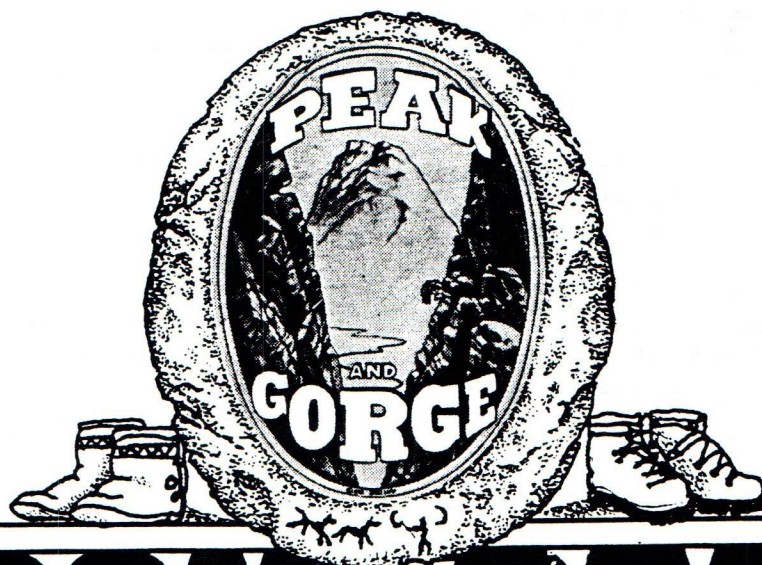


THE



BOULDER

motherlode chapter-sierra club

Issue Number 56, September-October 1993

CHAIR'S CORNER

I would like to start this article by thanking some of the people who have helped keep the Boulder Newsletter and the Peak and Gorge Section going. Thanks to Pete Yamagata and John Besbekos for putting together the newsletter and contributing many of the articles. I especially appreciate Pete's work getting the newsletter printed and distributed each issue. John also handles the computer work for maintaining our mailing list. For the money end, thanks go to our treasurer Gary Walker. He handles all the finances for the Section. Other major contributors of articles include John Watters, John Sarna and Bill Hauser. For the art work that graces many of our outside covers, my thanks to Ellen Van Fleet. Finally, I would like to thank the leaders who take responsibility for giving the rest of us the enjoyable experiences we have all shared. In addition to those named above, Alan Cooke, Al Gutowsky, and Fred Fischietto deserve recognition for their contributions.

Next subject, future meetings: On September 28 at 7:30, I will be hosting the Fall Slideshow. I hope we can get a lot of people with their slides or prints from this last summer. We will also have a discussion with Karen Leyse of the National Forest Service regarding registers on peaks in wilderness areas. Directions for my house are as follows: Coming on I-80 from Sacramento, take first Rocklin exit, Taylor Road. Exit will bring you over the freeway headed north and name of road will change to Pacific Ave. At second stop light, turn left on to Sunset. Go over railroad tracks to second stop light, turn left on to Whitney. Go to second stop sign, turn left onto Rainier. My house is one short block, on the right at 6120 Rainier Ave. Phone number: 624-3620.

On October 26 we will have our winter planning meeting at John Watters' apartment. If you missed the Sept meeting, bring your pictures for this follow-up show. Our main order of business will be to plan winter and spring outings. Address: 845 Fulton Ave #2056 (just south of Northrup on the west side of Fulton.) Phone: 488-8467.

November 16 we will have a cross-country ski clinic. December 14 will be the Christmas Potluck. I am looking for ideas for our winter meetings. Any ideas would be welcome. I hope to see you at the September meeting,

PYRAMID PEAK (11,700+'), TIOGA PEAK (11,513') JUNE 24-25, 1993

From well-traveled vantage points, say along U.S. 395 or vicinity, certain peaks seem to stand especially out, not necessarily to height, technical difficulty, or any superior quality of the peak, but by perspective, mainly foreshortening. It is by this trigonometric idiosyncrasy that many people will mistake Lone Pine Peak, a good 1,500' lower, for Mt. Whitney, as seen from Lone Pine, CA. Peaks like Mt. Morrison, Mt. Tom, and Mt. Williamson quickly attract the eye, and this offers a good opportunity to impress some fellow traveler by recounting your ascent (or, in the case of most, just identifying the peak).

I took the time of summer's first heat wave to climb two more such peaks. From most of Mammoth Lakes, CA, directly above the proposed mega ski development, Pyramid Peak stands above it all. I took a friend up a time-consuming 2,800' gain to this class 2 summit. Pyramid is the highpoint of the Town of Mammoth Lakes, of interest to me as I have recently done Mt. Lukens, highpoint of the City of Los Angeles, and Mt. Davidson, the highpoint of the City of San Francisco

Next, I climbed the imposing mountain standing directly astride the head of Lee Vining Canyon that one sees while driving up Tioga Pass Road from the east. This entailed an easy climb on trail to Gardisky Lake and then a short scree climb up the peak's WNW ridge.

I anticipated some snow this year, but most of our routes were snow-free, due mainly to the leeward disposition of these peaks relative to the Sierra rainshadow. I placed a new register on Tioga, with previous books filled. These summits are not on any list, but offer different views and a chance to enjoy the Eastern Sierra while most Sierra Club peak climbs are in limbo due to the insurance restrictions. PY

KAISER PEAK (10,320') 2X, MT. GIVENS (10,648') JULY 2-3, 1993

Rose Certini and I teamed up to do these easy, non-listed Sierra peaks given the inaccessibility of higher Sierra peaks due to the heavier snowfall this year. We camped near Shaver Lake, and Friday, we started up the Kaiser Peak Trail from the backpacker's parking near the pack station.

Rose began to suffer from a nutritional problem, so I dashed up the last mile to place a new register (a rusty can and lid, no book, were the only trace of my 10-90 placement). We camped at a noisy Huntington Lake USFS campground, and Saturday, we drove up to Kaiser Pass and hiked past the closed gate up to White Bark vista point. We continued on a jeep road and trail and hiked over some snow to the summit of Givens. On top was a survey scope with the names of many peaks (Clark Range to the Great Western Divide) corresponding to the proper alignment of the scope. I left a film can register, with my regular cans in short supply. We declined to do the Rancheria Falls trail, and proceeded home. I capped off the trip by enjoying the nighttime skyshow spectacular at the Port of Stockton 3rd of July celebration. PY

BLACK BUTTE (7449'), ANTHONY PEAK (6954'), JULY 6, 1993
MT. LINN (8092'), a.k.a. SOUTH YOLLA BOLLY MTN. 3X

Fred Johnson and I logged about 100 miles of dirt road driving on this one-day loop in the Mendocino National Forest. We met in Dunnigan and put Fred's Mercury wagon through some heavy paces! This was over 460 miles' worth of driving for Fred!

We started by proceeding to the trailhead for Black Butte, the highpoint of Glenn County. This takes a 20 minute hike on a steep trail to the pleasantly open summit, above the treeline. We then drove up Anthony, the highpoint of Mendocino County. After talking to some USFS employees, we drove over to Ides Cove where we made the 1½ mile, 1,000' gain climb to the summit of Linn.

No registers were found on the first two peaks, and I placed a new book and cans on Linn, which had some two-year old scraps. This was a nice way to beat the 100°F temps in the Valley, reminding us that June-August is usually too hot for exerting at the lower elevations. PY

RED SLATE MOUNTAIN (13,063') 2X

AUGUST 7, 1993

A double **Senior Emblem** celebration for **Barbara Cohen** and **Judi Richardson** was planned for this mutual achievement finishing peak, prompting me to wrench myself from the "no High Sierra Peaks doldrums" this year and drive down U.S. 395. A **SPS Senior Emblem** is about 2 to 5 times greater difficulty than the **NAS "Super Emblem,"** depending on the combination of peaks climbed and counted toward these goals. A **Senior Emblem** is designed to personally familiarize climbers with the Sierra Nevada, ensuring mountaineering visits throughout the range.

We met at an early 6:15 a.m. at **McGee Creek** trailhead, and were off by 6:24. The majority of the group was going overnight to also do **Red-and-White Mountain**. An independent group of four started ahead to do both peaks and return in one day. We reached **Big McGee Lake**, and I started ahead while the others made camp to take pictures and read the register before the summit festivities began. Arriving on top at 1:50 p.m., I found no register but enjoyed the great views from the highest Sierra peak north of **Mt. Abbot**.

The group reached the top shortly, and **Barbara** and **Judi** hugged in celebration, and then we broke out the sparkling cider and took turns taking pictures. Only about 109 persons have completed this accomplishment. After the group shots, I left to head for the car, noting the great wildflowers and completing the round trip in slightly over 12 hours.

I drove to **Mammoth** and had a tamale and chicken taco plate at **Gomez's**, and drove home Sunday morn. PY

EAST VIDETTE (12,350'),

AUGUST 19-23, 1993

ATTEMPT ON DEERHORN MOUNTAIN (13,265')

Long-time fellow **SPS'er**, **DPS'er**, and **SMS'er** **Owen Maloy** and I packed over **Kearsarge Pass** to **Vidette Meadow** to do **East Vidette** Friday, while the remainder of the **SPS** group led by **Al Conrad** and **Bob Wyka** came in to climb the peak on the same day as pack-in. We missed them on our descent, and they met us in camp at dusk only to report a turn-back due to time and failure to find the cl. 1-2 southeast chute. **Owen** and I had done the cl. 3 **East Ridge**. The summit block was of an angular nature that required placement of the register on a lower rockpile a few feet away. Lots of exposure!

Saturday, five of us started up the use trail to **Vidette Lakes** and began our climb on **Deerhorn**, which is rated one of the ten toughest Sierra peaks (**R.J. Secor**). We took the route up the **Northeast Buttress** (cl. 3) but lost the route near the lower summit. I found the traversing ledges to the notch between the twin summits of this fine peak, but, after 7½ hours of climbing, the leaders commanded a retreat with me less than 200' below the highpoint. I mentally flashed the idea of signing out and continuing to the top, but the thought of downclimbing alone with all the tricky cl. 3 moves dictated my action of following the group back.

We had a slower group on the descent, and reached camp at dusk. I constantly thought later that I might have made it down and gotten back on the trail using my flashlight, but, that success had eluded me.

Demoralized, I took an easy day hiking to **Center Basin** while the others did **Center Peak (12,760')**. I enjoyed talking to backpackers on the **Muir Trail** making their loops or shuttle trips, and then relaxed back at camp.

Owen and I took a slow backpack over the pass Monday to reach **Onion Valley** late in the day. I had gotten some fair photos, but the loss on **Deerhorn** weighed in my mind. Will I ever come back? Certainly, but not soon! I know most of the route now, and maybe someday there'll be another **SPS** trip or maybe I'll find a game peakbagger to climb this highly regarded summit in the **Kings-Kern Divide**. PY

FOR SALE: Used camera holster-packs. **Tamrac**, **Lowe**; still usable. \$5-8.
Contact **Pete Yamagata**, 444-6319.

Mt. Siegel

Trailhead: This trailhead is the junction of the Lone Pine Canyon jeep trail and Pine Nut Road, east of Minden/Gardnerville, Nevada. Pine Nut Road and the jeep trail are shown on the Mt. Siegel, NV-CA USGS 15 minute quadrangle, but the names are not given. Both are shown and named on the Smith Valley, Nevada-California quadrangle in the Bureau of Land Management's *Surface Management Status* series (1:100,000 scale-metric).

The afore-mentioned BLM map also shows land ownership status, an important factor in Nevada. The jeep trail crosses private land for roughly two kilometers in each direction, but no private property signs were noted.

Getting There: Pine Nut Road intersects US Highway 395 near the southern end of the Minden / Gardnerville area. Pine Nut Road is found 4.7 miles south of the intersection of Nevada 88 and US Highway 395. Two green signs hang over the highway, each readable from only one direction. The sign readable from the north says Riverview Drive. Turn left at the intersection. From the south the sign says Pine Nut Road. Turn right at the intersection. One last clue, look for a 7-Eleven on the corner.

Follow the paved Pine Nut Road for 2.2 miles, then turn left when you reach a sign saying Sierra Spirit Ranch. At this point, Pine Nut Road becomes a very good unpaved road (i.e., 30 to 40 m.p.h.). Follow Pine Nut Road for 7.4 miles until reaching a fork in the road with a creek crossing the left hand roadway. (There should also be a mine on the right side of and just uphill from the road.) Along the 7.4 mile journey there are three forks in the road. The first is at the 2.0 mile mark: go to the right following the sign for Sierra Spirit Ranch. The second is at the 5.4 mile mark: go to the right towards the Buffalo sign and away from Sierra Spirit Ranch. The third is at the 5.9 mile mark: go to the right. The last 1.5 miles to the trailhead is the only bad section of road and it is easily driven in a two-wheel drive passenger car, with modest care.

The hike: The "trailhead" is the junction of Pine Nut Road with the jeep trail that begins at the creek. Cross the creek and walk along the old corral. The road soon bends sharply to the left. From this point onward, the jeep trail is obvious. There are only one or two forks in the trail, and it is obvious which is the correct direction.

The trail winds through a modestly hilly region of pinyon pines, sage, mountain mahogany, and other basin and range foliage. In late May and early June, many of the larger shrubs and trees were blooming and the distant hillsides were green, making this time of year the nicest time to do the hike.

After about four miles of generally upward trending terrain, the trail heads steeply up and over Galena Pass. Once the pass is reached, the trail circles around behind (i.e., to the east of) the ridge that has dominated the view up to this point. Once the trail reaches this juncture, you become aware of the existence of a number of peaks. Immediately north of the pass is Galena Peak. To the east of Galena Peak is Oreana Peak, the latter sitting on a different ridgeline. To the north of Galena Peak, and on the same ridgeline, is Mt. Siegel.

You have at least two options for bagging Mt. Siegel. You can inflate your peak count by bagging Galena and walking the ridge to Mt. Siegel, then bagging Oreana Peak on the way back. If time is short or if you don't care about bagging peaks, per se, the jeep trail continues to the north in between the ridge line with Mt. Siegel and the ridgeline with Oreana Peak. The BLM map reference earlier indicates that there is a road branching off of the jeep trail and heading up the east side of Mt. Siegel. This road is easily found and it does lead directly -- if steeply! -- to the top of Mt. Siegel.

Total round-trip statistics: 14 miles and 3,600 feet of elevation gain (including Galena Peak).

Alan Cooke

Mt Patterson, Wheeler Peak, and South Sister (Sweetwater Mountains), July 16 - 18

Shinobu Takati, Valerie Phillips, John Besbekos, and I met at John's house at 6:00 p.m. for the trip to the trailhead at Lobdell Lake. Including dinner in Gardnerville, NV, the trip took about four hours, putting us at the lake at 10:30 where we set up our camp. The first night was a cold one and all of us froze our respective rear ends off.

Originally we were to reach Patterson and Wheeler via a jeep trail that leads all the way to both peaks. We did not do this. Three dirt roads head east from the east end of the lake. We camped next to the road along the south side of the lake. When we started hiking Saturday we followed the southern-most road. This road quickly petered out and we had to choose between going cross-country to find the dirt road that leads to the peaks, or going cross-country to the peaks. We did the latter.

Reaching Mt. Patterson via a direct, cross-country route is possible but harder than via the road. From Lobdell Lake we travelled to the end of our chosen dirt road and went straight uphill, heading in a southeast direction away from the lake, and following the creek that joins Desert Creek just northeast of the lake. On the ridge immediately above the lake is unnamed peak 10,790. We contoured in an easterly direction behind peak 10,790 and the next peak, straight towards the saddle on the northwest shoulder of peak 11,350. The route is relatively easy cross-country travel through sage and across sandy and scree slopes. The difficult part came when we reached peak 11,350. This peak had snow on its north face making contouring around it difficult. Further, it is composed of talus, making it difficult to go up and over. Ultimately, we climbed almost to the summit to bypass the snow then went north, straight downhill to the East Fork of Desert Creek, and up the ridge on the other side of the creek past the Montague Mine to the jeep trail. From there we climbed to Patterson and Wheeler by the jeep trail as originally intended.

Round-trip statistics for bagging Mt. Patterson via the jeep trail are 10 miles and 2,600 feet elevation gain. Wheeler Peak is an additional 2.2 miles and 300 feet each way from Patterson, for total round-trip statistics of 14.5 miles and 3,200 feet elevation gain for both peaks. The cross-country route added about 400 additional feet of elevation gain in each direction, but would be one mile shorter round-trip (i.e., 13.5 miles and 4,000 feet).

The second day, for the attempt on South Sister, we took the jeep trail for 4.3 miles (and 2040 feet elevation gain) to the ridge. We then turned north and walked the ridge to the peak. On the ridge, a road heads north for about a mile and ends at one of the higher points on the ridge. We contoured around the high points and were able to journey most of the way walking more-or-less at a constant elevation. The only serious elevation loss is just south of the peak where the ridge drops down 200 feet. The route is an easy, if rather long slog. One-way statistics are 8 miles and 3,100 feet elevation gain.

Note that the ridge that stretches from Wheeler to South Sister is wind-swept and cold, so be prepared. The wind-swept section starts just below the last major switch-back going up to the ridge. Note also that when you reach the ridge, the trail to Patterson is obvious as it heads directly up the whitish slopes. The trail stretching north towards South Sister is a little harder to find, but usage trails exist that can be found with minimal effort.

Coming down from South Sister, we went directly towards Lobdell Lake from the peak. We dropped down the southwest side of the peak into a marshy meadow infested with cattle. Crossing an unnamed creek and entering the adjoining forested area, we contoured around the end of a spur ridge that drops down from the main ridge. From the edge of the meadow we travelled through the forested area, across

some open sage meadows, and dropped down to the East Fork of Desert Creek. We then followed the creek to its confluence with Desert Creek and followed Desert Creek west until we encountered the dirt road that parallels the creek. The route was, mostly, open, either forested or sage covered hillsides with little difficulty.

As we approached and then followed the East Fork we encountered some difficult foliage, most notably knee-high bitterbrush, but overall it was a relatively easy route. Once reaching the road, it seemed fairly level all the way to the lake and the camping area (the last leg entails about 2.5 miles and 560 feet of elevation gain).

If you bagged South Sister via our return route, round-trip statistics would be roughly 13.5 miles and 3,800 feet elevation gain.

Trailhead: The Sweetwater Mountains start just north of Bridgeport and trend more-or-less due north. These hikes begin at Lobdell Lake.

Getting There: From the north, take U.S. Highway 395 to the intersection of U.S. Highway 395 and State Highway 108. The turnoff is roughly 2 miles southeast of this intersection, on Highway 395, near a gravel pit on the left side of the road. From the south, the turnoff is roughly 14.5 miles northwest of Bridgeport, on the right side of the road.

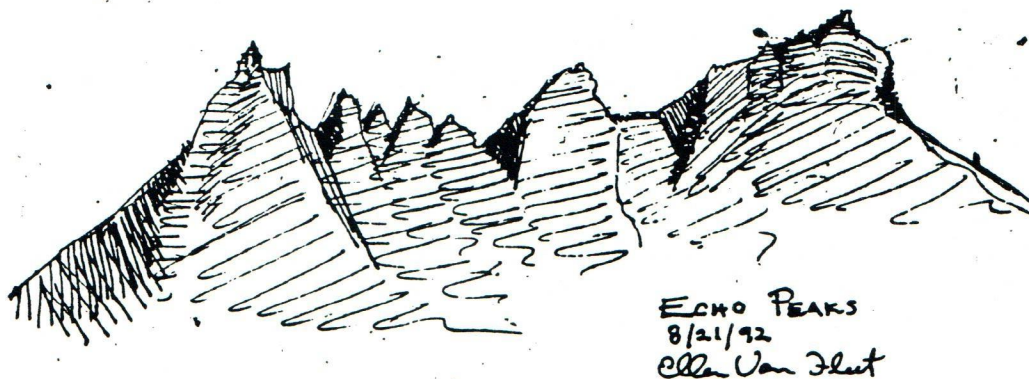
The turnoff in question is a dirt road (branching to the left from the north) known as the Burcham Flat Road. Follow this road to the Lobdell Lake Road, a right hand turn 4.2 miles from the turnoff from Highway 395. (Ignore the sign saying Lobdell Lake Road 5 miles found just after turning off the highway.) Follow the Lobdell Lake road for 6.2 miles until reaching a junction at the end of the lake. Either go to the right and find a camping spot if you have a low clearance vehicle. Go left if you have high clearance and you want to cut 4 miles (roundtrip) off the South Sister trip. Drive to the end of the dirt road before camping.

Trip Statistics: All are Class 2 peaks; 14.5 miles and 3,200 feet elevation gain for Patterson and Wheeler; 13.5 and 3,800 feet for South Sister.

Maps: BLM *Planimetric* 1:100,000 series map, Bridgeport quadrangle, USGS 15 minute Fales Hot Spring, CA-NV quadrangle and USGS 7 1/2 minute Patterson Peak, CA quadrangle.

Trip Highlights: From Patterson, Wheeler, and numerous spots on the ridge you get wide open views of the Sierras from the Carson Range to areas in the south of Yosemite. We also enjoyed an impressive wildflower display with lower elevations featuring indian paintbrush, lupine, penstemon, buckwheat, wallflowers, and numerous others we could not identify. Higher elevations featured the alpine variety of these as well as flowering cushion plants and pussy paws.

Alan Cooke



Desatoya Peak

Trailhead: The Desatoya Mountains are approximately 120 miles east of Reno, Nevada, just south of U. S. Highway 50, near Cold Springs.

Getting There: Take Interstate 80 to Fernley (30 miles). At Fernley, go east to Fallon on Highway 50. In Fallon, the first of two intersections of U. S. Highways 50 and 95 is southbound 95. From this intersection, the turnoff to the trailhead is roughly 60 miles east on Highway 50.

The BLM *Planimetric* map, Smith Creek Valley quadrangle (1:100,000 series), shows three possible turnoffs to reach this trailhead. The first is a dirt road found 58.9 miles east of Fallon. Turn south onto the dirt road. Travel 1.8 miles, then turn east onto the faint track heading into the desert. Drive as far as you can. With four wheel drive and high clearance, you can probably reach the end of the road at the foothill of the Desatoya range. Low-clearance autos probably won't reach the foothills.

The other turnoffs may or may not be better than the one I took. I did not look for them so I do not know whether the roads still exist or if they are usable. The second turnoff is less than 1/2 mile east of the first, and is found at the junction of Highway 50 and the Camp Creek road that heads off to the west. This road heads east to the Desatoya range and terminates at nearly the same place as the road described above. The third turnoff is approximately 60.8 miles east of Fallon. It terminates at the same place as the second road.

The Hike: I had to walk two miles across the desert to the end of the above-described faint dirt road because I encountered an impassible stretch of road. At the end of the road you start directly up into the Desatoya Mountains. Looking at the map and at the geography around you, it is obvious that the direct route is the hard way -- at the outset you would head straight up a (probably) class 3 cliff face. To the right (south) of the cliff is a minor peak, to the right of which is a creek bed. (The creek was dry on this occasion.) I followed the dry creek in preference to the cliff face. The route was made easier by the existence of a usage trail on the south side of the creek.

The usage trail follows the creek for about a mile and 1,000 feet of elevation gain to a ridge. The creek can then be followed to the ridge with Desatoya and two other nearly-10,000 foot peaks.

I followed the creek virtually all the way to the top. At the first ridge area, the dry creek intersected the creek that formed the previously mentioned cliff face. In this relatively flat area, I crossed the creek, from the south to north sides, and ascended for some distance toward the summit. After about 1/2 mile I recrossed to the southeast side of the creek. As it turned out, the creek forked a little farther up the hill. By crossing prematurely, I missed the fork in the creek and followed the southern fork up to the ridge. Desatoya Peak is at the head of the north fork. This navigation error put me on the ridge near a high point immediately south of the actual summit. The summit was still nearly one hour distant. I did not do so, but walking the ridge to the summit appeared easy -- just a long slog given that it is at roughly 10,000 feet of elevation.

The terrain in this area is sage, broken and scattered talus, and plentiful, but not impenetrable scrub brush and sage. I saw what I took to be wild horses on the ridge just below the peak. The horses explain the usage trails.

Trip Statistics: 12 miles and 3,400 feet of elevation gain.

Parting Notes: It looks, from the BLM map, that it would be easier to achieve the peak from an approach from the east. Has anyone tried this? If you have, write in and give us the scoop.

Maps: BLM *Planimetric* map, Smith Creek Valley quadrangle (1:100,000 series), and USGS 7 1/2 minute Desatoya Peak, NV quadrangle.

Alan Cooke

CALIFORNIA COUNTY HIGHPOINTS COMPLETED ON NORTH PALISADE

Congratulations are due to Gary Suttle of San Diego, CA. On July 28 1993, he reached the summit of North Palisade (14,242'). Among other superlatives, North Palisade is the highest point of Fresno County. For Gary, this was his 58th and final California county highpoint! Along with Mts. Whitney, Shasta, Ritter, and Lyell, North Palisade is the hardest climb required to complete the California county list. Gary saved this one for the last.

He was accompanied by Weldon Astle, also of San Diego, and myself. We left South Lake trailhead the previous day, and set up a camp at over 12,000', on gravel terraces at Thunderbolt Pass. We carried full gear for mountaineering, including ice axe, crampons, heavy boots, 150' rope, slings, chocks, carabiners, and seat harnesses, and helmets. We left camp soon after dawn, reached the summit at mid-day, and encountered another group who had climbed up from Palisade Glacier. Weather was mild and perfect for the climb, which was hampered to some extent by residual winter snow.

On the morning of the climb, we left Thunderbolt Pass using crampons to traverse snowfields well above Barrett Lakes. At the base of the "white shields" we began climbing the Le Conte Route. Half way to the U-Notch, a steep snow slope blocked our path and obscured landmarks. Eventually we were able to climb rocks on the south side of the gully, and chop big steps across the snow up higher, allowing us to reach the beginning of the famous ledge. This ledge is the key to the route.

Some trickles of water were crossing the ledge. We used the rope to protect our climbing along this section. We also protected the steepest portion of the next gully, which was full of rotten snow and ice. After this, the only major obstacle was shortness of breath. A devious scramble through the summit boulders leads to the top.

Our happiness was only exceeded by the dramatic setting afforded by this lofty and precipitous perch. A metal Sierra Club box holds the summit register. Also, a PVC pipe contains a copy of the original North Pal register that includes many legendary names from the early years of the Sierra Club. An injunction is given to please leave the copy in place, to "keep Norman smil'n" with a photocopy of Norman Clyde himself with a big grin on his face.

All too soon we left this place of dreams, and applied ourselves toward a safe descent. With only some headaches and nausea slowing our progress, we returned to the pass without incident. Clouds were beginning to pile in on the Palisades, so we moved camp to a slightly lower elevation northwest of Thunderbolt. The morning dawned fair, and we hiked out feeling weary, but well-satisfied with a wonderful climb.

In theory, North Palisade could be climbed in one massive day-hike. However, this would require a determined effort, optimum conditions, and a high level of ability and fitness. We were thankful to the Good Lord for mild weather on the summit, and on the parts of the route which we found to be difficult and challenging.

With best wishes for happy climbing,

Bill "Bighorn" Broeckel

Mt. Price/Agassiz

Here it was Saturday, June 19th, a 100 degrees in Sacramento, and five hearty souls leaving Wrights Lake via the Twin Lakes Trailhead with are skis attached to our packs. The trail was generally snow less until the trail was half a mile above the Grouse Lake-Hemlock Trail junction and where the Twin Lakes Trail parallels the creek coming out of Twin Lakes. Only than were we able to put on our skis and ski within a couple hundred yards of Twin Lakes. After a short parley it was decided not to cross the water covered spillway at the lower end of the lake but to hike along the snow covered shores of the lake. The upper portions of the lake provided us with easy snow free access to the snow covered northwest facing slopes of Mt. Price.

Upon reaching snow we stop for a snack and an opportunity to put on our skins. The angle of the snow covered slopes allowed for easy climbing and as one gets higher and higher the increased elevation provided us with a panoramic view of the Twin-Island Lakes drainage and Little Pyramid Peak. Barney and two others were the first to reach the upper slopes of the peak where they proceed, with and without skis, to climb a steep ramp that provided access to the summit ridge. Barney had one advantage that his two companions did not have, he was using ski crampons.

On the other hand, Rita and I skied to the low saddle in the ridge. The saddle provides access to the southwest facing slopes of Mt. Price and the drainage that flows into Lyons Lake. We descended down the saddle a few hundred feet and when the slope became more gentle we proceeded to ski northward toward Mt. Price which we reached shortly after one o'clock.

The view from the top was magnificent especially since the leader was carrying a large, fresh, juicy, delicious pineapple. While Rita and I had lunch and fresh pineapple, the remainder of the party either skied Mt. Agassig or enjoyed skiing the snow covered slopes. It wasn't after the five us had retraced my route to the summit and we had returned to the saddle that the other members of the group could feast on their share of the pineapple.

The skiing down was delightful; one telemark turn after another. Once the snow ran out we retraced our route back to Wrights Lake. Only one thing could have improved this trip; to have buried in the snow five bottles of Sierra Nevada. Wait till next year.

Job's Peak

I heard through the grapevine that this was a long, dusty trip. In response to such rumors I scheduled this June 26 trip to leave Sacramento at 6:30 in the morning, thus, insuring plenty of time to climb this peak. Hindsight, always being 20-20, suggests that I should have slept in and left Sacramento 4 hours later.

The start of this trip took the ten of us by auto over Echo and Luther Passes. Just below Luther Pass on the way to Picketts Junction, on the left hand side, is a dirt road the Forest Service designates O51. For those who cross country ski this is the same road many of us have skied to reach Horse Meadow and the upper slopes of Freel, Job's Sister, or any other of the high ridges in the Willow Creek drainage. The dirt road is well maintained and

two wheel drive vehicles will have no problem travelling it. We drove up the road about an mile and half and just before the road drops down and crosses a bridge crossing Willow Creek we parked. If I had know what I knew later, we could have drove along the road for another two miles to where the road dead ends on the flanks of the ridge that leads to Job's Peak.

Once we parked our vehicles we proceeded to hike along the road. When the road ended the hike/climb started. Within a hour or so we reached the top of the lowest ridge, with its north facing snow covered slopes, that we were to follow to the Job's Peak. After a nice break we proceeded to hike along the ridge passing numerous rocky crags which possessed steep, snow covered northwest faces. Only after passing two rock crags did we see our destination and the hiking trail that provides easy access to its summit. It was noon and the party was on the summit; to the east, Garderville/Minden, to the north, Monument Peak (Heavenly Valley), Freel, Job's Sister, and to the southwest the Willow Creek drainage and the snow covered Carson Pass area.

After an hour or so on the top we retraced our tracks and were back to our cars before four.

How does one account for the rumors of a difficult peak climb? I can think of only two explanations. One might either start this trip from Luther Pass (Highway 89) or Horsethief Canyon. The latter route would require one to gain 4000 feet and to hike at least 12-14 miles.

AL GUTOWSKY

FALL HIKING

It was a fantastic summer for wild flowers. Because of the late snows, we got the best show that I have seen since I started hiking regularly. Even in August we found areas in Desolation Valley that were just starting to peak with tiger lilies, lupine and penstemons beginning to blossom. We also continued to find snow fields on north slopes as low as 8000'. The only drawbacks for this year have been the slow start to the season and the mosquitoes, still terrible and likely to stay that way until next winter. This has been a year for putting on the repellent before you even leave the car.

With the late season there will be places that don't lose their snow until September. Water is plentiful in the hiking country and conditions will only improve between now and our first snows. This is my pitch for fall hiking. We have many trips, especially backpacks scheduled for October. My best trip last year was climbing Ritter in October. The weather was warmer than a trip to the same area in July. The trees had begun to change color, making the views particularly beautiful. Most of the crowds were gone. Don't let the first hint of cold weather keep you off the peaks. Last year I finished my hiking season on the third weekend in October and began skiing on the following Saturday. Choose a trip from our next schedule or make up one of your own. But don't miss the best season for climbing!

Bob Bush

MONUMENT PEAK (10,067'), MONUMENT PEAK EAST (9,591'), SNOW VALLEY PEAK (9,214'), MT. DAVIDSON (7,864'), OPHIR HILL (7,782'). MT. GRANT (11,239')

August 4-6, 1993

Fred Johnson

Thanks to Pete Yamagata's useful compilation of the 17 NEVADA COUNTY SUMMITS, I am now pursuing a new list which I unwittingly started with my climb of Charleston Peak (Clark County) September 18, 1943.

August 4. My first objective on this solo outing was the East Peak of Monument Peak (Douglas County). I drove 180 miles to Heavenly Valley at South Lake Tahoe to take the tram to its upper terminus at 8,250'. To avoid any possible trespassing hassle, I headed NE cross country up a ridge to emerge at a maintenance road at 9,200'. I followed this to the first branch road, which goes east to the top of the Comet ski run. From here Monument Peak is in good view and can be approached by continuing up this road to within about 20 minutes of the boulder-topped summit. Although an "unlisted" peak, it's definitely worth the visit if you're in the area to do the neighboring East Peak about 1½ miles to the north. From the top of the Comet run, I descended the grassy ski slope to the main road, then branched up the Von Schmidt road to the service building 5 minutes below the top. The views from both peaks of Lake Tahoe, its ring of peaks and the Carson Valley are great. Coming off the East Peak I met two workers who had driven up to the service building. They were friendly enough so that I had little hesitation to follow the road all the way back to the top of the tram. En route there were at least six pickups that passed me winding up the work day; no one minded my presence. I was back at the tram shortly after 5:00P, having started out about 10:30A and doing about 8 miles. There is an extensive road network within Heavenly Valley extending to Daggett Pass. No doubt you could just as easily approach these peaks from there as from the tram (\$12.00 a pop).

August 5. I left the Spooner Lake C.G. around 6:30A heading up the North Canyon dirt road toward Marlette Lake. In about 3½ miles a well marked trail heads east in long switchbacks to meet the Tahoe Rim Trail near the crest. A spur leads to the top of Snow Valley Peak. The visibility was remarkably good this sparkling, cloudless morning, and the views of the area couldn't have been better. The register placed by Pete Yamagata and Rex Smith in September 1992 was in good shape. To complete the loop of about 11 miles, I returned via the enjoyable, sometimes meandering Tahoe Rim Trail to Spooner Summit and via the connector trail from there to Spooner Lake C.G. A nice hike to the top of the County of Carson City.

August 6. An early 5:30A start to beat the heat, this time on Mt. Davidson (Storey County) overlooking Virginia City. I parked on B Street a hundred feet or so from the intersection with Rte 341 across from the 4th Ward School. Following a dirt road for perhaps ¼ of a mile, I came to a use trail that headed more or less straight up the moderate slope to the rocky summit outcrop some 1,500' and 1 hr 15 min above. No register, just the benchmark. Fine views of Virginia City below, the peaks of the eastern Tahoe rim, and of Reno. From the craggy top of Davidson, it was a short, easy descent to the extensive high plateau area to the west and a pleasant stroll along a road to slightly lower Ophir Hill, topped by a small communications facility. From here I returned directly to Virginia City following the track along the telephone poles down Spanish Ravine. I came out near the water tanks shown on the Virginia City 7.5 min topo map above Stewart Street.

It was still only mid-morning when I started the 115-mile scenic desert drive via Yerington and Walker Lake to Hawthorne at the base of Mt. Grant (Mineral County), the day's second objective. Mt. Grant tops the massive Grant Range, rising 6,000' above Hawthorne and Walker Lake. The long ascent that can be done from U.S. 95 poses no problems for the intrepid hiker seeking lots of vertical gain. Something of an opportunist, I obtained a key from the Army Ammunition Plant, which has jurisdiction over the area. This key, freely dispensed, opened a locked gate on Cottonwood Drive at Walker Lake and provided access to a good, well maintained dirt road that took me 15 miles into the inner reaches of the range and ultimately to the 11,000' level of Mt. Grant itself. With thunder showers threatening, I scrambled to the summit of boulders at 3:00P, just 1½ hours after picking up the key in Hawthorne. I was quite impressed with the splendid views of the Grant Range, Walker Lake, the Sierra peaks and the Sweetwaters. The register book, placed by Howard Steidtmann and Tobi Tyler (Mother Lode Chapter) 6-1-91, contained perhaps 15 entries including that of veteran peakbaggers Barbara Lilley and Gordon MacLeod on 6-3-92. Because of the uncertain weather, I cut short my summit stay and drove back down the mountain, regretting that there wasn't time to linger at least a day in the area. After returning the key in Hawthorne, I drove the very scenic Rte 359 through the Anchorite Hills to U.S. 395 just south of Conway Summit. The views of the Sierra with approaching sunset light were magical. Overnight in Bridgeport, then home on the 6th over Sonora Pass.



MT ANSEL ADAMS - 2ND DAY

DESERT PEAK BAGGING TRIP

June 17 to July 4, 1993

It is easy to write up these peak climbs in a cool house in San Jose, away from the daily blasts of 110-115 degree heat of the Arizona desert in June, the hottest time of the year. However, since I am a true desert rat, the heat was in fact stimulating and revealing. It hit 119 degrees Fahrenheit in Coolidge, Arizona while I was in Safford, Arizona (115 degrees F.) soaking in a hot spring at 105 degrees Fahrenheit!!

WAUCOBA @ 11,123' - After a nice trip over Tioga Pass and a soak in Pulky's Pool" I camped out east of Big Pine at the junction of the Saline Valley Road and the road to Death Valley. Next morning, I met Jim Pritchard and Jim Duemmel from Seattle. Jim Pritchard is an old desert peak bagger and a fellow climber from our McKinley climb. We parked 12.1 miles from the junction. We left at 8 am at 7300'. Jim Duemmel dropped out at 10 am due to the heat. Jim Pritchard and I climbed the 4000' slowly through nice Limber Pines (avoiding the mtn mahogany). Toward the summit, we saw Bristlecones growing right along with the Limber Pines. A ducked way leads one across the summit plateau to the top. Waucoba is the highest peak in the Inyo Range, even higher than Telescope Peak at 11,049'. We were on top at 12 noon. We could see the top of the Eureka Dunes but not the whole structure. This was my third attempt on Waucoba, so I was real glad to get this peak. It got quite hot on the way down, but no bugs and plenty of shade under the Limbers, Pinon, and Bristlecones. After the climb, we enjoyed a nice soak in Keogh Hot Ditch near Big Pine.

WHITE MTN PEAK @ 14,246' - We had a great (cooler) camp at 8500' off the road to the Patriarch Grove. We got up early, 6/20/93, and drove all the way to the gate. Got to about 12,600' ft and a massive series of Thunder and Lightning storms moved in from the South. Soon the whole Owens Valley was in storm and six lightning bolts hit our summit. We retreated at 10 am. While visiting the giant patriarch tree (36' in circumference) we had hail and heavy rains. The next day (6/21/93) we were up at 5 am. Left the gate at 7 am. LAB by 8 am and I was on the summit at 11 am. There is now a nice stone hut on top but it's for research only. I almost missed the register since it was south of the hut about 20' away!! I signed in and the two Jims signed in 1/2 hour later. This was my second time on White Mtn Peak. Great view down to the Owens Valley. It was cold up there. I actually hiked with a wind parka, sweaters and poly underwear. It is 14 miles round trip and 2500' elevation gain. They were doing research on the marmot colony near the gate. They were using a stencil and spraying numbers on them.

BEATTY HOT SPRINGS - Jim and Jim wanted to climb Mt. Jefferson and Arc Dome to the north. I wanted to attend the Earth First RRR (Round River Rendezvous) on Mt. Graham to the south. We split up. Beatty hot springs is still \$2.00 complete with live peacocks.

MT. CHARLESTON - FLETCHER CANYON - While visiting Gary Vesperman, and old PCS member in Lost Wages) I took his roommate (Leslie) up a nice Limestone Canyon with a very high flow rate spring. My car air conditioner went out on this trip and stayed out for the rest of my desert ramblings.

MT. HUALAPAI (8420') - I had a great campspot at 6000' (3000' above Kingman, AZ) with real Arizona walnut trees and Ponderosa Pines! Mt. Hualapai is all granite with rocky pinachos protruding from the main intrusive massive. Hualapai mountain park is developed (cabins, etc.) but with 2300 acres running from 4984' to 8420' There is plenty of room for a wild feeling. Mt Hualapai is a biological island way above the barren desert.

The ranger gives a nice map showing the trails and scenic points of the mountain. I hiked from 6814' at the lot to Aspen Peak (Class 3) at 8239'. I could see the summit off south of Hayden Peak at 8390'. I took the Hayden Peak south trail thinking it would to Hayden Peak and I could bushwack to the summit. Guess what? The Hayden Peak south trail doesn't go to Hayden Peak. It only goes to an overlook

called Dinosaur Point Overlook! I could see now that I should have taken the road to Hayden Peak (loaded with towers, dishes, etc.) and then bushwhacked to the exact summit of Mt. Hualapai (8417'). Well, it was 3 pm so I went to Mt. Tipton overlook and had a great spot with breezes and hot, dry air. Since I was running low on water (using up 3 qts) I decided to head back to the cars. However, I had a nice little scramble on Aspen Peak (8239'). It was a great day with a number of rare looking plants such as the Pink Blooming New Mexican Locust Trees; sort of a subtropical gift to the high desert. The aspens, white fir, Ash, Ponderosa all made their songs to me and I was lucky to be here. Hualapai Peak is the highest point in Mojave County ... so I'll be back again!! By the way, there are Ringtail cats and mountain lions up there. 6-24-93.

FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA TO CAMP VERDE HOT SPRINGS - Hot even at 8:30 am on 6-25-93. Still fingers of snow on Mt. Humphreys, the highest point in the State of Arizona at 12,633'. It was so hot my thermal protection switch was shutting off the air conditioner. At camp Verde along Highway 17, it was 105 degrees to 108 degrees Fahrenheit at 3000'. I left Camp Verde at 4:30 pm for the hot spring. I had 22 miles of dirt/washboard road to go on with no HVAC. It was so hot I missed the turnoff to the Verde River - the sign (VSFS) was facing the wrong way, so I ended up in Strawberry and had to backtrack 12 miles of dirt road back to the turnoff. Hot, hot. Everything was hot.

CAMP VERDE HOT SPRINGS, ARIZONA - I camped out at 1 am last night and the air temperature cooled down to 80 degrees F or so. I was up at first light, 5 am. Left Childs Power Station and campground at 6 am. had a nice walk in and along the Verde River to the old Bridge Piers. Here I crossed the Verde River twice, waded up to my hips in one place but the flow rate was low. Found the old resort on the other side complete with palm trees and two outdoor pools. The water was 102 degrees F., nice. One pool had a roof on it but was washed down river when the Verde River flooded last Jan/Feb 1993. Interesting old hippie types at the hot springs. Photo's of the Hot Springs are in Jason Loam's Hot Springs book. I drove back up to Payson, Arizona at 5000'. Then down toward Globe, Arizona and past Roosevelt Lake and its Dam. They are putting in a new dam much higher than the old dam, due to the booming population in Phoenix. Saw Saguaro's at 2500'. Hot Real hot. The A&W in Globe was giving free ice cubes so I loaded up and wrapped them in a towel and put the towel around my neck. I visited a new park in Globe, Az, called Besh-Ba-Gowah Arch. Park. Very interesting. Especially the "Sipapu"! So hot I went to a movie in Globe: "Cliffhanger". The movie was somewhat of a joke but it was so hot I stayed in the show for two movies.

EARTH FIRST RENDEZVOUS ON MT. GRAHAM - Camped out near Geronimo, Arizona (6/27/93). Hot, hot, 12 midnight, hot, 7 am. Coyotes were up at 6 am. Nice soak at Watson Wash Hot Well. Someone build a nice concrete tub. Clear, good water 104 degrees. Nice heavy flow rate. Headed to Earth First Rendezvous. Picked up two girls hitchhiking ... would you believe they took a Greyhound Bus from Kitchener, Ontario to Safford, Arizona to attend the Earth First Festival and protest building the University of Arizona telescope within the Rare Red Squirrel Refugium! I couldn't hike to the top of Mt. Graham - it was red-taped for the Red Squirrel ... but powerful University of Arizona interests built an actual hi-tech telescope within the Refugium. This is an environmental atrocity and I told the ranger so. In fact, even the Pope (Vatican) has money put into this obscene project. Are all astronomers that narrow and mean?? But the way, these Earth First people are radical. The two girls were chewing tobacco while carrying 50 pound packs, and, at the festival, I saw some pretty girls in their 20's walking around with no shirts or brassieres on!! A big poster in the trees said "U of A - Don't Rape Mt. Graham." Dozens of News media were there. No dogs allowed. Police cars seen escorting people in U or A cars up the road. It was a lot cooler in camp at 9000'. But still 90 degrees and in the daytime. Good weather for the women to go bra-less!! The Heliograph Peak trail was

closed due to fire hazards. This put all main trails out of business. I wonder if the USFS managed it that way due to the Earth First Festival.

What I thought was Pinon Pine on the lower slopes of Mt. Graham was indeed "Chihuahuan Pine." Pinon Pine grows only as far south as Roosevelt Lake in Arizona!! A Banner at Earth First Camp said: "UA ... come back to earth. Don't Rape Mt. Graham."

WATSON WASH HOT WELL - I didn't stay too long at the Earth First Camp. I went to soak again and who pulls up in his bubble-gum machine .. a BLM ranger. Nice, but same old stuff. He said:

1. "What are you doing in this area?" - I answer "visiting friends"
2. "Are you retired?" - "No"
3. "Are you an Engineer?" - "yes, bad job market, etc."
4. "You know the concrete TUB is illegal - someone built it without a permit"

I saw a roadrunner - Luckily, this uplifted my spirits after being interrogated by the BLM corporate spy.

MT. WRIGHTSON - 9450' (6-30-93) - After a day in Tucson, Arizona (yes, it's 10 am and 98 degrees Fahrenheit there), I camped out at 4500' just north of Mt. Wrightson. It was hot at 7 am at 4500'. I took the "old baldy" trail to the summit (5.4 miles one way) not the super-trail (16.2 miles round trip). I left the lot at 7:30 am and was on top at 10:45 am. Three hours 15 minutes for 4000' gain - pretty good!! There is a nice spring at 8000' called Bellows Spring - Good Water. As soon as I got back down to Baldy Saddle, the skies opened with torrential rains and hail. Luckily, I brought my parka and sweater. I think the air temperature must have dropped 30 degrees F!! The summit of Mt. Wrightson is relatively pure ... only the foundation of an old fire lookout exists. However, the view to the east to Mt. Hopkins (8585') is spoiled by a big telescope and its associated road switch-backing up the peak with the roads erosion gullies streaming down the peak. In fact, this giant white telescope is easily visible from Hwy 19, the main route south of Tucson to Nogales. Arizona is insane with scopes. Mt. Wrightson is the queen of the Santa Rita Mtn Wilderness and provides fine views of the desert, is the highest point in Santa Cruz County, but the view is spoiled to the east due to greedy U of A Astronomers. The White Pine crowning the summit did look a bit different than our Sierra White Pine. I found out later they are indeed "Mexican White Pine."

I drove from Tucson to the San Diego County highlands from 8 pm to 4 am to avoid the hot sun. End of trip.

Bill Hauser

Flagpole Pk. and Echo Pk.---John Besbekos

John Sams having just ridden his bicycle from North Carolina wanted to see the Sierras! I decided to take him on a short peak scramble at Desolation Wilderness. We headed along the trail above Lower Echo Lake and then did some boulder scrambling and easy but fun class 2-3 "cliff-hanging" (having just seen the silly Sylvester Stallone movie by the same name).

At the top of Flagpole our eastcoast visitor was duly impressed by the Lake Tahoe views and granite vistas. I found what looked to be a broken up register with wet sign-in sheets and a bag of dirt. Upon closer examination of what was left of the papers, it seems it was the cremated remains of someones dog! , complete with farewell eulogies.

We continued along the ridge to Echo Peak, still a lot of July snow. The trail down to Tamarack Lake was all snow, so we did a lot of hiking boot skiing. John S. having enjoyed his Sierra sampler continued his bike trip to Vancouver Island.

CLIMBING THE WEST RIDGE OF MOUNT HUNTER
by Paul Richins

The climb of Mount Hunter's West Ridge is considered by many one of the fifty classic climbs of North America. Having completed the route May 14-May 24, 1993, I appreciate the reason for its inclusion in this select group of mountain climbs. The technical difficulties we had to overcome on the climb included spectacular overhanging cornices, ice falls, towering seracs, hanging glaciers and 60-70 degree mixed snow/ice. Needless to say the climb was much more challenging than anticipated by either Dick Ratliff or myself when we were planning the climb from the safe confines of our homes.

Mount Hunter is located on the southern edge of Denali National Park about 150 miles north of Anchorage, Alaska. Mount Hunter (14,570'), Mount Foraker (17,004) and Mount McKinley (20,320), the highest peak in North America, form a compact triangle of three of the most spectacular and challenging mountains in North America. The peoples living closest to the majestic peaks had long called them Denali (McKinley), Sultana (Foraker) and Begguya (Hunter), meaning The High One, The Woman and Denali's Child, respectively. These are the "big three"--the Bach, Beethoven and Brahms of classic Alaskan mountaineering.

Although the smallest of the three, Mount Hunter is the steepest and presents the most difficult climbing challenges. Of the eighty or more peaks over 14,000' in North America, Mount Hunter is the most difficult to climb. Consequently, it was the last to be climbed.

To provide another perspective on just how difficult it is to climb Hunter, only 4 of 51 climbers reached the summit in 1992. In the past five years only 27 out of a total of 156 (17%) were successful. In comparison, more than 50% of those attempting Denali reach the top.

On the sixth day of climbing our party of five reached the summit of Hunter under ideal weather conditions. We were rewarded with unparalleled views of Mount Foraker, Mount McKinley, Mount Huntington, Mount Russell and hundreds of lesser peaks. It was 7:00 PM and we had been climbing for 13 hours that day. As it turned out we would need another 10 hours to descend to our high camp (Camp 4) on the West Ridge. We arrived back at our high camp at 5:00 AM the next morning completely exhausted. We had been climbing for 23 hours.

To reach Mount Hunter, Dick Ratliff and I flew from Sacramento to Seattle and on to Anchorage. In Anchorage we joined our guide, Gary Bocarde, and two other climbers. We drove two hours to Talkeetna, a very small town of a couple of hundred people. The community becomes the center of activity for both climbers and tourists flying into Denali National Park each spring and summer.

At 10:00 PM the evening of May 14, 1993, Don Geeting, our pilot, stuffed the single engine Cessna 185 with skis, ropes, packs, tents, climbing gear, two weeks of food and three climbers for the flight into the Southeast Fork Kahiltna Glacier. Flying and climbing do not have to be limited to the "normal" daylight hours we are used to as it is light 24 hours a day at this time of year in Alaska. I ended up in the very back of the plane sitting on a sleeping bag for a chair with packs and gear for a back rest. More gear was packed to the ceiling on my right which only allowed me to peer out through a small window on my left.

The flight into the mountain was inspiring. It is the most spectacular 30 minute plane ride you will find anywhere. The ride took us over the low lands, the glaciers and into the most rugged mountains in North America in a matter of minutes. Soon we were barely clearing a narrow mountain pass, banked left and then right to avoid the peaks towering above us and continued up the Kahiltna Glacier to the landing area.

At the Kahiltna Glacier landing strip (7,200') we found a small tent village of climbers from all over the world there to climb Hunter, Foraker and Denali. By far, most were there to climb Denali. We learned from Annie, the air traffic controller at the glacier air strip, that about 500 climbers were at various camps on Denali with a party or two on Foraker and one on Hunter.

Annie kept the pilots informed of the weather conditions on the glacier and kept track of the climbers on the mountains. Every evening at 8:00 she provided a weather report to the climbers over her C.B. radio and received a progress report from the climbers and guides.

The next day we skied about two hours down the glacier and around a spur ridge to the Northwest Basin of Hunter where we set up base camp (6,800'). We carried our gear in backpacks and on snow sleds that we pulled behind us. We had about 80 pounds of gear, food and clothing per climber.

The following day we abandoned skis, poles, an emergency food cache and snow sleds at Base Camp and forced everything else into our packs for the climb. From base camp we navigated up and through an ice fall in the lower Northwest Basin avoiding the numerous crevasses in the icefall. To avoid passing below a potentially dangerous hanging glacier, we left the basin and turned left up a steep slope that had avalanched a day or so earlier. Just below the ridge the slope steepened and we climbed one steep snow pitch (one rope length-165') that was near vertical. Camp I was placed on this spur ridge at about 8,600'.

The climbing from Camp 1 to Camp 2 would be the most difficult and sustained on the route. Up ahead we saw glimpses of the steep snow/ice couloir that blocked our access to the West Ridge. From our vantage point it looked as if the couloir steepened to near vertical at the top. It did, but our guide, Gary Bocarde, assured

us that it looked steeper than it actually was. I thought to myself that it was one thing to climb near vertical ice without a pack but a completely different challenge to climb six pitches of mixed snow and ice with a 60 pound pack. This was the 60/60 climb-60 pound packs up 60 degree ice.

I was apprehensive, as I am before all difficult climbs. The fear of the unknown and the doubts concerning whether my climbing abilities would be sufficient to meet the challenge was ever present. Would I be able to climb such a difficult and sustained couloir? I had in Norway two years earlier when Dick and I made the first ascent of the Southwest Ridge of Stortind, but that was without a 60 pound pack.

On the steep traverse from Camp 1 to the couloir we were never on slopes of less than 40 degrees. By the time we reached the couloir it was time to eat lunch. We needed to refuel before climbing the couloir. I drove in a snow picket and clipped in to prevent an unchecked fall. I then kicked a small platform out of the hard snow on which to stand. The snow and ice was so hard that I was only able to kick out a platform large enough for the front half of my boots with my heels hanging out over the steep slope. I carefully removed my pack and clipped it into my ice axe that I had planted in the snow/ice as an anchor. We had to be very careful when taking off our packs. Anything dropped, including our packs, would immediately slide out of sight and disappear to the glacier far below. Perched on the side of the mountain like this was not conducive to a relaxing lunch so we hurriedly ate.

As we ascended, the couloir steepened from 40 to 50 degrees. Near the top it continued to steepen to 60 and possibly 70 degrees. It was near vertical for all practical purposes. At the top of the couloir my calf's were burning and my legs about to give out. The front points of my Footfangs (crampons) were only penetrating the hard ice half an inch placing great strain on my calf's.

I was very happy and relieved to have successfully climb the couloir, the crux of the climb. It was a big confidence builder and made me optimistic about reaching the summit. Camp 2 (10,200) was placed just beyond the couloir on the West Ridge. The views from Camp 2 were magnificent as we looked out over hundreds of peaks and hanging glaciers.

Over the next two days we moved up the West Ridge establishing Camp 3 (10,600) and then our high camp, Camp 4 (11,000). In route we climbed up, over and down at least three very large snow domes with a near vertical ice pitch or two thrown in to keep our interest up.

At Camp 4 we could clearly see our route to the summit above. It looked discouraging. I was starting to have doubts about reaching the summit. The route from Camp 4 went up a very steep 45-60 degree face and then along a narrow ridge to a large glacier field and ice fall.

The next morning we were up at 4:00 AM and climbing by 6:00. To my surprise, the face climbing was somewhat easier than couloir we had climbed earlier. However, the ridge certainly got our attention. The ridge was very narrow and dropped off on both sides for thousands of feet below. A missed step here would not be good. We all were very careful as we made this delicate traverse.

Once we reached the glacier the climbing became more relaxed. We made our way across the glacier and onto the icefall just below the summit plateau. All around us ice seracs towered overhead. We worked our way through, around and over large ice seracs to reach the summit plateau. Navigating this ice fall was the most enjoyable portion of the climb.

We finally reached the summit. We had successfully climbed Hunter. It was 7:00 PM and we had been climbing for 13 hours. The winds were calm, the temperature mild and the skies clear. Conditions were perfect. If I had control over such matters I would not have changed a thing. The view was breathtaking. It would be difficult to imagine a more beautiful and majestic view than that afforded by the summit of Hunter. I was awe struck by the beauty and sheer size of Hunter and the hundreds of mountains and glaciers around us. The air was so clear it seemed as if I could reach out and touch Denali's south face towering over us nearly 7 miles away.

What a sense of accomplishment to have attempted a difficult task and accomplished, what at times, seemed impossible. What a rewarding and magnificent view from the summit. Each of us had our own personal reasons for climbing Hunter and they were more than fulfilled on this day.

Climbing Summary

Area: Denali National Park, Alaska

Route: West Ridge of Mount Hunter (14,570)

Camps: Base Camp plus Camps 1, 2, 3 and 4

Elevation Gain: 6,500' to 14,570'

Ascent: 6 days (includes one storm day)

Descent: 3 days (includes one and a half storm days)

Summit Day: 23 hours total, 13 hours to summit and 10 hours down to Camp 4

Belayed Rope Pitches: approximately 30 on the ascent

Rappels: 11, all on the descent

Hardware: 6 snow pickets, 6-7 ice screws, and several rock pitons

Coldest Temperature: about 14 degrees

Climbers: Gary Bocarde, Guide, Anchorage; Dave Bong, Assistant Guide, Ridgefield WA; Steve Swift, Fairbanks; Dick Ratliff, Sacramento; and Paul Richins, El Dorado Hills.

THE BOULDER: Published bimonthly by the Peak and Gorge Outings Section, Mother Lode Chapter, Sierra Club.

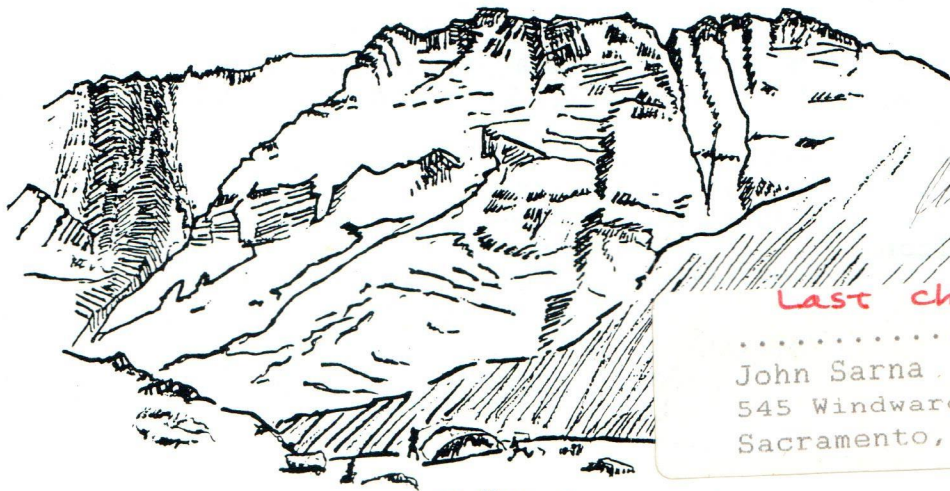
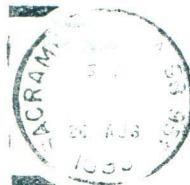
EDITORS: John Besbekos, Bob Buckles, and Pete Yamagata.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Dues are \$6.00 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: Gary Walker, P.O. Box 141, Weimar, CA 95736, who can be called at 637-4240.

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 Besbekos; 4428 Old Dairy Drive, Sacramento, CA 95842; phone 729-2725. Submittals will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.

DEADLINE: About a week before social meetings on even-numbered months. The next deadline is: October 18, 1993

BOULDER EDITORIAL COMMITTEE
 c/o John Besbekos
 P.O.Box 417415
 Sacramento, CA 95841



*Leave money w/ d.f.
 out d.d. 6/25/93*

Last chance to renew
paid til issue 55

John Sarna
 545 Windward Way #114
 Sacramento, CA 95831

PEOPLE WHO TOOK
 THE EASTEN RIDGE,
 4TH CLASS UP BEAR CREEK SPIRE
Ellen Van Fleet