Dragtooth & The Doodad. The second was dropping down several hundred feet below the notch, which then required ascending loose scree. The couloir below the notch was very steep & scary, filled with firm snow. After some discussion, we opted to rappel. Two rappels got us to less steep ground, and we roped up again until reaching the glacier.

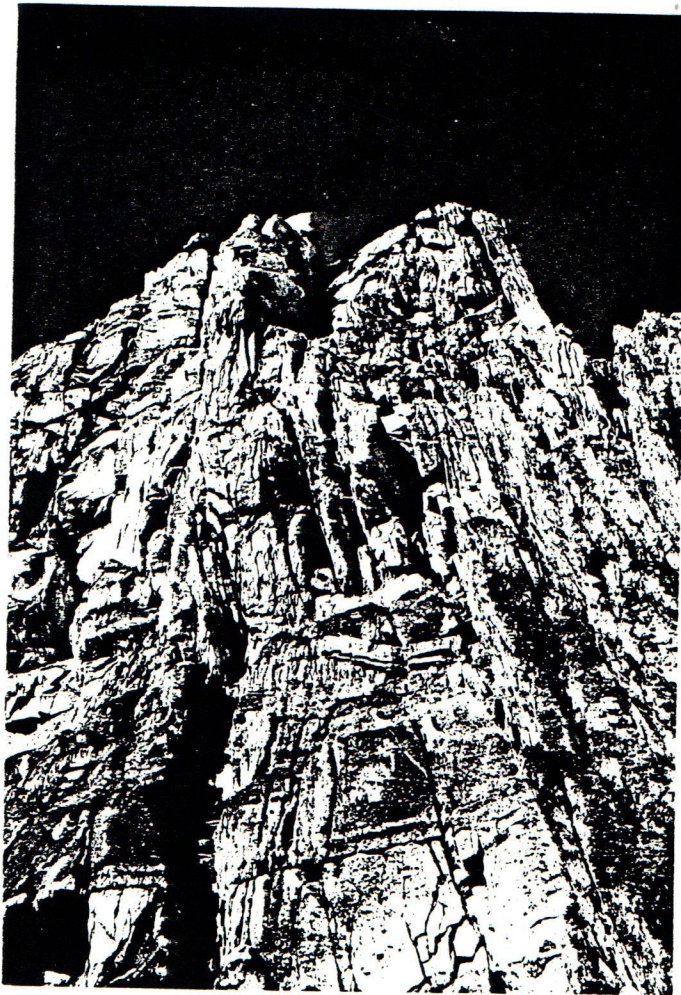
It still took a while to reach camp, which we quickly broke, & scampered down. The last light was fading when we reached the head of the talus slope. Opting not to descend steep, loose talus in the dark with heavy packs, we dug into our 'extra' food with gusto.

Back at Twin Lakes around 9:00 the next morning, phone calls to Sacramento reassured worried loved-ones of our well-being. (A lesson learned: leave your dental charts at home so search & rescue folks can ID your remains!)

This climb could be accomplished in a 2 day weekend by an efficient, time-conscious party who doesn't mind a very late Sunday night return, but 3 days would make for a more relaxed trip.

Charlie Smith

WANTED: I'm looking for one of the old MSR style climbing helmets, medium sized. Charlie, 454-3375.



NE Buttress, Dragtooth

CS

Climbing Stone Drum Mountain Above The Shores Of Shang-shu

A traveler's thoughts stretch on forever,
Sorrow follows grief and grief follows sorrow.
The road home is interminably far,
The rivers and highlands are impassable.
Wandering on, with no one to share a happy moment,
Now at the start of spring I devote myself to climbing.

Since I cannot share my joys and hopes,
Perhaps my melancholy is most in place.
Extending my gaze leftward, I see the broad plains,
Around to the right, I behold a narrow gorge.
As the sun sinks the waters grow choppy,
And clouds form midst the multiplying ranges.

White flag vies with new trumpet-creepers;
Green duckweed sets forth its first leaves.
Picking fragrant plants, their fragrance is unforgettable;
The prospect of a tryst is remote and vague;
I gaze out wildly--who would call me content?

Hsieh Ling-yuen (385-433 AD)
(translated by Francis Westbrook)

Hsieh was often a solitary montane wanderer. Kenneth Rexroth notes, in Love And The Turning Year that he "should have a minor place as a culture hero-- he invented mountaineering boots"!

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EDITOR:

Charles Smith
3962 "E" Street, Sacramento, CA 95819
(916) 454-3375

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

\$5.00 per year (6 issues). Address labels will note when it is "Time to RENEW!" Send checks, payable to "Peak and Gorge," to Boris Nahlovsky, 3276 Amethyst Lane, Cameron Park, CA 95682.

SUBMISSIONS:

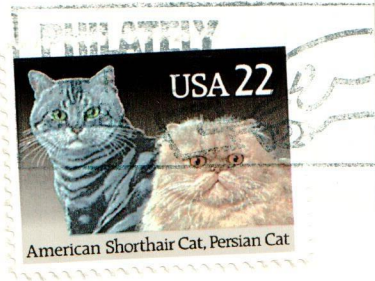
We are interested in articles, letters, fiction, poetry, and artwork that would be of interest to the Peak and Gorge Section. Copy should be typed, single-spaced on 8½ x 11" paper. Materials will not be returned unless accompanied by SASE.

DEADLINE:

One week prior to the first of odd-numbered months. The next deadline is ~~May~~ 24.
April

THE BOULDER

Charles Smith, Editor
3962 "E" Street
Sacramento, CA 95819



Jouie Lipsig

Lassen Peak

John Sarna
12 Park Vista Circle
Sacramento CA 95831