

THE



BOULDER

motherlode chapter-sierra club

Issue No. 50 Sept. & Oct. 1992

Chairmans Column

It is worth noting in this the 50th issue of The Boulder some thoughts about the state of our section and the Mother Lode Chapter. In recent years the most dramatic event to impact the Peak & Gorge section has been the mountaineering restrictions imposed as a result of liability concerns. From the beginning this issue has always struck me as a "red herring" because the history of climbing in the Sierra Club suggests that insurance liability is not much of a threat at all. Instead the specter of lawsuits has been used by the club leadership to divert money away from outings to other purposes. Those who see outings as a less important part of the the clubs activities also see wilderness not as an essential part of their lives but rather a commodity in which they deal. Experiencing wilderness reminds us that the cost of losing any environmental fight is too high and the loss of mountaineering to the club is the first step in our forgetting why we exist.

It has always been my contention that experiencing wilderness is the most likely way to develop in people the desire and motivation to protect it. This may be viewed as a traditional approach but however it is viewed this is the Sierra Club approach. Not only should we find a way to lift the mountaineering restrictions so club members can once again explore the remote high peaks but we should do more to include outings experiences in our environmental campaigns by using more personal accounts reflecting the value of wilderness to support arguments based otherwise on science or law.

So much for great thoughts and ideas. As I begin my second year as Peak & Gorge chair i'd like to throw out a wish list of things I want people to do for me. First of all, if more people will turn in trip write-ups it would be greatly appreciated. Also we can use more help with the Boulder publication and someone to coordinate meetings. And of course, people who want to give meetings are welcome to call me at 488-8467 with their ideas. Finally, if anyone has questions, suggestions, complaints or just comments about the section you are welcome to call and voice your opinions.

See you on the trail.
John Watters, Chairman

FALL CALENDAR

Sept. 5-7, Sat-Mon. **Emigrant Wilderness Yosemite National Park.** Trip limited to eight. For more details call leader: Al Gutowsky, 457-3338.

Sept. 5-7, Sat.-Mon. **Tehipite Dome.** Send SASE, experience, carpool info., and phones to Steven Thaw, 30 Woodside Drive., Moraga, CA 94556.

Sept. 12, Sat. **Velma Lakes.** For information to the trailhead, meet at the Hazel Avenue Park and Ride just north of Hwy. 50 at 7:30 a.m. This outing starts at the trailhead. Leader Bob Buckles, 624-3620.

Sept. 12, Sat. **Giant Gap.** Gorge Scramble IV. Meet at 7:30 a.m. in Roseville Square. Leader: Fred Fischietto, 773-0870.

Sept. 13, Sun. **Echo Lake To Echo Peak.** Meet leader at the CSUS Arboretum parking lot at 7:30 a.m. for directions to the trailhead. Leader: John Besbekos, 729-2725.

Sept. 19, Sat. **Desolation Wilderness Peaks.** Maggies Peak. Bring along a bathing suit. Meet at CSUS Arboretum at 7:00 a.m. Leader: Al Gutowsky, 457-3338.

Sept. 19, Sat. **M.F. Feather River.** Gorge Scramble III. Meet at 6:00 a.m. in Roseville Square. Leader: John Schwind, 678-2924.

Sept. 26, Sat. **Wade Peak.** Call leader for meeting place and time. Gary Campbell, 454-5140.

Sept. 27, Sun. **Silver Peak.** (East of Ebbets Pass on Hwy 4). Meet at Hazel Ave. Park and Ride at 7:00 a.m. for directions to the trailhead. Leader: Alan Cooke, 344-0957.

Sept. 29, Tues. **Annual Fall Slide Show of Summer Trips.** Bring 15-20 slides from your summer trips and a snack to share. Time is 7:30 p.m. and your host is John Watters, 488-8467. Address: 845 Fulton Ave. #2056 in Sacramento, call for directions.

Oct. 3-4, Sat-Sun. **Tuolumne Meadows Peaks.** This will be a car camp

with dinner out at the nearby resort. For more details contact leader: Al Gutowsky, 457-3338.

Oct. 10, Sat. **Monitor pass.** Fall Colors High Points. Meet at CSUS Arboretum at 7:00 a.m. Leader: Al Gutowsky, 457-3338.

Oct. 11, Sun. **Lookout Peak.** Meet at the Hazel Ave. Park and Ride at 7:30 a.m. for directions to the trailhead. Leader: Alan Cooke.

Oct. 27, Tues. **Slides of Favorite Winter trips and Cross-Country Ski Clinic.** Bring slides of last years ski trips along with equipment and any tips for the beginning cross country skier. Host: John Besbekos, 4428 Old Dairy Drive, Sacramento. Call for directions, 729-2725.

Oct. 17-18, Sat.-Sun. - **Mt. Starr King (9092')**. Anyone interested in a private climb of this prominent peak (with its historic register) in Southern Yosemite. Perhaps there will be enough interest to make this a **gala rock-climber's social gathering** around the campfire on Saturday night, but a small group would be enjoyable too. I'll arrange for the permit and coordinate times and the relatively short backpack in to the base of the peak, but I can't provide the ropes, hardware, or experience for the Class 5. Let's spend an evening at the Rocklin Quarry practicing and getting further acquainted before committing to this climb. How about October 12th, 13th, or 14th at 6 pm with pizza afterward? Coordinator: John Sarna, 429-8024.

CONGRATULATIONS

to Alan Cooke for being awarded the NAS EMBLEM
in August 1992

Corrections to List of California's County High Points

In Boulder Issues 49, I had published a list of the highest point in each county in California. Bill Hauser has since pointed out one error in this list, that is, the high point of Plumas County is Mt. Ingalls (8,372'), on the Mt. Ingalls (7.5) USGS map, in the Sierra Nevada (N70A2/3 in DeLormes Atlas), not "1-mile north of Mt. Lola," as already listed for and located in Sierra County.

I also wish to clarify that only official USGS names for peaks were included in the list. In particular, naming the high point of Yolo County (Little Blue Peak) on a County-High-Pointers' hike is not official until the USGS, through a formal administrative process of having a new name proposed and concluding it is a common name for the peak, so designates it and begins using it on their maps. Use of a name will, however, assist in the process of getting these peaks named. Some suggested names for unnamed peaks were included in the introduction to the list.

John Sarna

RIDER/CLIMBER WANTED:

Share ride, camping expenses for California Mountaineering Club and various Angeles Chapter, Sierra Club, SPS, DPS, and HPS outings over the fall. Must be experienced and in excellent condition; some of these are TOUGH trips! You must sign up under separate cover to the respective leader; I'll tell you how and with who. Includes weeklong outing to Arizona (Warning: State economy may be subsidized!) and semi-technical climbs, as well as moderate/strenuous backpacks and list-finish parties! Please contact Pete Yamagata (916) 444-6319.

DICTIONARY OF ACRONYMS COMMONLY USED IN THE BOULDER

BLM	Bureau of Land Management, Dept. of the Interior, United States
CKS	Climbing-Knapsack Section (now defunct, of Mother Lode Chapter, Sierra Club, 1981-1987)
CMC	California Mountaineering Club
DFG	Department of Fish and Game, State of California (or Nevada, or whatever state)
DPS	Desert Peaks Section, Angeles Chapter, Sierra Club
HPS	Hundred Peaks Section, Angeles Chapter, Sierra Club
JMW	John Muir Wilderness (eastern High Sierra)
MLC	Mother Lode Chapter, Sierra Club, or Mono Lake Committee (depends on context)
NAS	Northern Alpine Section, Peak and Gorge Division, Mother Lode Chapter, Sierra Club
NPS	National Park Service, Dept. of the Interior, United States
OGUL	Not an acronym; Washoe People's word for "Bighorn Sheep"
PCS	Peak Climbing Section, Loma Prieta Chapter, Sierra Club
PGOS	Peak and Gorge Outings Section, Mother Lode Chapter, Sierra Club
SGS	Sierra Gorge Section, Peak and Gorge Division, Mother Lode Chapter, Sierra Club
SPS	Sierra Peaks Section, Angeles Chapter, Sierra Club
TRT	Tahoe Rim Trail
USFS	United States Forest Service, Dept. of Agriculture, United States

compiled by Pete Yamagata 8-92

I HEARD IT THROUGH THE PEAKVINE

Anna and Lily Chaput completed the Whitney Trail (up and back from the Portal) in under ten hours round trip (r.t.) in late June.

Boris and Camille Nahlovsky, and Rex Smith climbed Kings Peak (high-point of the State of Utah) and also did Colorado 14'ers Sunshine, Red Cloud, Uncompahgre, Handies, San Luis, Princeton, Tabeguache, Shavano, and Antero on their two week excursion into the Rockies over June-July.

Rex Smith and Pete Yamagata placed a winter register on Pyramid Peak (9983') on the occasion of Pete's 40th (definitely nails in the coffin now!).

Chapter Old Guard composed of Roger Barr, Jack Rankin, Rich Gnagy, Bill Heyenbruch and son Dan successfully ascended Gannett Peak (high-point of the State of Wyoming) in July. This was the final State high-point of the 12 Western States (including Alaska and Hawaii) for Rich!

Bill Hauser bagged Mt. Williamson (14,370+') with the PCS last July. Way to go, Bill!

Jerry Adams and friends climbed North Palisade by the U-Notch and chimney variation in early June.

Howard Steidtmann and Tobi Tyler climbed Laurel or Bloody and Iron Mountain in late July.

FOR SALE:

Patagonia Stretch Synchronilla Vest, XL, cobalt. \$50.

Patagonia Featherweight jacket, washed once, never used, L, Bright-blue/Sapphire. \$60.

North Face windbreaker, M, Blue/black. \$20.

Epoke 900 skis, 200 cm., well used. \$50.

J. C. Penney sleeping bag, blue, zipper broken. \$10.

Beseler 23CII Enlarger with Nikkor Lens, and related darkroom equipment. All for \$300.

Contact Pete Yamagata (916) 444-6319.

THE ASCENT OF CASTLE PEAK

AFTER MUCH CAJOLING AND PLEADING, I WAS ABLE TO TALK JOHN, MY GUY, AND BOB BUCKLES, FRIEND INTO A LITTLE CLASS 3 PEAK BAGGING. (IF YOU ASKED THEM, THEY MIGHT HAVE A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION IN REGARDS TO THIS STATEMENT.) ANYWAY I PACKED LUNCH AND OFF WE WENT. (I PACK LUNCH BECAUSE IF I LEFT IT TO THE GUYS, I'D BE LIVING ON TRAIL MIX.)

WE WENT UP HYWAY 80 TO BOREAL, TURNED LEFT AND ENDED AT THE ACCESS ROAD THAT ULIMATELY TAKES YOU TO PACIFIC COAST TRAIL. HIKING UP THE ROAD IN A SHORT TIME WE WERE AT THE PETER GRUBB SKI HUT. WHAT FUN GOING THROUGH THE REGISTER WITH ALL ITS INTERESTING ENTRIES AND DRAWINGS. LEAVING THERE WE HIKED THE PACIFIC COAST TRAIL, AND RAN INTO A GUY HIKING FROM MEXICO TO OREGON. HE WAS EVEN STILL SINGING. BEAUTIFUL SCENERY AND WILDFLOWERS SURROUND YOU SO IT IS EASY TO FEEL YOUR SPIRITS LIFT. STARTING CROSS COUNTRY, WE HIKED UP BASIN PEAK, ALONG THE RIDGE TO A SECTION OF PEAKS, THE LAST BEING CASTLE. THEN COMES THE CLASS 3, WHICH TO BE HONEST, IS THE POINT I USUALLY CHICKEN OUT. BUT FOR SOME REASON TODAY LIFE WAS'NT PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT TO ME. THE CLIMB REALLY WAS EXCITING AND THE SLIGHT ADRENALINE RUSH PRETTY NEAT. IF YOU'VE NEVER GONE PEAK CLIMBING YOU SHOULD- IT'S FUN. IT'S REALLY NOT THAT DANGEROUS.

THE REST OF THE TRIP WAS HEADING DOWN THE MOUNTAIN. THE SCREE OR LOOSE ROCK MAKES IT MORE LIKE A SLID THEN HIKE. WE GOT BACK TO THE CAR ABOUT 4:00PM. I FIGURE WE HIKED ABOUT 9 MILES.

WE WENT TO BOB'S HOUSE AND PICKED UP CLAIRE, BOBS WIFE AND WHAT OUR HUSBANDS LACK IN PACKING HIKING LUNCHES THEY MAKE UP FOR IN CHOSING RESTAURANTS AND WE WENT TO PETES FOR PIZZA.

SEE YOU ON THE TRAIL- LYNNE BESBEKOS

FLAGPOLE PEAK --ECHO LAKES AREA

Om the cliffs above the north shore of Lower Echo Lake you can see a high point with a flagpole on it. Coincidentally the Fallen Leaf Lake quadrangle map labels it as Flagpole Peak. After hiking past it dozens of times over the past years on trips into Desolation Wilderness, I decided to finally check it out. Driving up from Sacramento with Ken Hofman to the Echo Lakes trailhead, we started down the Pacific Crest Trail as it goes along Echo lake just above the vacation cabins. At one point the trail switchbacks up away from the water towards the ridge. From this point we went cross country up quite steep, brushy and very sandy slopes. After about 1 1/2 hours of zig-zagging through scratchy shrubs and loose footing and a few instances of climbing up cracks in the granite walls we came to the ridgetop just left of the peak. Some easy scrambling and bouldering then brought us to the top. There was a steel pole embedded in the rock and 'flags' consisting of handkerchiefs and old underwear flying from it. There was a nice view of Tahoe and a swarm of flying ants also bagging the peak. Surfing down the sand chutes we got back down to the trail in only about 20 minutes!

-----JOHN BESBEKOS

GREAT BASIN ROUNDABOUT

JUNE 27-JULY 4, 1992

Teaming up again with **Fred Johnson** (Berkeley), we drove to the vicinity of Ely, Nevada, where we first climbed **Troy Peak** (11,298') via instructions from the Sierra Club guide "**Hiking the Great Basin**" by **John Hart**. Sunday, we met a tri-chapter Sierra Club Centennial outing led by **Vicky Hoover** (San Francisco) and **Fred "Campy" Camphausen** (Bishop) and proceeded to our first camp along the White River and hiked **Corduoy Mtn.** (9640') as a warm-up.

Monday all of us did **Currant Mtn.** (11,513') and three also climbed **Duckwater Peak** (11,175'). Tuesday, we proceeded to the Schell Creek Range where we were greeted by rain and 4" of snow overnight. We cancelled our planned traverse of North and South Schell Peaks, and instead drove to climb **Blue Eagle Mtn.** (9,561') on Thursday. Finally, we packed in a short distance Friday to climb **Mt. Moriah** (12,050') Saturday by the guidebook suggested Hendrys Creek route.

Registers were signed in or left on all summits. I shot a total of 12 rolls (36 exp.) which may testify to the beauty of these ranges. Total stats for me were about 50 miles and 21,000' gain. PY

BOUNDARY PEAK (13,140') AND MONTGOMERY PEAK (13,441') 2X**GLASS MOUNTAIN RIDGE (11,140') 2X**

JULY 25-26, 1992

In pursuit of photographs of one of Nevada's newest wilderness areas (I had traversed these peaks with a 50 pound pack in 1974 with Dan Dobbins and Lloyd Brown, but without a camera), I drove down Friday to join this DPS outing led by **Maris Valkass** and "**Campy**." Campy was assisting only, in a protest against the Sierra Club's outings program; the Club has sought to destroy its own mountaineering sections by its attempt to "over-insure" outings by seeking \$42 million in liability coverage---no insurer would accept such terms, therefore no climbing! For instance, the National Park Service has only \$5 million in coverage for its own employees.

We drove up **Queen Canyon** and carpooled in 4WD vehicles to the saddle above **Queen Mine**. A fair trail led to **Trail Canyon Saddle**, from where we trudged up scree trails to top **Boundary**. Most also did **Montgomery**, enjoying the excellent weather and great views.

After returning to the cars, several of us went to Soper's Cafe at Montgomery Pass where I enjoyed a nice, inexpensive sandwich (\$3), and, with some headed for distant points such as Arc Dome and San Diego, I joined the official camp near the **Glass** trailhead. The next morning, I amazed myself by, with no coffee, following the group on a route which nearly duplicated my own lead in 1985 with Tobi Tyler and Rex Smith! We were back by noon, and enjoyed lunch by the cars. After suffering an unrepairable tire puncture, I opted to cancel my plans to day-climb Laurel and Red Slate in the Sierra, and drove home on my good spare. Stats were about 8 mi. r.t., 4,000' gain on Saturday, and 4-5 mi. r.t., 2,000' gain for Sunday. PY

CASTLE (9103') 10X AND BASIN (9015') 7X PEAKS

AUGUST 20, 1992

Thanks to a register report from **Lynn Besbekos**, **Rex Smith** and I tried for the 2nd time in two days (Rex's car gave up the ghost at Dutch Flat the day before!) this ascent of these two classic peaks. I drove to the Castle Peak turnoff, and we climbed **Castle** in 1:45. Notable register entries included **Doug Mantle** (4X161), who had climbed Mt. Everest last May, **R.J. Secor** (author of "High Sierra, Peaks, Passes, and Trails," 1992), and locals **Tim Island**, **Bob Buckles**, and the **Besbekos**. Someone had put a book, which we had to leave a can for, on the north, lower crag. Not too many of those signed in were signed in the VABM 9103' southernmost Cl.3 crag highpoint, which is easily climbed along a steep gully of knobby agglomerate on the south side. Our traverse to **Basin** affirmed that the old 1982 book had vanished, so we left a new book, pen, and can. Also, the Peter Grubb Hut register was full, with interesting entries and artwork. Our day finished with dinner in Truckee and a pleasant drive home. PY

RED PEAK (9307'), **SILVER PEAK** (8930'),
McCONNELL PEAK (9099') 3X

AUGUST 1, 1992

Joined by companion-clairvoyant **Krystal Bahl**, we arrived at 7 a.m. at the Camino Heights Road USFS Information Station to wait 40 minutes in line to obtain our day-use permit, then managed to begin our climbs by 8:55 a.m. from the Tells Peak/Van Vleck Trailhead.

Hiking up the Red Peak Trail, we ascended **Red** in 3 hrs., 45 min., to run into two backpackers that were perusing the two register books on top. One of the two guessed my identity from the sign-ins, and the other spoke of his many cave explorations throughout the state. We departed for **Silver**, which we reached after one hour's traverse. Spending only about 20 min. on top, we followed the ridge over to "McConnell Spur" and signed in the register, with no intervening sign-ins since I had placed the can a year ago! Twenty minutes later we were sitting atop **McConnell**, relishing our good times, the great weather, and the short effort ahead to our loop completion.

We started out shortly, and after our class 2-3 traverse, we intersected the Tells Peak Trail (marked "Highland Trail" by the 6-7 signposts along it on the lower end), and were back to the car in two hours. Total round trip time was just under ten and a half hours. Total stats were about 15 miles r.t., 3700' gain. PY

STEVENS PEAK (10,061'), **RED LAKE PEAK** (10,061') AUGUST 8, 1992

Rex Smith and I left town at 8 a.m. to explore this loop climb to do these historic peaks (climbed by **Kit Carson** and **John C. Fremont** in Feb. 1844 to be the first of European descent to view Lake Tahoe) from Hope Valley. What follows is a precise guide to enable interested parties to do perhaps the easiest way for both peaks (2500' gain, 4 mi. r.t.).

Drive east on Hwy. 88 from Carson Pass and 2.3 miles east from Red Lake Road (signed), a paved road curves north (left) to quickly turn to dirt. Proceed on rough road (only good 2WD or 4WD) 1.3 miles to a fork and good parking (elev. 8080+'). Follow the lower fork to the right to cross a stream and past old mines and ruins to the NE ridge of **Stevens Peak** (the pinnacle visible for much of the ascent). Some loose rubble and mild cl. 3 can be encountered. The traverse to Red Lake is simple, with somewhat of a use trail to follow.

A slight use trail runs along the SE side of the summit pinnacles of **Red Lake Peak**. About 50 ft. from the north end of the crags is a deep, diagonal gully running NW with some chockstones lodged high within. Climb around to the right of the gully to a rectangular notch that looks down to the WNW. To the immediate left one climbs up a fin about 10-15 ft., through a small "notch" and then downclimbs a short way to a broad, 8 ft. wide ledge with some exposure. Follow the ledge left (south) about 30-40 ft. to another notch on the left, pass through to the SE side, and climb back (north) to the highpoint.

There are a number of **Class 3** moves required on knobby, volcanic agglomerate; a person losing his or her balance would suffer severe consequences. Make sure you can downclimb everything before proceeding further on any climbing. Many MLC groups could not complete this climb, so be sure you know what you're doing, as a wrong turn or misinterpretation of these instructions could result in encountering cl. 4-5 terrain, on which a fall, of course, would probably be fatal.

A nice ridge descends from **Red Lake Peak** to the east, then north to **Crater Lake**, from where it is a 20 min. walk on dirt road back to the suggested parking. PY

JUST ANOTHER EXPLORATORY HIKE

from the Rockhouse

From a top a windswept barren rock pinnacle, we could pick out hundreds of individual granite domes rising in tandem here and there above the pines. Some were sheer on a side, others appeared well-rounded, and still others jutted straight up into the sky as did the pinnacle we stood on. In striking contrast were the few deep-green meadows nestled in the lowlands. But the rock beneath us was sharp, and even as we huddled low, the cold wind struck into the meager protection provided by a small ledge just below the cap of the summit pinnacle. Consequently, down we crept, slowly as to secure a solid foothold with each step, trying not to look down from the ridge where a misstep could mean too long a fall onto the gentler slopes below.

Once secure on tempered slopes of jumbled boulders, the return trek began through a forested hodgepodge of valleys and ridges, each to be followed, climbed, and crossed to the next. Much later, the rhythmic routine of exercise was abruptly interrupted by our entrance into a fairland city of rocks and boulders of varied shapes and sizes. Some mundane thoughts were reflected in the names we gave uniquely-carved granite slabs two and three times our height: pancake rock, hamburger rock, muffin rock, etc. Thoughts of getting atop them were easily turned away by their smooth surfaces. Instead, we paused in appreciation and then went on to enter one of several narrow sandy avenues and drainage conduits interlaced through immense masses of granite, being led on to stand beside yet other exotic rock formations.

The sun was warm amid these giants, the wind reduced to a wisp, and a planned five-minute rest became an extended visit. We chatting idly while we watching a large bird, perhaps an eagle, circle lower and lower in the sky, until in one long swoop, it folded up its wings and perched atop one of the higher rock spires a bit ahead. So, over we ambled to get a closer look, and naturally, up we went to seek its view. Nonetheless, the eagle remained the sole proprietor of its choice perch, for one by one, each of us reached an impasse as the granite face became smooth and precipitous. Regrouping below the rock, we traveled on toward our secluded camp lower in the pines. Evening came on after we crossed a few more valleys to reach an anticipated trail, followed it down an intermittent creek, and finally, collapsed within and without our few frail tents. As the light faded, shared dinners and a warm fire kept away the solitude and the cold. Breaking camp the next morning, we shouldered backpacks and marched past the small birds flitting about a broad expanse of meadow called Manter in this wilderness called Domelands, and drove back to home, work, and other nuances of civilized lives.

Date of hike: June 13-15, 1992
Participants: Anna Chaput, Susan Hildreth, Dave Philileo, Ken Richards, and myself
Location: Southern Sierra northeast of Kernville, 7 hour drive from Sacramento to trailhead at Big Meadow.

John Sarna

Thunder Mtn. & Corral Hollow Hill 7/30/92

The county hi-point List provides a total spectrum of California's beauty. Other lists display only certain regimes (i.e. DPS-the desert, SPS-the Sierra, CRS--the Coast Range, etc.). The 58 County hi-point list is the only STATE WIDE list and in my mind the most important list of all. Refer to past Boulder issues for the listing of County hi-points.

Corral Hollow Hill 8170' (Calaveras County hi-point)

Take highway 4 East of Stockton to the Alpine County Line. There is a green county sign about 1.9 miles East of the Tamarack store--(now closed). Go about 0.1 or 0.2 past the County line and see a narrow road off to the left. A small sign down in a little dip says: "Corral Hollow ORV Route." Park close to hi-way 4. Don't go as far as the Bear Valley NATIONAL SACRIFICE AREA.
Calaveras Cty

Follow the jeep road west and then north. Lots of logging debris for the 1st mile. The road becomes smooth and climbs to a ridge & saddle about 2 miles from hi-way 4 (~1 hour). Turn left (west) and follow along the ridge about 0.5 miles to a wire gate. Sign says "keep closed." Continue ~200 yards past the gate and then head north (cross country) to a volcanic plateau with a cliff facing East. Leave the jeep trail where 3 grey snags appear.

The register is tucked behind the tallest rock on the plateau. The register is a plastic tube with a wooden cork on it. Many entries were snowmobile entries but Gary Suttle of San Diego placed the register. Great view of the South Face of Mokelumne Pk!

Raoul Mocho

Thunder Mtn (9402') Amador County hi-point

Drive up 88 to the Kirkwood Ski Resort. Go to the 1st store on the right called "Timber Creek." Park at the store. Follow the lift (maintenance road) to the top. From the top of the 1st lift climb ~1000' x-country to the top of the 2nd lift. The 2nd lift top is on the ridgecrest. The climb from the top of the 1st lift to the crest is steep; alternating with volcanic rock then nice flower covered alpine meadows. From the ridge crest head N/NW to Pt. 9402. This is Thunder Mtn. hi-point. Note the small glacial cirque to the NW of the summit. The other peak seen directly west is the most frequently climbed point but alas it is only 9240 and not the county hi-point. 2 hours to top.

Raoul Mocho

Banner Peak (12,945')
Class 3 (Private Trip)

July, 4-5, 1992

On a very mild fourth of July weekend, John Besbekos, Bob Buckles, Alan Cooke and myself set out to climb Banner & Ritter Peaks. We arrived in Mammoth Lakes late at night and camped at the very convenient forest service campground just east of town. The next morning we caught the bus at the Mammoth Ski Area into Agnew Meadows. The bus costs \$6.00. From the trailhead we hiked several miles to the Shadow Lake trail continuing past Shadow Lake and base camping just above Edza Lake.

The next morning we began our hike to the Banner/Ritter saddle which we accomplished with relative ease. The weather was clear and the hiking was pleasant. At the Banner/Ritter saddle we decided not to climb Mt. Ritter because the snow conditions in the notorious route 1 were quite hazardous. Instead we began our climb of Banner Peak along route 1 (east cliff) and made the summit without problem. It wasn't until reaching the saddle that we began to see other climbers who were all coming up from Lake Catherine. It was a little windy on top but we had great views of Mono Lake to the north and the High Sierra stretching to the south.

We had returned to our base camp by late afternoon to relax and enjoy the sunshine. The next morning we hiked out at a pleasant but brisk pace. While waiting for the bus at Agnew Meadows we encountered a group from the L.A. Chapter who were hiking from Tuolumne Meadows. They had made the distance in three days and were in good spirits. After a long wait made easier by our conversations with the other group, a special bus arrived and took us back to the ski area. We had lunch in Mammoth Lakes and headed home.

On the way back we stopped at the newly opened Forest Service, Mono Lake Visitors Center on the north end of Lee Vining. The Center is quite attractive and the "hands on" exhibits are well done. The visitors center is dedicated to David Gaines who founded the Mono Lake Committee and was tragically killed in an automobile accident several years ago. This new facility will introduce a whole new group of people to the wonders of Mono Lake and as a result increase the lakes chances of survival. For those of you who have visited Mono Lake before and already know the basics; the Mono Lake Committee Visitor Center remains your best bet for maps and info. on the lake. They have added a few new attractions and have quite a bit more to offer than the new facility.

John Watters

MT PRICE (9975') AND POINT 9967 18 JULY 92

After several tries from Smith Lake, John Besbekos had learned that to avoid the wrath of the storm gods, you should only climb Mt Price by way of the Lyons Lake trail. Having been on one of those previous rainstorm encounters, I was happy to see that the luck of Lyons Lake was holding as Jim Bely, Steve Richardson, John and I began to climb up the granite slopes above the lake. A few puffy clouds passed overhead without serious threat. We passed to the left of Lyons Lake, then curved right, crossing the stream bed above the lake and ascended the granite rampart up to a small unnamed lake. Beside this lake were the last remnants of the winter snow, clinging to the northern slope where the sun touched with least force.

After a short break, we climbed the steep right bank up to a broad sloped rock field leading to point 9967, called Mt Agassiz on some maps. The final approach to this summit block is quite easy from the south. Perhaps a 10 percent grade, the rock field stretches out to either side with no hint of the cliffs to the north. But when you reach the jagged ridge edge near the end of the climb, the view down to Aloha Lake begins to hint at the drop. The summit block involves some easy class 3 climbing with a long view down. Once on top, this "peak" is more like a backyard patio. Of course most patios don't drop rock slab, almost flat and rectangular. I of course most patios don't drop 1000' off for the first step. We wouldn't fully appreciate our position until we reached Mt Price. From that vantage, you see that the peak extends out as an overhang with the entire summit block extending over the abyss.

After finishing our lunch on point 9967, we climbed off the summit block and began to traverse thru the brush over to Mt Price. Though higher by a few feet and having claim as a named peak, Price was a simple walk up with just a small cluster at boulders at the top. The views were not too spectacular after the fantastic sight from our previous summit. During lunch, we had been identifying peaks from Round Top and Freel to Tallac, Dick's and Jack's. But Price did have the sight of the 9967 hanging over the abyss.

Our descent was uneventful as we set a brisk pace back to the car. Trip data: 12-13 miles, 3300' gain, started 9:00, finished back at Lyon Creek trailhead about 5:00.

Bob Buckles

ROUND TOP (10,381')

19 JULY 92

Last year's Round Top peak climb had been narrow success with threat of rain and a tough climb for much of the group. Though I had a large group this time as well (14), the character of the trip was quite different. All were strong hikers, including Paul who was completely blind, relying on his sighted partner, Eric, to guide him on the trail. We left the main parking lot at Carson Pass at 10:00 and reached Round Top Lake about 12:00 without pushing anyone very hard. All but one person elected to continue up the trail on the west side. We left another member at the beginning of the class 2 rock scramble up to the secondary peak.

Though I was a bit concerned about Paul's ability to negotiate this section of the climb, he did an excellent job, making as good time as several of the sighted members of our party. This is the second trip I have led with Paul along. He and Eric make an excellent team, are able to keep a good moderate pace on trail, and with only modest allowances for difficulties can negotiate all but the roughest hiking terrain.

Upon reaching the secondary summit, many of the members of our group stopped. Six of us continued, all of whom completed the class 3 sections of the summit climb with no difficulty. Those reaching the summit included John Pearson, Mike Clancy, John Besbekos and myself.

During the descent, several of us enjoyed a glissade down the snow chute adjacent to the trail above Round Top Lake. Though we all tried a standing glissade, we quickly slipped on the fast snow and ended in one or another firm sitting, or perhaps "loungeing" position. The remainder of the trip was uneventful and we reached the cars about 5:00.

An additional note regarding Round Top peak: A week after our trip, two hikers got trapped on this peak, requiring helicopter rescue. I did not get additional details beyond the television news broadcast. Though perfectly safe from the proper approach, much of this mountain is covered with crumbly rock--very questionable for any technical climbing.

Bob Buckles

Mt. CONNESS - YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK 1 AUG 1992

Bob Buckles, Mark Castle, Gertrude Gonzales, Greg Fletcher and I left Sacramento Thursday night and drove to a campground in Lee Vining canyon. Friday morning we entered Yosemite via the Tioga Pass entrance station. After securing our permits we headed down the Soda Springs trailhead then 7 miles to Young Lakes.

Saturday morning we began our cross-country route to Mt. Conness. We navigated northeast from Lower Young Lake up to a lakelet beneath White Mt. From this plateau there is a use trail that leads up the left side of a very steep talus slope to a higher ridgeline. Mark sped on up ahead while the rest of us followed at varying paces. Regrouping at that ridgeline we scanned the open, relatively flat sandy terrain devoid of vegetation. At this point we were at about 12,100'. Gregg decided to wait here since he was beginning to feel the effects of the altitude.

Contouring around the slope on our right the remaining 4 of us came to a saddle that leads left to the Conness summit block. From here you can gaze down to the east and the lakes of the Hall Natural Area that buffers Saddlebag Lake and the park boundary. The cliffs on this side appear quite formidable and I was unable to see the class 3 route that mountaineers can take from that direction.

I can best describe the final approach to the summit as exposed class 2. There are a couple of tricky spots beside some sheer dropoffs, but someone has practically built a stairway to the top. There is a series of flat rocks, hand-fitted going almost uninterrupted to the top! What a tedious engineering feat to have been worked at over 12,000 ft.! No problems with route finding here! Mark having scampered to the summit first was unable to locate a register.

The view was the best I've ever seen for identifying the peaks in or near the park. We could easily see the Ritter range, Halfdome, Tower, Matterhorn and all in between. We returned to camp by the same route after retrieving a now recovered Gregg.

Sunday we backpacked out the Dog Lake trail which consisted of whole lot more up and down than the one we came in on. We tried to drive home via Hwy 120 and Manteca but a forest fire closed the road and we were forced to detour out Hwy 140 and the Merced river canyon. An interesting drive but almost 2 hours longer.

---JOHN BESBEKOS

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View NE from summit, Mt. Moriah, Nevada
 July 4, 1992 PY