

THE



BOULDER

motherlode chapter · sierra club

Issue No. 64 January & February 1995

Chair's Corner

This will probably be my last submission to the Chair's corner. Assuming that we get no other candidates, I expect Alan Cooke to be elected to the Chair position at our next meeting, 17 Jan 95. I have really enjoyed being able to give back something to this organization during my two years as its leader. My only regret is that I sometimes felt I should have done more to try and keep things going with the social meetings, getting more leaders for hikes, and so on. I will keep active leading ski and climbing trips. I hope to lead a couple low level technical trips using ice axes this next year. I appreciate the support others have given me, particularly John Besbekos as editor of the Boulder and Treasurer for the Section. I would like to thank the leaders who have continued to keep this outings section active including John Sarna, John Watters, Al Gutowsky, Jackie Stroud and Alan Cooke. My thanks to those contributing articles and also all the subscribers to the Boulder.

As I leave office, I leave behind some challenges to the next Chair. First, though our organization has not shrunk too badly, neither has it grown any. We need new blood to avoid stagnation and decline. This includes subscribers, people submitting articles, and outings leaders. I will do my part to help and others need to as well. We also need to get active using our new opportunities under the current insurance rules. We need some leaders willing to lead technical climbs under the current rules. If not, we are likely to lose the choice as the Sierra Club looks for ways to save money. There isn't much point in having mountaineering insurance if leaders don't use it. We will also have to watch out for other kinds of problems developing out of the current problems the Sierra Club is encountering. Declining membership and funding may threaten outings in a variety of ways.

I do not intend to quite Peak and Gorge by any means. I plan to continue leading hikes and writing articles for the Boulder. As a member of the Mother Lode Chapter Executive Committee I also intend to be a voice in support of outings in our Chapter. Finally, I hope to continue spending time with many of you hiking and skiing in our High Sierras. Climb safely and help protect the mountains we love,

Bob Buckles

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.

Dec 31-Jan 1 Fri-Sun	Lassen (Sierra Club) Ski Tour. Experienced, intermediate skiers in good shape. Stay in motel Saturday night. <i>Call a week in advance!</i> Leader: Dave Vandershaf, 933-3116.
Dec 31, Sat	Maidu Group Beginner Ski Trip (Sierra Club) 2 mile ski tour. Meet at Pollock Pines Safeway parking lot 8 am. <i>You must call leader!</i> Ron Murray, 644-6758.
Dec 31, Sat	Snowshoe Hike (Sierra Club) Sugar Bowl to Lake Mary. Easy, flat trip. For info call Bern Kreissman, 753-7758.
Jan 1, Sun	Intermediate Ski Tour (Sierra Club) Donner Summit. Meet at CSUS Arboretum 7 am. Leader: Al Gutowski, 457-3338.
Jan 7, Sat	Intermediate Ski Tour (Sierra Club) Moderate paced trip on hilly terrain for experienced skiers. Meet Roseville Square 8 am. Leader Bob Buckles, 624-3620.
Jan 7, Sat	Maidu Group Winter Safety Class (El Dorado Nordic Ski Patrol) Free class on winter safety. Emergency shelters, avalanche danger, equipment, etc. Class in Placerville from 9am to 4 pm. Call EDNSP message phone for info, 647-1825.
Jan 7, Sat	Maidu Group Intermediate Ski Trip (Sierra Club) Becker Ridge. 7 mile tour from Echo Lake Snow Park. Meet at Pollock Pines Safeway parking lot 8 am. <i>Participants must call leader!</i> Bill Campau, 644-5339.
Jan 7, Sat	Jackass Mountain (Sierra Club) 5 mile loop day hike with the Tuolumne Group. Meet 9 am Wayside Park in Groveland. Leaders: Hap & Elizabeth Barhydt (209) 962-4847.
Jan 8, Sun	REI Cross Country Ski School (REI Store) Chartered bus, beginner or intermediate lesson, trail pass, ski rentals at Tahoe Donner Cross Country . REI members \$44, non-members \$59. Register at store. REI Outreach Coordinator 965-4343.
Jan 14, Sat	Snowshoe Hike (Sierra Club) 6 to 8 miles somewhere in the Sierra. Call leader for details. Leader: Ben Kreissman, 753-7788.
Jan 14, Sat	Intermediate Ski Tour (Sierra Club) Carson Pass Area. Carson Pass to Blue Lakes, skiing every high point. Meet CSUS arboretum 6:30am. Al Gutowski, 457-3338.
Jan 14, Sat	Maidu Group Beginner Ski Trip (Sierra Club) Echo Lake, 2miles. <i>Participants must call leader!</i> Ron Murray, 644-6758.
Jan 14, Sat	Intermediate Ski Tour (Sierra Club) Tuolumne Group. Tioga Pass Road from Crane Flat to Gin Flat, 9 miles. For details call Frank Oyung, (209) 962-7585.
Jan 15, Sat	Beginner/Low Intermediate Ski Tour (Sierra Club) Meet Roseville Square at 8am. For info call Bob Buckles, 624-3620.

Jan 17, Tues	Peak and Gorge Social (Sierra Club) Hosted by John Sarna. 9556 Appalachian Dr. 363-9243.
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Jan 21, Sat	REI Cross Country Ski School (REI Store) Same as Jan.8 trip except at Royal Gorge .
Feb 11, Sat	REI Cross Country Ski School (REI Store) Same as Jan. 8 trip.
Feb 18, Sat	REI Cross Country Ski School (REI Store) Same as Jan. 8 trip.
Feb 4, Sat	Intermediate Ski Trip (Sierra Club) Meet Hazel Park & Ride off Hwy 50 at 8:00 am. Leader: Bob Buckles 624-3620
Feb 25-26, Sat - Sun	Intermediate Ski Trip (Sierra Club) Tioga Pass. Check out Skiing along Hwy 395 area. Contact Bob Buckles 624-3620.



**117 N.A.S. PEAKS
62 STAR PEAKS**



DESERT PEAK-BAGGING TRIP

(with lots of driving) planned to climb Stepladder, Little Pichacho, Weaver's Needle, and Superstition from Dec. 26 to Dec. 31, 1994.

Call John Sarna at 362-9243 for details.

Notes on North Palisade

For a detailed description of the climb of North Palisade, see John Sarna's article in previous BOULDER issue. When I agreed to sign on for this trip, I warned Alan Cooke that while I did want to get a couple nice peaks, I knew I wouldn't be up to the ambitious schedule in his original prospectus. Was I ever right! By the time I stumbled into camp that first night at 8:00, I was wondering what I had gotten myself in to. As usual, I had packed too much food (especially when the trip lasted only five days instead of eight) and that combined with all my climbing gear, 10 miles of hiking above 10,000 feet, 2500 feet of vertical gain over rough terrain made me question having come at all. After having decided to lay over the second day while the rest of the group climbed Sill, I almost changed my mind when I saw that they were still not ready to leave at 8:00 in the morning. Just as well I didn't. A little 1200 foot climb that afternoon to the top of Columbine Peak (12,652') was enough. Things get a little weird when you start categorizing 13,000' peaks as easy days. But when the rest of our group stumbled back in to camp as dark fell, I was certain my decision to forgo Sill had been a good choice. They looked as bad as I had felt the day before. So much for climbing North Palisade on the third day and so much for our schedule.

I did not finally commit myself mentally to North Palisade until the morning of the climb and even then questioned my judgment as I upchucked my breakfast bagel not fifteen minutes out of camp. Amazingly, that was the last time I felt bad all day. Though generally at the back of the group, I slogged up the scree and boulders with less trouble than I had ever experienced at these elevations. Acclimatization actually worked! I did more than my share belaying others on the technical sections and even led one short pitch. It turned out to be one of the most enjoyable climbs I have ever had. Though it worried me while we were in it, the snow storm added a bit of spice to this premier mountaineering experience.

For those who have not experienced a major climb requiring rope work, a couple observations: It takes FOREVER. For our group of six, we took 30-60 minutes every time we had to set a belay. They were all for pitches of less than 30 vertical feet and only the catwalk had significant horizontal traverse. Because of an excellent guide book and good route finding by our leaders, we did minimal technical climbing. We would not have made the peak if we had taken any longer than we did given the weather. The excellent teamwork of our group also played a major role in our success. Everyone was sufficiently competent in rock climbing that we only roped up for one pitch where the need for ropes may have been questionable. John Sarna did an excellent job of leading the technical sections and getting everyone off the peak quickly when the weather turned sour. Howard provided an excellent assist providing suggestions, cleaning the routes, and making sure each belay went smoothly from the back end. I think the rest of us did a good job too, getting through each technical section as quickly as we could, repacking ropes, etc. The lesson on a mountain like this is that efficient time use is often critical.

A few things that we could have done better: One member of the party did not have a helmet. That was an obvious mistake for any technical climbing. I also think we should have brought a few more pieces of protection (had 5 small chocks) and slings (had about 7.) We might have leapfrogged a couple pitches with additional gear. I didn't bring my wind pants onto the peak. Though it turned out not to be a problem, I was not prepared to be trapped on the peak with rain or snow in my cotton pants (too many good weather climbs!) Finally our camp was not prepared for rain. I got the worst of it since I had not used a tent but I wasn't the only one with wet gear. Still, none of these slips had a major impact. It was a great trip. Thanks again to Alan Cooke for organizing it and John Sarna for leading the technical sections.

Bob Buckles

THE CALIFORNIA 100

THE 100 HIGHEST PEAKS IN CALIFORNIA

Compiled by Paul Richens

The following list of the 100 highest peaks in California was compiled from data contained in the newly photo-revised USGS 7.5 minute maps, Steve Roper's, The Climber's Guide to the High Sierra and R.J. Secor's The High Sierra. The new 7.5 minute maps adjust, up or down, many elevations from the older 15 minute maps due to more accurate mapping techniques available today. Some elevations have been adjusted by more than 100 feet. For example, Mt LeConte, lost 115 feet, Black Kaweah lost 85 feet and North Guard lost 118 feet while Mt Prater gained 142 feet and Mt McAdie gained 119 feet. Mount Whitney lost 3 feet dropping from 14,494' to 14,491'.

The revised and updated list corrects the many inconsistencies contained in the list of 100 highest peaks in California published in California Mountain Ranges, California Geographical Series, Falcon Press. Many notable peaks, such as Norman Clyde Peak, Mt Dade, Mt McAdie, Mt Hale, Mt Powell, Mt Goethe and Mt Thompson, which were left off the old list, presumably because the peaks exact elevation was not known, have been added. Excluding a peak from the list because its exact elevation is unknown is likened to not recognizing K-2 as the second highest peak in the world because its precise elevation is in doubt. However, for some reason, the old list included other peaks such as Thunderbolt, Mt Corcoran and Mt LeConte even though the exact elevations of these peaks were not known. In total, Sixteen peaks, that did not appear on the original list, have been added.

Determining which peaks to include in the revised list was subjective at best. A certain amount of judgement was necessary. It was not always readily apparent whether a given high point was a significant peak or merely a point or pinnacle on the ridge leading to the main summit. For example, should Starlight Peak and Polemenium Peak be included in the revised list? What about the East and West Horns on Mount Williamson, point 14,125' and point 14,160' or the two sub-peaks on Mount Shasta, points 14,000'+ and 13,840'+ or Day Needle (14,174') and Keeler Needle (14,240')?

To minimize the amount of subjectivity several general guidelines were used. First of all, for a peak to be considered, it must be named on the USGS maps or have a "commonly used name". However, unlike the old list, the peaks exact elevation was not a prerequisite for inclusion on the revised list.

Secondly, the peak must meet the dictionary definition of a mountain peak which is, "a great mass of land that projects conspicuously above its surroundings". I arbitrarily adopted a general rule of thumb to define the dictionary phrase, "projects conspicuously above its surroundings". This guideline requires that the peak have an elevation rise of at least 400 feet above the land bridge (col or pass) connecting it with its closest neighbor peak or be at least one-half mile from its neighbor peak.

This was not a hard and fast rule but was useful in determining list status for some peaks. Applying this rule of thumb, caused several "named" peaks such as Starlight, Polemenium, Palisades Crest, Aperture and Gendarme Peaks to be excluded from the updated list.

The following list of the highest 100 peaks in California is arranged in descending order using the elevations on the new 7.5 minute USGS maps. The second elevation shown is from the older 15 minute USGS maps. Peaks measured in meters have been converted to feet by multiplying by the factor of 3.2808 (39.3701 inches per meter divided by 12 inches = 3.2808). Example: 4200 meters x 3.2808 = 13,779 feet

All the peaks on the list are in the Sierra Nevada Range, except for Mount Shasta which is in the Cascade Range and four peaks in the White Mountain Range.

If you have any comments regarding the list please write or call me at 3562 Rolph Way, El Dorado Hills, CA, 95762, phone 933-1898. I may have overlooked a peak you believe should be added or maybe included one that should be dropped. Your comments are appreciated. Based on your input I will revise and update the list and resubmit it for inclusion in the Boulder.

THE CALIFORNIA 100
THE 100 HIGHEST PEAKS IN CALIFORNIA
 Compiled by Paul Richins

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Peak</u>	<u>Elevations</u>		<u>Location</u>
		<u>New</u>	<u>Old</u>	
1.	Mount Whitney	14,491	14,494	Whitney Region
2.	Mount Williamson	14,370+	14,375	Whitney Region
3.	White Mountain		14,246	White Mountain Range
4.	North Palisade	14,242	14,242	Palisade Region
5.	Mount Shasta		14,162	Cascade Range
6.	Mount Sill	14,153	14,162	Palisade Region
7.	Mount Russell	14,088	14,086	Whitney Region
8.	Split Mountain	14,042	14,058	Palisade Region
9.	Mount Langley	14,022	14,042	Whitney Region
10.	Mount Tyndall	14,019	14,018	Whitney Region
11.	Middle Palisade	14,012	14,040	Palisade Region
12.	Mount Muir	14,012	14,015	Whitney Region
13.	Thunderbolt Peak	14,003	14,000+	Palisade Region
14.	Mount Barnard	13,989	13,990	Whitney Region
15.	Mount Humphreys	13,986	13,986	Mono Recesses
16.	Mount Keith	13,977	13,977	Kings-Kern Divide
17.	Mount Stanford	13,973	13,963	Kings-Kern Divide
18.	Trojan Peak	13,947	13,950	Whitney Region
19.	Disappoint Peak	13,917	13,917	Palisade Region
20.	Mount Agassiz	13,893	13,891	Palisade Region
21.	Norman Clyde Peak*	13,855	13,920+	Palisade Region
22.	Mount LeConte	13,845+	13,960+	Whitney Region
23.	Junction Peak	13,845+	13,888	Kings-Kern Divide
24.	Mount Mallory	13,845	13,850	Whitney Region
25.	Caltech Peak	13,832	13,832	Kings-Kern Divide
26.	Mount Darwin	13,831	13,830	Evolution Region
27.	Mount Kaweah	13,802+	13,802	Great Western Divide
28.	Mount McAdie*	13,799	13,680+	Whitney Region
29.	Mount Irvine	13,779+	13,770	Whitney Region
30.	Mount Winchell	13,775	13,768	Palisade Region
31.	Mount Morgan	13,748	13,748	Mono Recesses
32.	Mount Gabb	13,741	13,711	Mono Recesses
33.	Bear Creek Spire	13,720+	13,713	Mono Recesses
34.	Red Kaweah*	13,720+	13,760+	Whitney Region
35.	Mount Corcoran	13,714+	13,760+	Whitney Region
36.	Mount Mendel	13,710	13,691	Evolution Region
37.	Mount Abbot	13,704	13,715	Mono Recesses
38.	Black Kaweah	13,680+	13,765	Great Western Divide
39.	Midway Mountain	13,665	13,666	Great Western Divide
40.	Mount Tom	13,652	13,652	Mono Recesses
41.	Milestone	13,638	13,641	Great Western Divide
42.	Table Mountain	13,632	13,630	Great Western Divide
43.	Second Kaweah*	13,602	13,680+	Great Western Divide
44.	Birch Mountain	13,602	13,665	Palisade Region
45.	Mount Dade*	13,600+	13,600+	Mono Recesses
46.	University Peak	13,589	13,632	Kings-Kern Divide
47.	Mount Brewer	13,570	13,570	Kings-Kern Divide
48.	Mount Goddard	13,568	13,568	Evolution Region
49.	Tunnabora Peak	13,563	13,565	Whitney Region
50.	Mount Dubois		13,559	White Mountain Range

51. Clouddripper*	13,525	13,501	Palisade Region
52. Mount Carillon	13,517+	13,552	Whitney Region
53. Thunder Mountain	13,517+	13,588	Kings-Kern Divide
54. Mount Ericsson	13,517+	13,608	Kings-Kern Divide
55. Mount Gayley	13,510	13,510	Palisade Region
56. Mount Fiske	13,503	13,524	Evolution Region
57. Mount Pinchot	13,495	13,495	Kearsarge Pass Area
58. Mount Hale*	13,494	13,440+	Whitney Region
59. Mount Thompson*	13,494	13,440+	Evolution Region
60. Mount Bolton Brown	13,491	13,538	Palisade Region
61. Mount Jumpoff		13,484	White Mountain Range
62. Mount Pickering	13,474	13,485	Whitney Region
63. Mount Prater	13,471	13,329	Palisade Region
64. Mount Versteeg	13,451+	13,470	Whitney Region
65. Mount Mills	13,451	13,468	Mono Recesses
66. Montgomery Peak		13,441	White Mountain Range
67. Mount Newcomb	13,422	13,410	Whitney Region
68. Mount Haeckel	13,418	13,435	Evolution Region
69. Mount Lamark	13,417	13,417	Evolution Region
70. Cardinal Mountain	13,396	13,397	Palisade Region
71. Mount Jepson	13,390	13,390	Palisade Region
72. Kaweah Queen*	13,382	13,360+	Great Western Divide
73. Mount Wallace	13,377	13,377	Evolution Region
74. Mount Hilgard	13,361	13,361	Mono Recesses
75. Mount Powell*	13,360+	13,360+	Evolution Region
76. The Thumb	13,356	13,338	Palisade Region
77. Black Giant	13,330	13,330	Evolution Region
78. Joe Devel Peak	13,327	13,325	Whitney Region
79. Mount Jordan	13,320+	13,344	Kings-Kern Divide
80. Black Mountain	13,291	13,289	Kearsarge Pass Area
81. Mount McDuffie	13,282	13,271	Evolution Region
82. Deerhorn Mountain	13,281	13,265	Kings-Kern Divide
83. Royce Peak	13,280+	13,253	Mono Recesses
84. Picture Puzzle Peak*	13,280	13,278	Palisade Region
85. Mount Bradley	13,264	13,289	Kings-Kern Divide
86. Mount Goethe*	13,264	13,200+	Evolution Region
87. Feather Peak*	13,240+	13,242	Mono Recesses
88. South Guard	13,231	13,224	Kings-Kern Divide
89. Centennial Peak*	13,228	13,255	Great Western Divide
90. Mount Carl Heller*	13,225	13,211	Whitney Region
91. North Guard	13,209	13,327	Kings-Kern Divide
92. Mount Warlow	13,206	13,231	Evolution Region
93. Mount Emerson	13,204	13,225	Mono Recesses
94. Mount Julius Caesar	13,200+	13,196	Mono Recesses
95. Mount Hitchcock	13,186	13,184	Whitney Region
96. Red Spur Peak	13,186	13,183	Great Western Divide
97. Acrodictes Peak	13,183	13,183	Kearsarge Pass Area
98. Basin Mountain	13,181	13,240	Mono Recesses
99. Striped Mountain*	13,179	13,120+	Kearsarge Pass Area
100 Mount Wynne	13,179	13,179	Kearsarge Pass Area

*Peaks that did not appear on the original list of the 100 highest peaks in California published in California Mountain Ranges, California Geographic Series, Falcon Press.

BEAR MTN --- IT'S A LONG, LONG WAY TO DEL NORTE

A bear of a drive, a bear of a climb. That should say it all for this peak climb, but for the longest time, ornery old Bill Hauser has been leaving suggestive messages on my answering machine asking if I've written up this trip yet. Well, after ignoring him for a year, John Besbekos also chimed in asking for articles for the Boulder, so I finally decided to let people her know what climbing the "Bear" was like.

I originally had scheduled this climb as a Sierra Club hike up to the highest point in Del Norte County, one of the most remote county high-points in California. But, there was a dearth of interest from the Sacramento climbing community, i.e. not one person called me about going. Thus, I let pass responsibility for organizing the climb to Dinesh Desai, informal head-commando of the county high pointers group. After all, he knew the way, having already tried it once, although he had to turn back due to pending darkness. With a number of dedicated county-high-pointers along on this trip, Bill and I in particular, such an excuse would scarcely come up, and it didn't, even though we did come out a few hours after dark; after all, what else is new. But, I'm getting ahead of the story.

To start at the beginning, it's but a 9-hour drive from Sacramento to the trail-head of the "Bear." I had persuaded my former nemesis, Pinus Lambertiana, to share the drive. However, not only did we start late, but driving her Honda over the last few miles of bumpy dirt road was extremely time-consuming. Hence, we made it to Dinesh's meeting place about midnight, and by the time we drove in, the others were fast asleep beside their cars. We sacked out where the trail began from the parking area, figuring the others have to trip over one of us when they began hiking, planned for an ungodly 6 or 7 the next morning.

Brought to our groggy senses by someone (probably Dinesh) and realizing it was morning, Pinus and I threw on some clothes, shut our over-night gear up in the car, and turned toward the nearby trees where the rest of our group were milling about. The greetings were short and sweet, before shouldering our packs and preparing to go. The trail before us led downhill for a few miles, then a steep uphill side-trail led the rest of the way up into the Devil's Punch-bowl, where it abruptly ended at a lake. At that point, we were several hours into the hike, and Pinus decided the peak wasn't worth the supreme effort, so she relaxed by the lake while the rest of us boulder-hopped around its shore. Getting up a scree gully on the opposite side of the lake was a bit more difficult than anticipated, but once we got up and onto the main ridge, Bill and I charged ahead toward the top of the Bear. Somehow we got through all the brush with few scratches and, in an hour, all of us stood on top of the peak. We could see the lake almost straight down below. For some reason, we were all in a raucous mood, and it showed in our conversation. Maybe we've been hiking together too long, or, maybe Bill is just a bad influence on all of us. Of course, I was but an innocent bystander in discussions of the vicissitudes of relationships with the opposite sex, whichever sex is being mauled.

But the day was wearing on, and after everyone got in a last word, down we went, getting back to the lake at sunset just in time to wake Pinus up from her nap. Slowed by the physically-wasted members of the party, we were lucky to get back to the main trail before dark. Hiking out the rest of the way out with flashlights was slow but sure work. On reaching the cars, we all simply collapsed into our sleeping respective bags without much thought of dinner.

The next morning, we expressed our heartfelt goodbyes, and all left for diverse destinations. After a good breakfast, Pinus and I stopped at one of the many Redwood Groves in the area, which is well worth visiting in its own right. We also came across a herd of Tule Elk browsing near the highway. On the other hand, Bill and Peter tried to bag another county high point, Solomon Mtn, but I understand they didn't make it because of the weather, although Bill managed to get himself invited to a semi-public bash and have dinner with Jerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead, who was traveling incognito (or was that another time, Bill). If his name would have came up while atop Bear, I could have added some more spice to our conversation with the story my very first girlfriend told me about her first "encounter" with Jerry, and it would have fit right in. Anyway, I'm digressing and have reached the end of this saga.

In conclusion, and every story needs a proper perspective, this hike is just another long drive with a long hike through nice but unimpressive scenery. If you want to get there; Gary Suttle's County High Point Book has excellent directions; after all, Bear is a county high point. If you want some advice, don't do it alone; you'll be bored silly without someone to talk to on the way.

John Sarna

After nearly cancelling the trip, I finally got a call from Alan Cooke. Of course I still wanted to go! After all, I had bought crampons and packed. After a beautiful sunrise overlooking Mono Lake on Friday morning, we began the hike in from Tuolumne Meadows towards Donoghue Pass. Lyell Fork canyon is a beautiful area for backpacking. Most of the trail was gentle, staying close to the river in a broad floodplain made up of grassy meadows and woodlands with rugged granite ridges to either side. We did run into a couple pack animal groups and numerous day and overnight hikers. Late in the afternoon we reached some serious uphill sections as we approached our 10,000'+ camp near an unnamed lake. We ran into Don and Chris Fox who were coming down from Donoghue Pass on their way out. We also met a fellow at the footbridge who was just a little bit lost. He meant to be heading west towards the valley, had gotten on the John Muir trail heading the wrong direction and hadn't noticed his error in 8 miles of hiking. Though otherwise well prepared, it was obvious this visitor from Ohio should have checked his map occasionally when he saw trail signs which never mentioned his destination. We ran into a group of Sierra Peak Section people (private trip like ours) also after Mt. Lyell.

On Saturday we got a 6:00 AM start from our base camp, headed up the trail to the last lake below Donoghue Pass and then started cross country southwest towards the peak. We veered right to avoid steep cliffs and then climbed up granite ledges to the moraine below Lyell Glacier. The glacier was in fair condition, not many suncups, but already softening enough to make our crampons just marginally useful. But after lugging them in, why not use them? With our ice axes, it was a pretty easy ascent, even if I trailed behind superman Alan, gasping for breath as we passed the 12,000' mark. We exited the glacier onto the ridge of the Lyell-McClure saddle, missing the bergschrund, and began climbing up some class 3 ledges. I dropped my camera and watched it bounce down the hill 60' back to the snow field. As we continued climbing, we began to wonder if we were going to have to descend by the same route. It didn't sound appealing as I used a hand jam to leverage myself to the next foothold. Finally the tough sections gave way to a talus field leading to the summit. Alan bounded ahead and eventually I got there to be greeted by a breathtaking view in all directions. It was 12:30 and I felt pretty drained. While we ate lunch, the lead members of the SPS group reached the summit and before we started down, they all made it.

On the descent, we found the easy way down the rock, almost a class 2 use trail. But instead of returning us to the saddle, we reached snow about 60 feet above the bergschrund. [Bergschrund: a glacial crevasse that separates the moving ice from the snowfield at the top of a mountain valley.] The snow had been softening a lot and I sank in several inches when I put my foot on it. To my surprise, as I took my second step, the snow sheared away, revealing hard ice below. I slid down the hill about 15 feet before I could self arrest with my ice axe. Though the bergschrund had not looked to bad earlier, maybe 5 feet wide and 10 feet deep, I didn't want to confirm it by falling in! Exercising much more caution, I got back up and began carefully kicking steps for a long traverse, using my ice axe as a third contact point, until I got back to the saddle where the bergschrund vanished. After seeing my initial slide, Alan had wisely put on his crampons before following. In retrospect, this was the most serious "accident" of my climbing career and one which I hope never to repeat. If the bond between snow and ice had been just a little weaker as I slid, I may not have stopped short of the crevasse.

Having survived that thrill, Alan and I started up McClure. Though Alan was definitely up to it, I questioned my resolve as we headed towards a clump of brown rock midway up the ridge. By then I was feeling better, recovering from getting up Lyell and my little scare on the snow. We continued up the almost knife ridge formation, winding back and forth across the top with much exposure to either side. The rock was loose but otherwise easy class 2-3 ledges, safe as long as you tested all holds. We reached the top about 2:00. Now I found out that my camera wasn't working. It had jammed and the film hadn't rewind. I lost an entire roll exposing it when I opened the case and only got a few good

pictures of our climb from my next roll. Fortunately, if dropping it was the cause, there was no permanent damage to the camera.

The return was uneventful except for me throwing up on the way down. My weak stomach likes to punish me for high altitude climbs. Fortunately, it usually waits until after all the work is done. We reached camp about 6:30. The SPS group had one girl with knee problems and ended up with a long day, getting both peaks like us, but not reaching camp until 8:00. Sunday we hiked out. Again the canyon was beautiful but much more crowded. Many anglers were fishing along the river banks and we hit the rush hour on the trail as we neared the parking lot. We headed for home, tired but ecstatic.

Bob Buckles

Congratulations to Don Fox — Ogul Emblem Award !!!

Since arriving from New England, Don and his wife Chris have spent a lot of time in our mountains. Don met minimum Ogul Emblem Qualifications with 8 Star peaks and 7 other in less than 14 months.



Lembert Dome (Yosemite)

On Friday, October 28, I drove to Yosemite Valley with my wife Lynne. Late October has always been my favorite time to visit the valley. The throngs of crowds are gone, half the campgrounds are closed, and the park is transformed into quiet, peaceful autumn scenery. Yosemite falls even had water in it thanks to a previous snow dusting in the high country.

We spent Friday just doing the typical tourist bit, strolling around the valley admiring the fall colors. We stayed in one of the cabins that night and on Saturday set off for Tuolumne meadows. Lembert Dome is the major rock directly overlooking the meadows. I had driven and hiked past it a dozen times before on the way to more serious climbs and backpacks but had never actually been up it before.

We parked at the trailhead off Tioga Pass road at the intersection of the road that goes to the stables near the Glenn Aulin / Soda Springs trailhead. The trail went up and behind the dome for about 2 miles. When you get up on the gently sloping backside of the dome you just head up "cross-country" across solid granite.

We scrambled up to the high point and discovered that it is actually sort of a double camel - hump shape, with the lower hump being the dome that provides the dramatic drop off to the meadows. We contoured down around toward the lower dome. There was a short drop off that required some brief hands-on-rock moves. Then we were able to stroll to the edge and watch a party of rock climbers working their way up the shear face.

After admiring the vistas, we reversed our route and hiked back down to the vehicle. All in all it was a fairly leisurely hike for some dramatic views. I would recommend this short "peak bag" to anyone stopping at Tuolumne Meadows.

---- **John Besbekos**

Old Man Mountain

Bob Buckles and I set out to climb Old Man Mountain by way of Fordyce Summit. I had climbed Old Man Mountain before, but it was by way of Eagle Lakes, and it was a 'death march.' I wanted to see if there was an easier route, and Bob needed to climb it. The following summarizes how to go about doing Old Man Mountain 'the easy way.'

Getting There: Take the Cisco Grove exit from Interstate 80, roughly 55.5 miles east of the I-80 / California Highway 49 intersection in Auburn, or from the east, 22.5 miles west of the I-80 / California Highway 89 north exit in Truckee. Head to the frontage road on the north side of I-80. Turn west onto the frontage road, and immediately look for a paved road to the right. Turn onto and follow this road for 4.5 miles (the road soon changes from a paved road to a very good, if washboarded, dirt road). At the 4.5 mile mark, a signed junction should indicate Fordyce Lake to the left. Turn left. At this point, the road deteriorates again to a fair to good dirt road. It should be passable to two-wheel drive cars for roughly another mile. At 5.2 miles from the frontage road, another junction should appear. Stay to the right. Very shortly, the terrain levels out. Park here. The road becomes a nasty jeep trail, totally inhospitable to two-wheel drive, low clearance vehicles. It is passable to high clearance, four-wheel drive vehicles as far as Fordyce Lake.

The hike: Proceed downhill following the jeep trail towards Fordyce Lake. Roughly two and a quarter miles from Fordyce Summit and just before reaching the dam at Fordyce Lake, the road forks. At the fork, two buildings should be directly in front of you -- one that looks like a house and one that looks like a shed -- and to your right you should see either lake or a creek with a lot of exposed sandy bank (bath-tub ring). Take the fork to the left.

The jeep trail heads into the trees and then downhill. At the bottom of the hill, you cross Fordyce Creek. In late season, the creek crossing was manageable without wading. In the spring or if water was being spilled from the dam, crossing would be tougher.

After crossing Fordyce Creek, the jeep trail bends sharply to follow the creek. In the process, the trail passes among some old mining equipment. Follow the jeep trail to the next creek crossing.

At the next Fordyce Creek crossing, do not cross the creek. Instead, turn right (west) and plunge into the brush. A trail exists that can be found a few feet into the brush. Although unmaintained, the trail is recognizable by the blazes on trees. This trail skirts the base of Old Man Mountain, staying above and west of Fordyce Creek, thereby avoiding two creek crossings.

Follow the trail around the base of Old Man Mountain until you reach the southeast shoulder of the mountain. Essentially, route finding devolves to finding a route with a low enough angle to climb and with a minimum amount of brush. The southeast shoulder meets both requirements. Head straight up. If you approach from the southeast, you will encounter one false summit before reaching the top.

Once on top, looking in the direction of the dam on Fordyce Lake, but directly downward towards lower levels of the mountain, you will notice trails, particularly in the area of the pipes (left by miners) on the east side of the mountain. A trail exists (sort of, anyway) that heads towards the dam from the summit. It is possible to follow this trail, but it is extremely easy to lose. Following it involves alternatively spotting ducks and blazes, then losing the trail as you scramble / downclimb through broken granite slabs, manzanita, currants, and oak, then finding the trail again marked by ducks and blazes. It is possible to return this way, but it is more adventurous than the outward-bound trip outlined above. It may not be advisable for anyone that does not like wading through brush while scrambling over loose rocks.

Total round-trip statistics: If you climb and downclimb via the southeast face, total statistics are approximately nine miles and 2,600 feet total elevation gain. If you climb up or downclimb via the east face as described above the mileage decreases to about seven miles. Old Man Mountain is a Class 2 peak.

Maps: U.S.G.S. *Cisco Grove, Calif.* 7 1/2 and *Emigrant Gap, Calif.* 15 minute topographic quadrangles.

Alan Cooke

The Perfect Day
(Great Smoky Mountains National Park, October 1994)

There we were, on that bright and almost perfect fall morning, two middle-aged, out of shape men trying to relive a past memory. John Sams and I were about to hike from Newfound Gap to "Charlie's Bunyon" (5672') on the Appalachian Trail. A hike we had done many times, but not in recent years, along with a friend (your own John Besbekos) who could not make it out here this time.

As we were about to leave we came across a lone female hiker who had been on the "AT" for several weeks and needed directions through this particular congested tourist area to Clingman's Dome (highest point in Tennessee, 6642'). After giving her directions and listening to a few interesting stories she told us about her adventures, John and I left for our hike admiring her for doing what we had wanted to, but never have.

At this elevation most of the leaves had fallen, giving us better views on this two and one half hour walk to "Charlie's Bunyon". On the North Carolina side of the trail we could see where the morning fog had settled into the bottom, giving it an eerie look as though we were looking into Loch Ness and waiting for the monster to appear. As we passed the 'Icewater Spring Shelter', we made the usual stop to converse with other hikers and trade camera's for pictures of ourselves, before continuing the short downward stretch of rocky and wet terrain where the spring follows the trail.

When we came within view of "The Bunyon", we stopped to admire the beauty of the vistas we were approaching and the other hikers that had already collected their spot on the protruding rock with the almost 360° views known as "Charlie's Bunyon". After we had arrived and claimed our spot, we settled in for about a half an hour of admiration of the spectacular views. The color of the leaves in the lower elevations were still brilliant and the view toward the Tennessee Valley was fantastic as usual.

After we had our fill, we left for the one hour forty-five minute hike down the trail back to Newfound Gap and civilization. Each step of the way being thankful of the perfect day. -----**Hamlin Andrews**

A Different Type of Outing

In November, Pam (my wife) and I participated in a decidedly different type of outing type those offered by the Sierra Club. The Mycological Society of San Francisco sponsors periodic 'forays' where the members camp and search for mushrooms. The primary emphasis is on edible mushrooms. (one of the ringleaders, Larry Stickney, refuses to bend over for inedible mushrooms!) Pam and I went on their trip to Mendocino. The edibles sought were Boletes and Chanterelles I have picked many Boletes over the years, but I have never picked Chanterelles- I thought I had found some when I stumbled across some bright pink mushrooms of the general funnel shape of the Chanterelle. Larry identified it as a Gomphus Floccosus- The guidebooks supported his identification. Gomphus is a genus of the Chanterelles group, but the Gomphus Floccosus happens to be a species that is not considered good to eat (not inedible, but it makes some people sick). Pam and I found some Suillus Lakei, a less desirable genus of the Bolete group, but we did not find any of the more highly prized Boletus Edulis.

The group plucked roughly 70 different species of mushrooms, most of which were inedible. (I use the term mushrooms rather loosely, referring to all fungi as mushrooms although the commonest fungus [Ganoderma] was among the mushrooms picked and identified about a dozen edible mushrooms were identified, including chanterelles and 'pigs ears,' a different species of Gomphus- The most interesting mushroom was the 'Fly Agaric,' a poisonous mushroom with the scientific name Amanita Muscaria. The Fly Agaric is the red, round mushroom with white knobs featured on one of the Sierra Club's greeting cards. Generally, I learned a lot about fungi and, specifically, a lot about the characteristics that define the various fungal groups I also met a lot of fun guys and fun gals.

Alan Cooke

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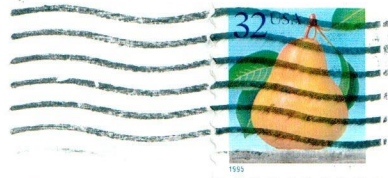
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