

THE



BOULDER

motherlode chapter · sierra club

Issue No. 61 July & August 1994

Chair's Corner

The ski season is over and peak climbing days have begun. I've already climbed Echo and Ralston in Desolation Wilderness. We have a lot of weekend trips planned for the summer, some as club trips, others as private. I did not get very many day trips for the Bonanza submission. That means people not gone for the weekend will have more trouble finding a peak climb day hike. If anyone wishes to add late day trips for August, we would be happy to put them in this newsletter. If you are desperate come Friday night, try calling some of the regular leaders to check out their plans. Though I hope to be backpacking many weekends this summer, fatigue, yard work and enjoying a day with my wife Claire will sometimes keep me home. If I don't have a commitment to take her out to breakfast, I'd be happy to get in a day hike.

We did not get any mountaineering trips in as official Sierra Club hikes this period. There are several private trips planned using technical gear. I am leading a trip to Mt Lyell. Alan Cooke has a major expedition to the Palisades planned (already booked with a waiting list.) John Watters is trying to stir up interest in a climb of Jeff Davis. My Round Top Ice Axe Trip did have a lot of interest even with the \$10 per person fee. Because I did not get approval as required for an official trip, I felt obliged to cancel. Maybe we can get in a couple technical climbs for the fall. Anyone interested in leading?

We have gotten fair attendance at the past few socials. For those who have attended, keep coming. If you have any program ideas, let me know. For the rest, you missed some great slides by Jackie Stroud of Brewer, Humphries and wild peaks. Have a good season, see you on the trail,

Bob Buckles, Peak & Gorge Chair

Calendar

Note: The outings and events listed here are items that may be of interest to our readers. They are a mixture of private trips and other organizations as well as Sierra Club trips.

June 25, Sat.	Deadwood Peak (Sierra Club) From Upper Blue Lake. 12 miles, 2800' climb. Meet Eldorado National Forest Supervisor's Office, 100 Forni Rd. Placerville at 7:00 am. Limited to 15, Call Mark Olsen, 677-1010.
June 25, Sat.	Fall Creek Mtn. (Sierra Club) Grouse Ridge area. Meet CSUS Arboretum at 8:00 am or Auburn Courthouse at 8:45 am. leader: Wayne Luney, 383-9393.
June 25, Sat.	Freel Peak (Sierra Club) Meet Pollock Pines Safeway parking lot, (Sly Park exit from Rte 50). Leader Bill Campau, 644-5339.
July 2-4, Sat-Mon	Clavey River (Sierra Club) Level 3 Gorge Scramble. Visit lower 9 miles including Hunter Bend and Clavey Falls. For details call Paul Plathe, (209) 463-3466.
July 2-4, Sat - Mon	Mts Forester or Ansel Adams (Sierra Club) Hoover Wilderness. Limited to 8. Call Al Gutowski, 457-3338.
July 9, Sat	Boundry Pk. & Mt. Montgomery (Sierra Club) White Mountains, Car camp. Call Alan Conke, 756-5083 (Davis).
July 9, Sat	Stevens Peak (Sierra Club) Meet CSUS arboretum 8:00 am. Leader Louise Soto, 725-9819, 7-9 pm.
July 9 or 10	Jeff Davis Pk. (Private) The only technical peak on the Ogul list. Contact John Watters, 488-8467.
July 9, Sat	High Points North of Dicks Peak (Sierra Club) Desolation Wilderness. Meet Eagles Lake Trailhead 8:00 am. Leader Al Gutowski, 457-3338 or Friday from 8 - 10 pm at 581-2239.
July 16-17, Sat-Sun	Stanton Pk. & Virginia Pk. (Sierra Club) Limited to 6. Call Jackie Stroud, 457-6338 before 9 pm.
July 20, Wed	<u>Peak & Gorge Potluck.</u> Wednesday evening, 6:30 pm. Join our annual potluck picnic at Swanston Park, Northrup Ave. between Howe & Fulton. Bring food and play volleyball. Families welcome. For further info call Bob Buckles 624-3620.
July 23, Sat	Castle Peak & Basin Peak (Sierra Club) 9 1/2 miles (3 cross country), 2000' gain. Meet 11th & P at 8 am or Auburn Courthouse at 8:30 am. Leader: Pat Purcell, 428-0838 (6-9 pm).
June 25, Sat	Mt. Watkins (Sierra Club) Yosemite Meet 8:00 am at Wayside Park in Groveland. Leader : Frank Oyung 962-7585.
Jul 30, Sat	Rubicon Peak (Sierra Club) 9183' Ogul list peak. Steep off-trail. Meet Hazel Park & Ride at 7 AM. Bob Buckles, 624-3620.
July 31, Sun	Clavey River (Sierra Club) Level 3 Gorge Scramble. Near confluence of Hull and Clavey Rivers. Meet at PArk & Ride ,Hammer Lane & Hwy 99, Stockton 7 AM. Paul Plathe (209) 463-3466.
July 30-31, Sat-Sun	Blacktop Peak (Sierra Club) Near June Lake. Basecamp near Gem Lake and Gem Pass. Call Al Gutowski, 344-9537 (6-9 pm).
Aug 12-14 Weekend +	Thompson Canyon (Sierra Club) Backpack in approx 8 miles from Twin Lakes (Bridgeport). Peak climbing in Robinson Creek - Barney Lake - Peeler Lake area. Call Al Gutowski for details, 457-3338.
Aug 20, Sat	Raymond Peak (Sierra Club) Climb from Ebbet's Pass, Possibly bag Reynolds Pk. Meet Hazel Park & Ride & AM. Bob Buckles 624-3620.
Aug 25 -29 Th-Tue	Koip Peak (Sierra Club) 12,979' peak in Yosemite. Backpack / peak bag. Limited to 6. Call Bob Buckles, 624-3620.
Aug 27, Sat	Tyron Peak (Sierra Club) Day hike/Peak climb below Ebbets Pass. Meet at CSUS Arboretum, 6:30 am. Al Gutowski, 457-3338.
Sep 16-18 Fri-Sun	Disaster Peak (Sierra Club) Backpack 9 miles from Highland Lakes trailhead to base camp. Call Jackie Stroud, 457-6338.

Congratulations to John Dodds !!! N.A.S. Emblem Award.

Congratulations to John T. Dodds for Northern Alpine Section Emblem Qualification, submitted 21 April 1994. John's climbing career spans over three decades. Beginning with a climb of Mt Lassen with his family in 1952 he has gone on to climb Lyell, Ritter, Matterhorn, Whitney, and Brewer to name a few. He recently resumed his mountaineering activities with climbs of Black Giant, Mt Goddard, and Seven Gables during 1993. John, we are glad you got back on top of the world!

Karen Leyse sent us the following copy of some correspondence she had regarding the placement of Peak Registers within Wilderness areas such as Desolation:

Dear Vi:

Thank you for writing. The Wilderness manager of whom I spoke is George Duffy of the Mt. Baldy Ranger District. George is on the Region's Wilderness Excellence Team and is currently heavily involved in leading national efforts for the 30th Anniversary celebration of the passage of the 1964 Wilderness Act. George, I believe, is also an avid mountain climber. You can contact him at (818) 335-1251, he'd be a great person to have talk to your group about peak registers in Wilderness and other Wilderness issues.

You asked for a summary of the replies that we received last year when we asked for views on this subject from other forests. We received about ten replies that stated a position. As you might imagine the replies were somewhat varied.

Several replies came from other regions of the country. In Colorado the Colorado Mountain Club has maintained peak registers on 14,000 peaks since 1912. The registers are evidently unobtrusive 4" diameter PVC pipes with caps on them which are stuck in the rocks. The club shares the info gained from the registers with the Forest Service. People in the region feel that trying to change an 80 year tradition is not a worthy fight.

On the other hand, a response from the East Coast talks of the "4000 Footer Club" climbing peaks, often at running speed, to bag several peaks in a day. The suggestion there was to avoid registers within the Wilderness, but possibly to locate them at the trailhead. One or two other regions indicated that they were moving to remove them or that they were inappropriate in Wilderness. The response from our regional office was that we should be working towards getting rid of them as the opportunity arises.

In most places this is not a major issue and responses from field personnel varied. Again some felt that the registers are inappropriate in wilderness and some felt that they encourage use. Others pointed out that registers may be historical and that the Forest Service provides many other improvements such as trails, bridges, toilets, etc. to the public which facilitate use. Respondents felt that climbing peaks specifically to remove registers is a waste of time and energy.

In the Desolation Wilderness, I gather that most registers (other than the 3 handled by the Sierra Peak section) have been placed initially within the last 10 or 15 years. All of our peaks are readily accessible to the general public and therefore registers fill quickly with all manner of extraneous and sometimes offensive comments. Of the three registers placed by the Sierra Peak Section on Desolation's Peaks, S.P.S Mountain Records indicate that 2 peaks are no longer recommended for register placement due to their popularity. The third peak, Pyramid Peak, has the same visitation problems as the other two peaks. In addition, occasionally other groups have put a register on these peaks.

Overall those who responded felt that there are more serious Wilderness issues to address than Peak Registers. There is no national direction specifically aimed at removing Peak Registers within Wilderness. Direction to remove any registers would come from current Federal Regulations which prohibit abandoning personal property or placing papers, signs, etc. without special-use authorization. Old registers are protected by federal law under acts which protect historical resources. Desolation Wilderness staff on both the Eldorado National Forest and the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit feel that peak registers are inappropriate within the Desolation. Our decision here in the Desolation will likely be to require that any peak registers, if allowed, be placed under an agreement with the Forests involved. This type of arrangement would provide direction for their maintenance and would preclude the placement of additional registers in additional areas by other groups. We would ask that the Sierra Club sections interested in placing or maintaining registers in the Desolation provide the Forests with a written application to place and maintain the registers, explaining the purpose of the registers and why the registers are consistent with the intent of the 1964 Wilderness Act. We would also request the year in which each register was initially placed. Again, thank you for your letter. I know that George would be an excellent speaker for your meeting. If you have any questions or feedback, please don't hesitate to call me at (916) 644-2349.

KAREN LEYSE Wilderness Resource Specialist Pacific Ranger Station Pollock Pines, CA 95726

Flagpole Peak and Echo Peak May 15, 1994

This ridge scramble is becoming a tradition for me. When there is still snow on the higher Desolation Wilderness Peaks, this south facing ridge has afforded good early season adventures. Bob Buckles and I started down the Pacific Crest Trail along side Lower Echo Lake. Where the trail leveled off after switchback gains (approx. halfway along the lake) we set out on the first Sierra cross-country of the season.

We went up scree slopes, hopped over boulders, and edged up a few cracks in some short class 3 rock faces. We soon found ourselves perched atop Flagpole Pk. with another group of 4 climbers. We paused for a lunch break, taking in the views of Tahoe on one side and Pyramid Pk. on the other.

Bob and I continued up along the ridge to Echo Peak. We gazed down onto Angorra Lake and over at Dicks and Jacks Peak. I remembered that on my trip here last year, I had run into a lot of snow when I tried to come down on the trail that comes up from the far side of the ridge.

I therefore suggested we try to make our way down the face of the ridge directly to Upper Echo Lake. This turned out to be one long bush-whacking party. We were bloodied by the constant caress of shrubbery on our bare legs. This definitely wasn't short pants territory!!! Our ordeal was ended after about a 45 minute underbrush battle. A final 1.5 mile hike out along the trail concluded our adventure. ----- **John Besbekos**

Signal Peak, 5 June 1994

Alan Cooke, Annie the dog, and I drove up I-80 to the Eagle Lakes turnoff. The trailhead or should I say Jeep road head begins near here. We trudged up the steep grade and alternated throwing sticks for Annie. Near the top, we cut across the open slopes on a cross country route. The top was covered by a large micro wave station and littered with wire, metal scraps and other debris.

We were unable to locate any register. Despite the poor conditions on the peak itself, the views were quite nice. In spite of the recent hot weather, it was windy & a bit on the cold side on top. We had lunch and then decided to start back down before Alan would be forced to suffer the inconvenience of pulling out his wind gear from the bottom of his pack.

Another round of steep trails and stick throwing for Annie and we were back at the car.. I think Alan's dog is about halfway to an Olgul Emblem award. --- **John Besbekos**



Ralston Peak, 4 June 1994

It was a clear Saturday when I set out with 11 other hikers from the trailhead parking across from Camp Sacramento to climb Ralston Peak. I promptly missed the trailhead and we ended up following the bulldozed dirt road to its end. Fortunately, we came upon a use trail that I correctly surmised would link up with the official trail. With that lucky break making up for the earlier unlucky break we continued up the trail. Several of the participants were on their season opener for Sierra hiking. In spite of a couple mild cases of blisters and altitude sickness, everyone made it to the top, handling the summit boulder hop without incident.

We enjoyed the views into Desolation and made tentative plans for some summer backpack trips. On the way down we took the "official" trail all the way back. An enjoyable time was had by all. **-John Besbekos**

SOLOMON PEAK (7,581')
HAMMERHORN MOUNTAIN (7,581')

May 29, 1994
Fred Johnson

These two peaks, which dominate the southern part of the Yolla Bolly- Middle Eel Wilderness, offer an easy, beautiful 10-mile hike. The approach is a long one from Berkeley, but worth it. It is 225 miles via Covelo and Round Valley to the Soldier Ridge trailhead (6,050') on the Indian Dick Road, the last 20 of which is well graded dirt. Driving from the east, the approach is from Mendo-cino Pass.

On this fresh, very clear day I left the trailhead at 7:00A. The first 2 miles is through fir and pine. Then, after the corn lily meadow at Johnson Headquarters, the trail breaks out in the open on Soldier Ridge, with impressive views of Solomon Peak straight ahead. The trail proceeds steeply up bare, broken rock to the north ridge and soon thereafter to the gentle summit area of Solomon Peak, the highest summit draining into the Middle Eel River. The most striking view was the one of mighty snow-covered Shasta. Closer at hand, standing out in the vast panorama, were North Yolla Bolly Mountain and Black Mountain to the north and Mt. Linn to the east. From Solomon Peak, it's about an hour Over to the slightly lower pinnacle of Hammerhorn Mountain. Snow covered much of the trail, but presented no problem. Once again the summit vistas were rewarding. After ample breaks atop both peaks to "take it all in," I returned to the car at 2:30P and drove the six hours home.



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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, P.O. Box 417415, Sacramento, CA 95841; 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: *August 14, 1994*

Boulder Editorial Committee
C/O John Besbekos
P.O. Box 417415
Sacramento, CA 95841



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John Sarna
545 Winward Way # 114
Sacramento, CA 95831



Mt. Shasta & Lassen from North Butte