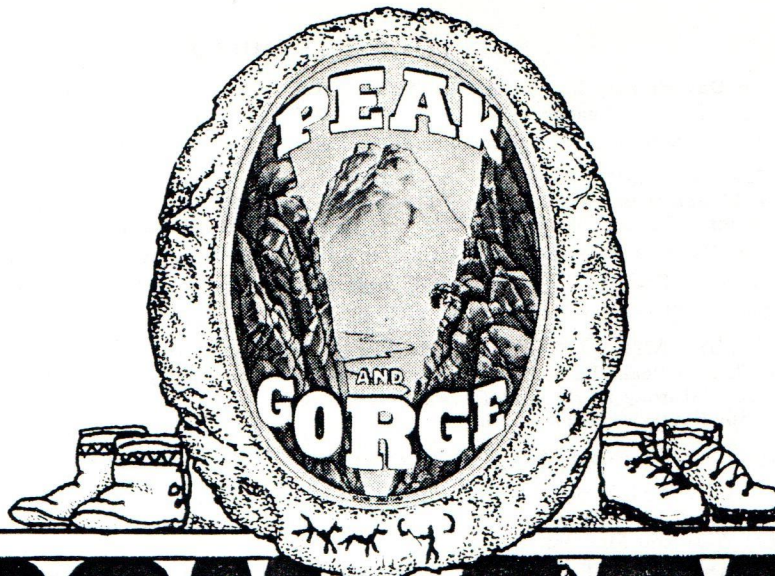


THE



BOULDER

motherlode chapter-sierra club

Issue No. 40, January & February 1991

THE CHAIR'S CORNER

Seasons Greetings,

If your wondering why this issue is out a bit early, it's simply to save a few dollars for our treasury, by giving rather than mailing it to those attending the Peak and Gorge Christmas Party, which I hope is as celebrated a social gathering as was last year's. Thanks go to Brad Brooks for hosting it a second time. I wish everyone safe and pleasant holiday if I don't see you there (I may be working in Monterey that day).

The **January meeting** will be a **Rock-Climbers' social**, rescheduled from November (as announced in the last issue). Thanks go to Judith Fairchild for organizing and hosting it at her home. As in the past year, this and all meetings other than the Christmas party will be on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

Everyone who has an opinion on the **future role of the Peak and Gorge Section** should plan on attending the **February meeting**. This will not be a business meeting (making things happen must occur later), but hopefully, a lively discussion of our goals and objectives for the next few years. The time is ripe since, as we had feared, it is now unlikely that insurance restrictions on the use of ropes and ice axes will be lifted in the foreseeable future. In the past, outings which require such equipment formed a core about which we could focus most of our activities. Let's pluck the core out of the fruit and see what's left of our primary activities, as listed below:

◦ Peak Climbs and Gorge Scrambles

What about other strenuous and/or objective-orientated outings not now offered by other Activity Sections in the Mother Lode Chapter?

◦ The Dan Dobbins Youth Award.

◦ Social Meetings (monthly)

How frequent? What topics are of general interest?

◦ The Boulder Newsletter (bimonthly)

How frequent? What types of articles should be solicited?

◦ Training New Leaders for the Chapter

How appropriate is classroom/field-training in navigation, snow travel, (class 3) rock-climbing, or anything else?

Your opinions will help establish priorities. Since many of us are, by nature, independent thinkers, it may be difficult to reach a consensus. However, the first step is to exchange ideas, so I hope everyone will freely express their thoughts on any relevant course of action at the meeting, or before, if unable to attend.

Happy Hiking, John Sarna

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

- Dec. 16, Sun. MLC Gr. 2B Day Hike up Mt. Tamalpais (2571'). Rain cancels. Meet at the 11th & O parking lot at 8:00 a.m.; in Davis at Murder Burger at 8:30 a.m. Leader: Patrick Purcell, 428-0838 (6-9 p.m.).
- Dec. 22-25, Sat.-Tues. ODS Anza-Borrego Car Camp (near San Diego). Contact Leader Steve Tabor (415) 357-6585.
- > Dec. 27-Jan. 1, Thurs.-Tues., Christmas in the Mohave Desert. Depending on the weather and group preference, we'll climb Kingston, Avawatz, Moapa (Class 3), Sheephole, Turtle, and/or Mopah Mtns, with a side trip to Los Vegas. Be prepared for cold and windy conditions. Call for directions to the meeting place in Baker (at 7 a.m.). Leader: Bill Hauser, 408/243-4566.
- Jan. 5, Sat. MLC Ski Tour, Hawkins Peak; meet at El Dorado Hills Park & Ride at 7:00 a.m. Leader: Dave Vandershaf, 933-3116.
- Jan. 6, Sun. MLC Ski/Snowshoe Practice, Donner Summit; meet at CSUS Arboretum at 7:00 a.m. Leader: Jack Rankin, 457-0776.
- Jan. 15, Tues. MLC Slideshow, "The Peaks of 1990"; at 2109 10th St, #3 (rear) at 7:00 p.m. Leader: Pete Yamagata, 444-6319.
- > Jan. 19-20, Sat.-Sun., Harbin Mtn (2,582') & Hot Springs. Let's start off the New Year right with a Class 1 climb from the newly proposed Coastal Peaks List. Meet at 8 a.m. Sunday at main entry gate to Harbin Hot Springs (fee required, but clothing optional), or 8 a.m. Saturday at the Middletown Post Office for a private exploratory climb of Cobb Mtn. beforehand. Call for details. Leader: Bill Hauser, 408/243-4566.
- Jan. 19-20, Sat.-Sun. DPS climb of Nopah, Smith, & Brown in Death Valley. Leader: Dale Van Dalsem: 213/453-4715.
- > Jan 22, Tues., ROCK-CLIMBERS SOCIAL meeting (rescheduled from November 27) to tell stories, plan private trips, etc. At 7:30 p.m. Bring a snack to share and beverage of choice. Judith Fairchild (485-1010) will coordinate, 3561 Greenview Lane, in Sacramento, near Watt and Marconi.
- Jan. 26, Sat. MLC Ski Tour, ^{up} Stevens Peak; meet at CSUS Arboretum at 6:30 a.m. Leader: Leader: Al Gutowsky, 457-3338.
- > Feb. 2, Sat., Snow Climb for Kids; where there's snow and a nearby place to park in the Sierra is where we'll watch our kids climb up and slide down a hillside. All kids must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Bring something warmable (soup, hot chocolate, etc.). Call for meeting place and time. Leaders: John Sarna, 429-8024, and Terri Panipinto, 387-1852.
- > Feb. 9, Sat. - SPRING OUTINGS SCHEDULE Deadline - Peak and Gorge Outings Leaders, please send your trip writeups for the period of December 15 through March 15 to John Sarna, 545 Windward Way #114, Sacramento, CA 95831.
- > Feb. 16, Sat., Loon Lake, Winter Climb of Guide Peak. A moderately vigorous ascent of Guide Peak (7,741') from the new Natl Forest Ski Lodge at Loon Lake, involving 12 to 14 miles and up to 2000' elevation gain. This peak is the finest example of a pristine granitic glacial dome north of Yosemite Park. Outstanding views of the Rubicon River Canyon and of the Sierra Range. Meet at CSUS Goethe Arboretum at 6:00 a.m. Leader: Jack Rankin, 457-0776.
- Feb. 17, Sun., MLC Ski Tour, Hawkins Peak; meet at ~~El Dorado Hills Park & Ride at 7:00~~ ^{6:30} a.m. Leader: Al Gutowsky, 457-3338.
- Feb. 23, Sat. MLC Ski Tour, Stevens Peak; meet at El Dorado Hills Park & Ride at 7:00 a.m. Leader: Dave Vandershaf, 933-3116.
- > Feb. 26, Tues., Peak and Gorge Social Meeting: A Rap-Session on the Future course of the Peak and Gorge Section. Bring a snack to share and drink of your choice. At 7:30 p.m. John Sarna (429-8024) will host; at 545 Windward Way #114; Sacramento (43rd St. exit from I-5; to Riverside, left on Florin, then next right).
- > Mar. 2, Sat., South Lake Tahoe, Winter Climb of Monument Peak. A moderately vigorous ascent of Monument Peak (10,067') in the Carson Mtn. Range SE of South Lake Tahoe, involving 12 to 14 miles and 3000' to 4000' elevation gain. Great views of Tahoe, the Sierra, and Carson Range. Various points of interest lie along the way, as well as excellent downhill running possibilities on the north-facing descent. Meet at CSUS Goethe Arboretum at 6:00 a.m. Leader: Jack Rankin, 457-0776.
- Mar. 3, Sun. MLC (Gr 3B) Dayhike up Mt Wittenberg. Meet at 11th and O at 8:00 a.m. Leader: Pat Purcell, 428-0838 (6-9 pm).
- Mar. 9-10, Sat.-Sun. DPS climb of Tin and Dry Mtns in Death Valley. Leader: Maris Valkass: 213/379-8592.
- Mar. 16, Sat. MLC (Grade 2B) Dayhike with lunch on Table Mtn in the Monte Bello Open Space Preserve and Yerba Buena Nursery. Meet at 11th and O at 7:30 a.m. Leader: Pat Purcell, 428-0838 (6-9 p.m.).
- Mar. 16-17, Sat.-Sun. DPS climb of Pyramid & Corkscrew Mtns in Death Valley. Leader: George Toby: 818/345-2459.
- Apr. 13-14, Sat.-Sun. DPS double list finisher on Nelson Pk. Leader: Dale Van Dalsem: 213/453-4715.
- May 4-5, Sat.-Sun. DPS climb of Inyo and Keynot. Leader: Igor and Suzanne Mamedalin: 714/786-3918.
- June 15-16, Sat.-Sun. DPS climb of Boundary & Montgomery. Leader: Maris Valkass: 213/379-8592.

NOTE: Some outings carried by other Sections and other Chapters of the Club (NOT marked with a ->) are listed for your information. Details are provided in other Sierra Club Publications; prior consultation with the outings leader is recommended for those unable to check the original (more detailed) description of the trip. ODS = Oakland-based Desert Survivors; MLC = Mother Lode Chapter; SPS = Los Angeles Sierra Peaks Section; DPS = Los Angeles Desert Peaks Section; HPS = Los Angeles Hundred Peaks Section; PCS = Loma Prieta Chapter Peak Climbing Section.

PRIVATE TRIPS: Space available for anyone who wants to call or write in a private trip.

T-SHIRTS

Anyone wanting to buy T-Shirt(s) displaying our original Peak & Gorge Logo can phone in an order to P. Lehman at 916/452-5057. Please include your name and phone number along with the preferred color, size, and number desired. The cost will be \$8 to \$10 depending on the size of our order.

I noticed an announcement in the Bonanza that Janet was having a showing at the Duck Stamp in the Pavilions shopping center so I paid a visit. Janet and her husband Harry Erl were very prominent in the Peak and Gorge organization before their move to Yreka a few years ago.

They both were doing very well, with Janet's watercolors fetching almost \$3,000 per work, and with Harry considering retirement from the automotive business to becoming Janet's full-time manager. Janet was having shows throughout the West, including Seattle, Los Angeles, and Boise.

Harry reported being a chief honcho with Siskiyou County Search and Rescue, having participated in a number of heli-operations, including the removal of deceased climbers including a sporting goods store owner from Cameron Park and two dead doctors from the Hotlum Glacier (an unfortunate attempt at ice climbing). Aside from this, Harry had given up climbing, but remains the Sheriff's Office's "expert." Both said to say, "Hi!"

Pete Yamagata

500 PEAKS CELEBRATION SLATED FOR JANUARY 15, 1991

On Tuesday night at 7:00 p.m., there will be a party with hors d'oeuvres and champagne to mark Pete Yamagata's "Year of the 500th Ascent." All interested persons are invited. There will be slides of recent climbs as well as a request session of slides of past outings that Pete has in his 13-year old collection. This includes about 300 peak climbs as well as day hikes and ski tours. The party will be at Pete's apartment at 2109 10th Street (rear) #3. Pete is currently the only triple "Super Emblem" in the NAS organization, and is also a SPS Senior Emblem, a DPS Emblem, and is a member of the HPS. Get a "Peaks Tour" of the wild and scenic areas of the West and enjoy the fine company of other mountaineers and interested people.

DESERT LOVERS WANTED FOR CARPOOL AND PARTY

Pete Yamagata is organizing a carpool to attend the DESERT SURVIVORS Christmas Party which will be held in Berkeley on December 15, 1990 at 7:00 p.m. There will be a potluck dinner with slides shown. The DESERT SURVIVORS began in 1978 when two UCB students climbed Keynot Peak, a 11,101' peak in the Inyo Mountains, from the floor of the Saline Valley (a 10,000' climb). A group of students who enjoyed exploring the desert then became a larger group of persons interested also in desert issues. A quarterly newsletter is published, and a slate of officers formally manages the group. Please phone Pete at 444-6319 to get in on the ridesharing and fun!

URGENTLY NEEDED, PLEASE!!

Your Editorial Committee of the Peak and Gorge BOULDER is in desperate need of your trip write-ups and articles of interest. Without your contributions we cannot put out a good newsletter. Please, we want stories on trips and outings, plus newsworthy items related to peak climbing and gorge scrambling and wilderness exploration in general. The specifications are on the last page, and if one does not have a typewriter, please write by hand and send them in anyway; one of the committee has a fun, brand new electronic typewriter and is dying to use it! Handwriting must be legible. Thanks tremendously!!

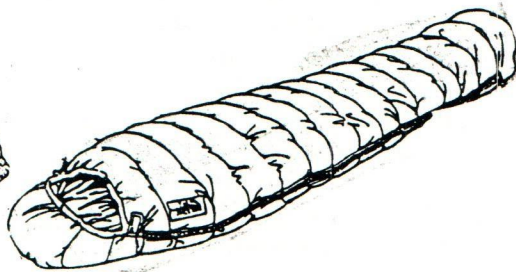
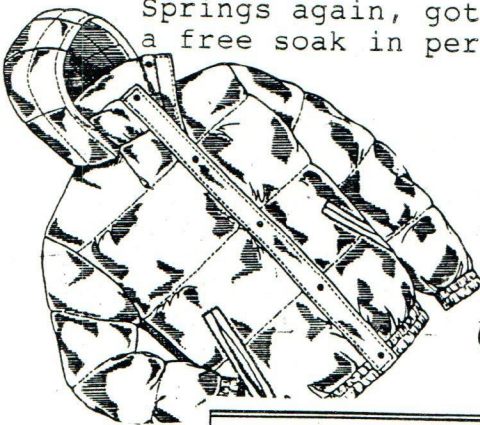
After a glorious 700 mile drive to our meeting place 50 miles north of Elko, Nevada, we were met with a storm and snow down to 6,000' elevation. Dancing with delight in the snow, we decided to go and visit the ghost town of Tuscarora, Nevada. Evidently the town was on television recently because the open pit gold mine threatened to "eat up" the town. Trip members Bill Hauser, Ron Kezar (of Ely, Nevada), Alan Edwards of England (PCS), Mark Halverson (PCS), and Malcolm Bauer (of Arnold) enjoyed the old ghost town (pop. 8) and relished the museum tour given to us by the town's 92 year old mother.

Later, we visited the perfectly natural hot springs on the Spanish Ranch. Four pools were very hot; one pushed my thermometer up to 200°F!! Alan Edwards discovered a hot (92°F) waterfall and a beautiful pool but due to the wind and cold air temperatures we just took pictures.

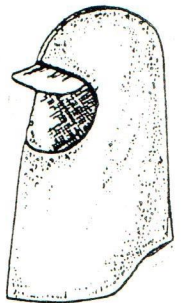
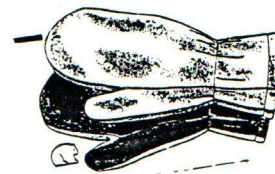
We drove over Jack Creek Summit at 8353' and could see that the snow was melting on the peaks. Wildhorse Hot Springs was closed now due to a greenhouse development so we checked out Ruzzi Ranch Hot Springs. The owner spotted us and declared that he was using the water for irrigation and that there was no place to soak. Somewhat defeated in the hot spring quest, we toured Mountain City, Nevada, being only 15 miles from Idaho!! We had a good meal in Mountain City and then drove to our camp below Mt. McAfee.

Sunday we were up early. It was cold (20°F) and windy. We moved up into a nice canyon with willows and alders out of the wind and left at 9 a.m. for the peak--about 3,500' above us. Skirting the hunters, heading for the Whitebark pines and threading through the 3-4" of fresh snow we made the top at 12 noon. 10,438'. Great desert views plus a stiff wind made it a little like Alaska. I had on my 2 sweaters, down jacket, and windbreaker. I built a cairn and placed a register in a mayonnaise jar. We left and traversed a nice ridge about 1½ miles to pk. 10,434'!! The ridge was a firm class 2 and low class 3. On the second summit at 2:30 p.m. we made a big loop and got back to our cars about 5:30 p.m. We saw a couple of bucks and many does running scared from all the shooting.

I built a nice fire to take the chill off the cold evening and we had a great camp along Pratt Creek. The next day we tried Wildhorse Hot Springs again, got a tour of the greenhouse (tomato and cilantro) and a free soak in perfect mineral water at a perfect temperature!!



Bill Hauser



Sierra Club Bookstore Opens

At 1009 J St. in downtown Sacramento (447-9003)

Monday - Friday 11-6

Saturday 11-5

They stock books on hiking & mountaineering and plan to have USGS Topographic Maps on hand as well

Rex Smith and I drove to the Bishop Sizzler to meet Boris and Camille at 8 p.m. Wednesday night for a final consultation on the order of peaks and other details. We camped at Baker Creek Campground in Big Pine, and, in the morning, drove east on Hwy. 168 to Lida Summit to park and climb Palmetto via an easy, cross-country 5-6 mile and 1750' gain round trip. Leaving a register, we descended quickly, and, with the extra daylight, visited historic Goldfield on Nevada State Route 95. We then drove south and then west to Scotty's Castle to get gas (yes, they were open on Thanksgiving), and then drove north on the Eureka Valley Road to camp outside the Monument. Within an hour, Camille had prepared our sumptuous turkey dinner with all the trimmings.

The next morning, we drove to the takeoff point for Tin on the Race-track Road (it says 4WD RECOMMENDED, but a good 2WD car can make it). Camille couldn't remember exactly what ridge to take (having been 3 years since her climb with John Sarna, Ellen VanFleet, and Rifka Offenbach), but I made a good guess and found the "DPS use trail" that she mentioned. I summited the 4400' gain climb after 3½ hours and was followed by Boris and Rex after ½ hour. I took scores of photos of the views along with pictures of the many scenic snags that abounded on the summit plateau. We descended together, and then hopped into our vehicles to proceed to Stovepipe Wells to work on our leftover turkey, trimmings, and dessert (pumpkin and pecan pie). I walked over to the village and lounged almost by myself in the saloon, having a decaf coffee, wondering if the Persian Gulf situation had to do with the definite absence of the usual holiday crowd (Super ran about \$2.03 at some stations).

We awoke early to a great breakfast by Camille (she began cooking at 5 a.m.), and then motored up to the takeoff point for Tucki, which involves a long up-and-down ridge run on a huge order. I became separated from Boris and Rex due to differences in route-guessing, and arrived near the summit by 11:30 a.m. Due to an error in height perception I climbed a far peak, but, looking back, I saw the correct summit after spotting Boris and Rex topping out there. The views were spoiled by the large plateau-like nature of the summit area, with adjacent bumps blocking all but distant horizons.

I started back ahead of the other two, convinced I had found a better route to Tucki over the DPS peaks guide, but unfortunately, a bad memory/navigation error led me down the wrong wash (what's all this?) to the top of a 50' dry waterfall which convinced me that I was dead lost! I did a lot of traversing and a lot of dropping steeply down into a deep wash, plus a dead serious humungous climb to the top of a "this better be it!" ridge which revealed to me in the form of the view that I was about a mile too far west. I bagged two peaks (both with cairns) while running the ridge to pass a familiar cabin and to get back on route. I had to walk with serious speed, gulping precious water, as it got dark shortly with miles to go. But as soon as I confirmed my position (no 15' topo or use of compass), I knew that I had it made. I got back to the cars at dark one hour after Boris and Rex and was welcomed by hot turkey noodle soup prepared by Camille, who had explored the old town-site of Skidoo that day. I also quickly finished two diet cokes in no time!

We camped at Wildrose and had turkey sausage and French toast with whipped cream and strawberries for our laid-back Sunday breakfast, then drove to Aguerberry Point for a great view (better than Tucki); I sat around while the others climbed Aguerberry Mtn. (6433', a 15-minute hike). Due to their van problems, Rex and I trailed Boris and Camille on the road home. However, we stopped at Bobo's Bonanza in Lone Pine

MT. REINSTEIN (12,586') AND FINGER PEAK (12,404')
AUGUST 30-SEPTEMBER 3, 1990

Steve Thaw (leader), Robert Wilkinson (Berkeley), Jim Murphy and Nancy Gordon (Sierra Peaks Section), and myself were on the move by 8:00 a.m. from Wishon trailhead (elev. 6750') to cover a minimum of 46 miles round-trip, with about 8 extra miles for Steve, Jim, and Nancy (climbed Tunemah), over four and a half days over Labor Day weekend. We made good time, with plenty of breaks along the Woodchuck Country trail which climbs to 10,400' near Crown Pass, and then drops to Half Moon Lake (elev. 9422'), our first night's camp.

We continued the next day to Portal Lake (elev. 10,320+'), made camp, and then four of us headed north past interesting Pearl Lake to climb Mt. Reinstein. After a nice class 2 talus slope, we enjoyed great views of Goddard, Goddard Canyon, and Martha Lake. We had a nice scree run down the center of the south side of the peak.

Day Three was to prove a tough, 6,600' gain (all cross-country) day for Steve, Jim, and Nancy as they climbed Tunemah, possibly the most remote peak in the Sierra, and Finger. I slept late and climbed Finger solo via a chute up from Cathedral Lake to the right of the glacier, and then around and up the class 3 south side. The Tunemah three came back to camp by headlamp about 1 hour after sunset.

Steve declared Day Four to be "Club Med Day" so we slept late and shifted camp in the afternoon back to Halfmoon Lake. It took a lot of restraint for me not to pack out and get that "Cheeseburger!!" We got up early on Day Five and arrived back to the cars at 12:30 p.m., except for Robert, whose poor memory and sense of direction resulted in an hour's delay in his return (you may be a genius, but you can still get lost!). Congratulations to Jim who was now about 9 peaks from list finishing! We drove to Shaver Lake for a nice Mexican lunch and said our goodbyes.

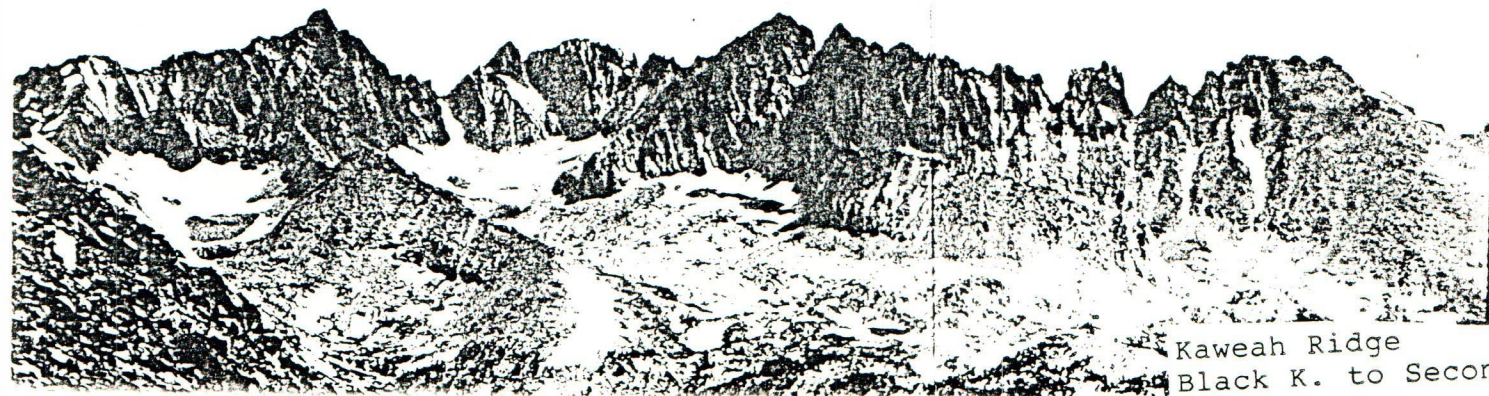
Pete Yamagata

THANKSGIVING EXPEDITION (CONTINUED)

for a chicken fried steak supper which featured a piece of meat that nearly filled a plate 12" by 8" (\$7.95). We enjoyed the U.S. 395 scenery but when we reached Kingsbury Grade, we were turned back by blowing snow and extremely poor visibility. Hearing radio road conditions, we opted to drive to Reno and try I-80, which was reported "open with no driving restrictions." Of course, by the time that we got there, multiple spin-outs had closed the road for a while, but we put on chains and got home by 2:45 a.m. Monday morning.

The weather in the south had been excellent, with temperate days and cool nights. It never reached freezing, and at Stovepipe Wells, the night was quite pleasant. The High Sierra had been pretty much bare of snow aside from the north sides, and we could have hiked Whitney if that had been our urge.

Pete Yamagata



Kawah Ridge
Black K. to Second K.

Rex Smith and I left Sacramento by 9:30 a.m. to head for our "official" dedication of a new peak to be included as part of the new "Coastal Peaks List." Readers may note that aside from Mt. Vaca, the high points of Blue Ridge, which is the "Front Range" of our local coast range, are not included in the list published in the last issue of the Boulder. Notably, the high point of Yolo County was left out (a list of the 58 California Counties highpoints is being prepared, along with a guidebook on how to climb them), along with some highpoints which, being close for us, should be developed into climbs. Much, if not all, of Blue Ridge is BLM land; the approaches are generally private property.

Anyway, back to the hike, we drove up Hwy. 16 through the scenic Capay Valley past Rumsey to the trailhead at Cache Creek Canyon County Park, a short 60 mile drive from Sacramento. Crossing the low water bridge (which I have seen inundated with 2 feet of water surging over the top), one takes the dirt road west (left) to shortly come to a clearing where the trail begins a few feet from the old outhouse. This trail was largely built by Sierra Club volunteers with BLM assistance, but badly needs more work, as there are some washouts and is in need of "brushing out." However, it climbs nicely to the east side of the main ridge, and after the view of the highway bridge is gained, another 15 minute walk will place one at a small saddle from which a steep use trail (with yellow flagging) climbs steeply to about 50' to the left of a lone Digger Pine, then up the high 2 "rock band," and then continues to the top of the main ridge. Along the top, one proceeds along a nice "trail" past 2-3 false summits and finally to a high point which is marked by a large rock coated with a white, mineralized substance (from lightning?). We placed a can and a book, which hopefully will see some use. The view was nice, with Mt. St. Helena, Snow Mtn., and the Upper Capay Valley visible. On a clear day, one will see the Sutter Buttes and the Sierra.

Our time for the climb was 2¼ hours. There is another peak about ¼ mile to the south about 100' higher, but I didn't want to make this point "too impossible" as a couple of hiking groups that I had led to the ridge thought that even that much was "pretty rough" (some didn't even make the ridge!). Also, the trail didn't seem to continue to the further "peak." One person reported a "tick," and I have seen a rattler on the trail. This climb is best done in the fall or during a dry winter. Spring might be nice, but insects will abound as well as wildflowers. Total stats are about 7-8 miles r.t. over 2,000' net gain.

Pete Yamagata

MAKE MINE AN FB, BARKEEP

Here's a new product with a catchy name: California Fruit Beer. It's sweet and nonalcoholic and doesn't even claim to taste like beer--it's made from grapes and figs--but it does sort of look like beer. High in potassium (which is lost in exercise) and glucose polymers (quick energy), it seems really to be aimed at exercise-type people who perhaps don't like to look as if they're drinking fruit juice.

Or to drink too much of anything. "It's not the kind of drink you'll drink and want another," creator Brad Snower told Food Business magazine. "Your thirst is quenched with one."

Reprinted from the DPS Sage
Submitted by Pete Yamagata

WHAT TO DO IN WINTER

It was another dull summer. No injuries. Only got snowed off a couple peaks. Missed the deer on the way home. Where's the adventure? Since getting my new Trooper, I haven't even had a breakdown. The truck that got stuck in the mud by Lobdell Lake didn't even belong to our group. All the trips that I went on this year and we didn't lose anyone. No one even managed to get us back to the car later than 9:30. Well, winter is here. An end to those routine, cheap, good weather outings. So what can we do?

Speaking of expensive, how about some alpine skiing. Bring your VISA because at thirty six dollars per lift ticket, I doubt you have cash. If you work hard at it, you should be able to spend a thousand dollars on gear which you won't use at all due to continued poor snow conditions this year. And don't forget a good book for those charming stops after a trailer rig flips on the bridge coming home. Taking eight hours to get from Reno to Roseville will give you a greater appreciation of our forefathers travails. Think of their suffering as you inhale Greyhound bus fumes.

If we ever do get any snow, nordic skiing is another option. Be sure to get an out of date guidebook which sends you drooling to the perfect spot, only to discover that it has been converted to a private resort. Go now, this week. My sister-in-law in Truckee has assured me that if I manage to avoid the rocks, conditions are a delightful combination of slush and ice. If you don't get there before the real snow, choose your time carefully. Dash up during winter storm watches. Be sure to take routes that you have never been on, with no map or compass. And never attempt to follow your tracks back to the car until they are obliterated by falling snow. Hug those steep snow banks where there aren't any trees. It's the best way to find avalanches.

In preparation for the winter season, take your chains out of the car. Always dress lightly. Wear low cut tennis shoes unless sandals are available. Never bring extra blankets or clothing. Food is unnecessary. Water will only prevent you from appreciating how dry your throat can get while freezing. Don't tell anyone where you are going. They might rescue you just when you are starting to appreciate what winter can mean.

Alright, maybe the white stuff isn't for you. There is plenty of fun elsewhere. Go for a stroll in the foothills. Your map will have about half of the jeep roads that you find. Marking the route isn't fair! Do a lot of bushwacking. Without leaves, you won't notice the poison oak until you feel the itch. Climb with abandon on those rocks along the streams and rivers. Slick with moss and mud, you can break an arm when you slip. Start late and don't take a flashlight. It won't get dark until about 5:00.

Finally, if the fog and overcast in the valley depresses you too much, travel a little. But don't check the weather forecast. Calling for road conditions is a no-no, depriving you of the special vacations. A couple of years ago I got to see snow at Scotty's Castle and flooded roads the length of Death Valley. That was after a trip which started with blowing a fuse driving up I-80 at 4:30 in the morning. With John hanging out the window holding a flashlight, we reached the conclusion we could safely pull off the road. Too bad the radio fuse was interchangeable. But the strain of trying to peer thru an iced over windshield helped me savor the rest of the trip down 395. I just haven't had any fun since I got rid of that truck.

Sound absurd? It is. It is also all true, for myself or people I know. The rules for winter are be flexible and be prepared. Sierra winters can be beautiful but deadly. Expect things to go wrong. Have a sense of humour. If you are crazy enough to try skiing in blizzards and hiking in the most questionable weather, also be careful enough to keep your odds of surviving the experience good. Then tell us about what insane thing you did this winter. Better yet, submit an article to the Boulder.

Bob Buckles

White Wilderness in Washington?

A proposal to leave a few blank spots on the map.

By Lowell Skoog

The latest issue of *SUMMIT* magazine describes Reinhold Messner's "White Wilderness" proposal at the Fourth Annual Mountain Summit in Utah. According to *SUMMIT*, "the point of White Wilderness is to leave a few blank spots on the map--places without any permanent traces of mankind, not even guidebooks, maps or rules, nothing that prevents an adventurous visitor from being left utterly alone with the natural environment and himself." As Messner points out, "just knowing such places are out there, even if never visited, is vital to the human soul."

SUMMIT describes Messner's proposals as "preaching to the converted." Yet while everyone seems to support the idea in the abstract, I've never heard a concrete proposal of where White Wilderness should be preserved. It seems only to be "out there somewhere" in Greenland, Antarctica, or maybe the Himalayas. Can't we find it closer to home?

In the heart of Washington's North Cascades, the Picket Range occupies a special place. In his *Cascade Alpine Guide*, Fred Beckey writes of the Pickets: "Despite all we know, despite pictures, and maps, the range is bound to remain full of dazzling surprises. In a sense it is today's version of the remaining exploration left on Earth."

I'd like to say that Beckey is right, but I'm afraid that his very guidebook (published by Mountaineers Books) will eventually make a thorough housecleaning of the Pickets and their mysteries. A second edition of the guide is in preparation and will be published soon. In light of the growing appreciation of White Wilderness, and in acknowledgment of the fact that the Pickets still retain some of their original mystery, I'd like to propose a



Mt. Challenger--anchoring the northern end of the Pickets.

radical idea for the new guidebook: Leave the Pickets out.

The usual response to such a proposal is that people like me should avoid buying guidebooks. Ignore the guidebooks and the adventure will return, I am told. But this is not really true. It's like suggesting that one can ignore a highway within earshot of a wilderness trail.

Another response is that it's too late for the Pickets. They are too well known. I disagree. Just as roads wash out and clearcuts grow over, so guidebooks wear out and memories fade. Fred Beckey himself has

said that he left some routes out of his guidebooks by design, so there would be room for discovery after he's gone. That's a nice gesture, but it really won't preserve much in the long run.

In the past, threats to wilderness came from others, they were tangible and obvious, and solutions could be found through legislation. The Mountaineers have always responded heroically to such threats. In contrast, the value of White Wilderness is intangible. It cannot be preserved by legislation, but by self-restraint, since it is threatened not by dynamite and chainsaws, but by words and pictures. And we, who say we value wilderness the most, are the developers.

I hope we can preserve some of the spirit of wilderness that I was able to experience growing up here in the Northwest. When the wildest mountains have been dissected by "classic routes" books, topo diagrams and pre-packaged video tapes (as in Europe), their soul will be diminished, and so will ours.

We have a rare opportunity to save a bit of White Wilderness here in the Northwest. I don't propose it everywhere--in Washington, I think only the Pickets really qualify. As publishers of the definitive guidebook to the area, The Mountaineers are in a unique position. We can set a precedent by showing a deeper commitment to wilderness values than every before. Are we up to it?

Lowell Skoog grew up in the Seattle area, is a member of The Mountaineers and has been climbing throughout the Northwest for 15 years--hiking and skiing for 25. He has made a number of new routes, first winter ascents and first ski traverses in the North Cascades.

The Picket Range from Easy Ridge, North Cascades NP.

Ken Lans

White Wilderness: What Do You Think?

We'd like to hear what our members and readers think of Lowell Skoog's concept of *White Wilderness*. Send us your thoughts, reactions, proposals and ideas--we'll publish as many of them as we can in a future issue of *The Mountaineer*. Mail to Ken Lans, *The Mountaineer*, 300 Third Ave. W., Seattle, WA 98119.

Ken Lans

- THE BOULDER:** *Published bimonthly by the Peak and Gorge Outings Section, Mother Lode Chapter, Sierra Club.*
- EDITORS:** *John Besbekos, Bob Buckles, John Watters, and Pete Yamagata.*
- SUBSCRIPTIONS:** *Dues are \$5.00 per year (6 issues). Address labels will note what issue will be your last unless you renew. Send checks (payable to "Peak and Gorge") to this Section's Treasurer: Boris Nahlovsky, 3276 Amethyst Lane, Cameron Park, CA 95682.*
- SUBMITTALS:** *We encourage you to submit copy for publication. Articles, letters, fiction, poetry, and artwork that would be of interest to the Peak and Gorge Section are welcome. Copy should be typed single-spaced on 8.5 x 11" paper with half- to one-inch margins, and sent to: Boulder Editorial Committee; C/O John Sarna; 545 Windward Way #114; Sacramento, CA 95831; phone 429-8024. Submittals will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.*
- DEADLINE:** *A week before social meetings on even-numbered months. The next deadline is: Wednesday, February 20, 1991.*

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John Sarna's OGUL List Finisher summit party
Genoa Peak (9150'), September 22, 1990