Chair’s Corner
by Tina Bowman

Thanks to Sharon Marie Wilcox for sending a link to an article about the sale of Cerro Gordo (see https://therealdeal.com/la/2018/07/13/a-group-of-la-investors-paid-over-1m-for-a-ghost-town-on-friday-the-13th/). We’ll see whether this affects access to Pleasant Point and routes for New York Butte, Keynot, and Inyo. Perhaps we’ll still have access to where we traditionally park for Pleasant, and perhaps the road will even be improved. Or this may turn out to be wishful thinking. So be aware that change might be afoot at the ghost town!

Members, if you’d like a copy of the revised DPS Peaks List sent to you rather than printing it yourself from our web site, please write Laura Newman, merchantiser, for a copy free of charge.

We have the member potlucks and management committee meetings scheduled now for October, December, March, and April on the second Sunday of each month. The meetings begin at 4:30 should you be interested in sitting in on those, and the potlucks get going at 6:00. For a list of the dates and locations, see the Sage outings and events listings of the website at http://desertpeaks.org. If you haven’t come to a potluck, please give them a try and invite non-members. We’ve cut back on the number of in-person meetings so that it should help us in recruiting candidates for the management committee who don’t want to give up climbing on Sundays for a meeting. We will still meet in the months without a potluck but via conference call, Skype, or the like and possibly during the week when people are more likely to be in town anyway.

Sandy Lara did a great job last season of nudging leaders to lead a lot of outings. It was so great to have so many outings to DPS peaks and sometimes others to choose from. Leaders, let’s continue to offer our members a full slate of outings. Without outings, we wouldn’t be an activities section, the oldest one in the Angeles Chapter. Wishing certain peaks would be led, contact a leader about offering outings to them. If you aren’t a leader, please consider becoming one. The next leadership-training seminar is coming up on October 6th with a deadline to sign up of September 22nd. If that won’t fit your schedule, try for the spring seminar, probably in April. Find out more here: http://angeles.sierraclub.org/ltc_leadership_seminar.

Besides outings leaders and volunteers to serve on the management committee, we always are on the lookout for new members. Please encourage people you may know who are working on the list but who aren’t members to join. Finish the list doesn’t count officially if those people aren’t members. If they like the list that much, it would be nice and appropriate to support the section and the Sierra Club by becoming members.

Enjoy the high desert peaks before the snow flies!

Happy trails and safe climbing!

Tina
Desert Peaks Section Leadership for the 2018 - 2019 Season

Elected Positions

Chair
Tina Bowman
283 Argonne Avenue
Long Beach, CA 90803-1743
(562) 438-3809
tina@bowmanchange.com

Vice Chair / Outings / Safety
Sandy Lara
5218 East Parkcrest Street
Long Beach, CA 90808-1855
(562) 522-5323
ssperling1@verizon.net

Secretary
Diana Neff Estrada
138 La Fortuna
Newberry Park, CA 91320-1012
(818) 357-1112
hikinggranny@aol.com

Treasurer
Laura Newman
11755 Entrada Avenue
Porter Ranch, CA 91326-1933
desertpeakstreasurer@gmail.com

Program / Banquet
Jim Fleming
538 Yarrow Drive
Simi Valley, CA 93065-7352
(805) 405-1726
jimf333@att.net

Appointed Positions

Archives
Barbara Reber
PO Box 1911
Newport Beach, CA 92659-0911
(949) 640-7821

Conservation Chair
Dave Perkins
1664 Buttercup Road
Encinitas, CA 92024-2451
(818) 421-4930
david.perkins@csun.edu

Guidebook Editor
Jim Morehouse
3272 River Glorious Lane
Las Vegas, NV 89135-2123
(702) 528-3712
desertpeakssection@gmail.com

Mailer
Elaine Baldwin
3760 Ruthbar Drive
Hawthorne, CA 90250-8473
(310) 675-4120
DWBaldwin@aol.com

Membership Records Chair
Ron Bartell
1556 21st Street
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266
(310) 546-1977
ronbartell@yahoo.com

Merchandising
Laura Newman
11755 Entrada Avenue
Porter Ranch, CA 91326-1933
desertpeakstreasurer@gmail.com

Mountaineering Committee Chair
Sandy Lara
5218 East Parkcrest Street
Long Beach, CA 90808-1855
(562) 522-5323
ssperling1@verizon.net

Mountaineering Committee
Ron Bartell
ronbartell@yahoo.com
Tina Bowman
tina@bowmanchange.com

Mountain Records (Summit Registers)
Mark Butski
6891 Rio Vista
Huntington Beach, CA 92647
(562) 716-9067
hbmark58@yahoo.com

Newsletter Editor (The Desert Sage)
Greg Gerlach
23933 Via Astuto
Murrieta, CA 92562
(626) 484-2897
gregrg1955@verizon.net

Webmaster
Jim Morehouse
3272 River Glorious Lane
Las Vegas, NV 89135-2123
(702) 528-3712
desertpeakssection@gmail.com

The Desert Peaks Section
explores the desert mountain ranges of California and the Southwest, stimulates the interest of Sierra Club membership in climbing these ranges and aids in the conservation and preservation of desert wilderness areas.

Cover Photo Credit...
goes to Tina Bowman. The photo is of Telescope Peak from the alluvial fan located below Pyramid Peak, which was taken on a DPS sponsored trip on March 23, 2018.

The Desert Sage 3 September-October 2018
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**SEPTEMBER 23**

**SUN**

**I: Navigation: Mount Pinos Navigation Noodle:** Navigation Noodle at Los Padres National Forest for either checkoff or practice to satisfy the basic (I/M) level or Advanced (E) level navigation requirements. To participate, send email with contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare to Leader: Robert Myers (310-829-3177, rmyers@ix.netcom.com). Assistant: Ann Pedreschi. Note: Early (at least two weeks prior to the event) sign-up for all navigation checkoffs and practices is recommended. These outings require substantial pre-outing preparation work, including completion of both a comprehensive written exam and a route planning assignment that will be mailed to you prior to the checkoff. See Chapter 6 of the Leaders Reference Book for more information. Send contact information (including mailing address) and your qualifications to the leader as soon as possible.

**OCTOBER 6**

**SAT**

**LTC**

**O: Leadership Training:** Offered just twice a year, the next Sierra Club Angeles Chapter's Leadership Training Seminar is scheduled for Saturday, October 6, 2018. Apply by September 22 to guarantee a spot and learn all about the best leadership practices of our outings program. Full details, including cost and required
application, can be found at the following website link: https://angeles.sierraclub.org/ltc_leadership_seminar. This all-day event covers group management, our ratings system, rules of conduct, safety and much more, from presentations, breakout groups and scenarios. Location: Eaton Canyon Nature Center, Altadena, California. Email LTPSeminarRegistrar@gmail.com for information. Leader: Anne Marie Richardson (amleadership@gmail.com).

♦ OCTOBER 6-7 SAT-SUN WTC, DPS
I: Last Chance Mountain (8,456’): We are off to Last Chance Mountain as your last chance for a graduation trip. The mountain is located in super secluded northern Death Valley National Park just a few miles from the Nevada state line. Total two-day stats: 15 miles and 3,700’ gain. Saturday afternoon we’ll hike in on a dirt road through abandoned mines for 3.5 miles and 1,300’ of gain and make camp; later, we’ll tell ghost stories during happy hour among the ruins. Sunday morning we’ll rise early and hike to the summit, sign the register and return the way we came, then break camp and hike back to the trailhead (11 miles and 2,400’ gain). Participants should be comfortable on 2nd class terrain and be prepared to carry in all their water (6-8 liters). A National Park pass is required to enter the park. This WTC Outing is co-sponsored by DPS. For consideration, please email hiking resume and current conditioning to Leader: Megan Birdsill (mbirdsill@gmail.com). Co-leader: Saveria Tilden.

♦ OCTOBER 6-7 SAT-SUN LTC, WTC, DPS
I: Navigation: Beginning Clinic: Spend the day one-on-one with an instructor, learning/practicing map and compass in our local mountains. Beginners to rusty old-timers welcome and practice is available at all skill levels. Not a checkout, but it will help you prepare. Many expert leaders will attend; many I-rated leaders started here in the past. 4 miles, 500’ gain. Send sase, phones, rideshare info, $25 deposit, refunded at trailhead (Sierra Club) to Leader: Diane Dunbar. (dianedunbar@charter.net or 818-248-0455). Co-Leader: Richard Boardman (310-374-4371).

♦ OCTOBER 10 WED LTC
E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program: Knots and Basic Safety Systems: First of four climbing workshops aimed at developing skills for 3rd, 4th, and 5th class climbing both as a participant or a future Sierra Club M and E leader. This will be an indoor workshop held in the evening reviewing ropes, harnesses, helmets, basic climbing gear, and knots in preparation for later workshops. All participants must have prior roped climbing experience and commit to all four classes. Registration opens at 8:00 a.m. the Monday two weeks after the final previous class outing, and the cost is $75.00. To register, please see http://www.advancedmountaineeringprogram.org. Leaders: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com); Patrick McKusky (pamckusky@att.net); and, Matthew Hengst (matthew.hengst@gmail.com).

♦ OCTOBER 13 SAT LTC
E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program: Belay Skills: Second of four climbing workshops aimed at developing skills for 3rd, 4th, and 5th class climbing both as a participant or a future Sierra Club M and E leader. This workshop will focus on belaying and related principles starting with standard sport climbing all the way up to advanced techniques to move large groups across dangerous terrain. All participants must have prior roped climbing experience and commit to all four classes. Registration opens at 8:00 a.m. the Monday two weeks after the final previous class outing, and the cost is $75.00. To register, please see: http://www.advancedmountaineeringprogram.org. Leaders: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com); Patrick McKusky (pamckusky@att.net); and, Matthew Hengst (matthew.hengst@gmail.com).

♦ OCTOBER 14 SUN DPS
O: DPS Management Committee Meeting and Potluck: Join us at the home of Tom and Tina Bowman in Long Beach for the DPS Management Committee meeting at 4:30 p.m. and potluck at 6:00 p.m. Please bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. RSVP to Tina at tina@bowmanchange.com.

♦ OCTOBER 20 SAT LTC, WTC, HPS
I: Navigation: Beginning Clinic: Spend the day one-on-one with an instructor, learning/practicing map and compass in our local mountains. Beginners to rusty old-timers welcome and practice is available at all skill levels. Not a checkout, but it will help you prepare. Many expert leaders will attend; many I-rated leaders started here in the past. 4 miles, 500’ gain. Send sase, phones, rideshare info, $25 deposit, refunded at trailhead (Sierra Club) to Leader: Diane Dunbar. (dianedunbar@charter.net or 818-248-0455). Co-Leader: Richard Boardman (310-374-4371).
**OCTOBER 20**  SAT  LTC

**E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program: Rappelling:** Third of four climbing workshops aimed at developing skills for 3rd, 4th, and 5th class climbing both as a participant or a future Sierra Club M and E leader. This workshop will focus on rappelling using a variety of techniques with a heavy emphasis on redundancy, safety, and efficiency. All participants must have prior roped climbing experience and commit to all four classes. Registration opens at 8:00 a.m. the Monday two weeks after the final previous class outing, and the cost is $75.00. To register, please see: [http://www.advancedmountainingprogram.org](http://www.advancedmountainingprogram.org). Leaders: Dan Richter ([dan@danrichter.com](mailto:dan@danrichter.com)); Patrick McKusky ([pamckusky@att.net](mailto:pamckusky@att.net)); and, Matthew Hengst ([matthew.hengst@gmail.com](mailto:matthew.hengst@gmail.com)).

**OCTOBER 27-28**  SAT-SUN  LTC

**E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program: Anchors and Real World Application:** Fourth of four climbing workshops aimed at developing skills for 3rd, 4th, and 5th class climbing, both as a participant or a future Sierra Club M and E leader. This weekend completes the series of AMP workshops at Joshua Tree National Park and focuses on building anchors and applying previously learned skills in real world climbing situations and multiple participants. All participants must have prior roped climbing experience and commit to all four classes. Registration opens at 8:00 a.m. the Monday two weeks after the final previous class outing, and the cost is $75.00. To register, please see: [http://www.advancedmountainingprogram.org](http://www.advancedmountainingprogram.org). Leaders: Dan Richter ([dan@danrichter.com](mailto:dan@danrichter.com)); Patrick McKusky ([pamckusky@att.net](mailto:pamckusky@att.net)); and, Matthew Hengst ([matthew.hengst@gmail.com](mailto:matthew.hengst@gmail.com)).

**NOVEMBER 2-4**  FRI-SUN  LTC

**Wilderness First Aid Course at Harwood Lodge:** For 35+ years, the Wilderness First Aid Course (WFAC) has been training students in first aid and medical emergency management when regular response services are unavailable. The three-day, 26-hour course runs from 7:30 am Friday to 5:00 pm Sunday. Fee includes instruction, lodging and meals. Proof of CPR within previous 4 years required to enroll. Fee $295 (full refund until 9/28/18). For sign-up and more information, instructions and application, please go to [www.wildernessfirstaidcourse.org](http://www.wildernessfirstaidcourse.org). Event Organizers: Steve Schuster, [steve.n.wfac2@gmail.com](mailto:steve.n.wfac2@gmail.com), 714-315-1886.

**NOVEMBER 10-11**  SAT-SUN  LTC

**M/E-R: Rock: Sheep Pass/Indian Cove Joshua Tree Rock Checkoff & Practice:** M & E level rock checkoff and practice for LTC leadership candidates wishing to pursue a rating or practice skills. Also open to Advanced Mountaineering Program students wanting to solidify what they learned in the course. Practice Saturday and optionally checkoff Sunday. Restricted to active Sierra Club members with previous rock climbing experience. Climbing helmets and harnesses required. Email climbing resume to leader to apply. Patrick McKusky (626-794-7321 or [pamckusky@att.net](mailto:pamckusky@att.net)). Co-Leader: Daniel Richter (818-970-6737 or [dan@danrichter.com](mailto:dan@danrichter.com)).

**NOVEMBER 17-18**  SAT-SUN  LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS

**I: Navigation: Mission Creek Preserve Navigation Noodle:** Navigation Noodle at Mission Creek Preserve to satisfy the basic (I/M) level navigation requirements. Saturday for practice, skills, refresher, altimeter, homework and campfire. Sunday checkout. To participate, send email with contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare to Leader: Robert Myers (310-829-3177, [rmmyers@ix.netcom.com](mailto:rmmyers@ix.netcom.com)). Assistant: Ann Pedreschi. Note: Early (at least two weeks prior to the event) sign-up for all navigation checkoffs and practices is recommended. These outings require substantial pre-outing preparation work, including completion of both a comprehensive written exam and a route planning assignment that will be mailed to you prior to the checkoff. See Chapter 6 of the Leaders Reference Book for more information. Send contact information (including mailing address) and your qualifications to the leader as soon as possible.
DECEMBER 1-2 SAT-SUN LTC
M/E-R: Alabama Hills Rock Check-off and Practice: M & E level rock checkoff and practice for LTC leadership candidates wishing to pursue a rating or practice skills. Also open to Advanced Mountaineering Program students wanting to solidify what they learned in the course. Practice Saturday and optional checkoff Sunday. Restricted to active Sierra Club members with previous rock climbing experience. Climbing helmets and harnesses required. Email climbing resume to leader to apply. Leader: Patrick McKusky (pamckusky@att.net). Co-leaders: Daniel Richter (dan@danrichter.com) and Matthew Hengst (matthew.hengst@gmail.com).

DECEMBER 9 SUN DPS
O: DPS Management Committee Meeting and Potluck: Join us at the home of Christine and Ron Bartell in Manhattan Beach for the DPS Management Committee meeting at 4:30 p.m. and potluck at 6:00 p.m. Please bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. RSVP to Christine at christinebartell@yahoo.com.

DECEMBER 9 SUN LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS
I: Navigation: Warren Point Navigation Noodle: Navigation Noodle at Joshua Tree National Park for either checkoff or practice to satisfy the basic (I/M) level or Advanced (E) level navigation requirements. To participate, send email with contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare to Leader: Robert Myers (310-829-3177, rmmyers@ix.netcom.com). Assistant: Ann Shields. Note: Early (at least two weeks prior to the event) sign-up for all navigation checkoffs and practices is recommended. These outings require substantial pre-outing preparation work, including completion of both a comprehensive written exam and a route planning assignment that will be mailed to you prior to the checkoff. See Chapter 6 of the Leaders Reference Book for more information. Send contact information (including mailing address) and your qualifications to the leader as soon as possible.

JANUARY 12 SAT LTC
M/R: Navigation Workshop on 3rd Class Terrain: This navigation workshop is limited to individuals participating in the Indian Cove Navigation Noodle and is intended to explore special navigation issues that arise on 3rd class terrain. Class 3 rock travel experience required. Restricted to Sierra Club members. Helmets and medical forms required; group size is limited. Send email, Sierra Club number, class 3 experience, conditioning, contact info to Leader: Robert Myers (rmmyers@ix.netcom.com). Co-Leader: John Kieffer.

JANUARY 12-13 SAT-SUN LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS
I: Navigation: Indian Cove Navigation Noodle: Navigation Noodle in Joshua Tree National Park to satisfy Basic (I/M) level navigation requirements. Saturday is for practice, skills, refresher, altimeter, homework and campfire. Sunday is for checkoff. Send email/sase with contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare, to Leader: Robert Myers (310-829-3177, rmmyers@ix.netcom.com). Assistant: Ann Shields. Note: Early (at least two weeks prior to the event) sign-up for all navigation checkoffs and practices is recommended. These outings require substantial pre-outing preparation work, including completion of both a comprehensive written exam and a route planning assignment that will be mailed to you prior to the checkoff. See Chapter 6 of the Leadership Reference Book for more information. Send contact information (including mailing address) and your qualifications to the leader as soon as possible.

MARCH 10 SUN DPS
O: DPS Management Committee Meeting and Potluck: Join us at the home of Tom Sumner in Sylmar for the DPS Management Committee meeting at 4:30 p.m. and potluck at 6:00 p.m. Please bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. RSVP to Tom at Locornnr@aol.com.

APRIL 14 SUN DPS
O: DPS Management Committee Meeting and Potluck: Join us at the home of Larry and Barbee Tidball in Long Beach for the DPS Management Committee meeting at 4:30 p.m. and potluck at 6:00 p.m. Please bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. RSVP to Larry or Barbee at lbtidball@verizon.net.
♦ APRIL 17 WED LTC
E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program: Knots and Basic Safety Systems: First of four climbing workshops aimed at developing skills for 3rd, 4th, and 5th class climbing both as a participant or a future Sierra Club M and E leader. This will be an indoor workshop held in the evening reviewing ropes, harnesses, helmets, basic climbing gear, and knots in preparation for later workshops. All participants must have prior roped climbing experience and commit to all four classes. Registration opens at 8:00 a.m. the Monday two weeks after the final previous class outing. Please see website for cost. To register, please see http://www.advancedmountaineeringprogram.org. Leaders: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com); Patrick McKusky (pamckusky@att.net); and, Matthew Hengst (matthew.hengst@gmail.com).

♦ APRIL 20 SAT LTC
E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program: Belay Skills: Second of four climbing workshops aimed at developing skills for 3rd, 4th, and 5th class climbing both as a participant or a future Sierra Club M and E leader. This workshop will focus on belaying and related principles starting with standard sport climbing all the way up to advanced techniques to move large groups across dangerous terrain. All participants must have prior roped climbing experience and commit to all four classes. Registration opens at 8:00 a.m. the Monday two weeks after the final previous class outing. Please see website for cost. To register, please see: http://www.advancedmountaineeringprogram.org. Leaders: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com); Patrick McKusky (pamckusky@att.net); and, Matthew Hengst (matthew.hengst@gmail.com).

♦ APRIL 27 SAT LTC
E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program: Rappelling: Third of four climbing workshops aimed at developing skills for 3rd, 4th, and 5th class climbing both as a participant or a future Sierra Club M and E leader. This workshop will focus on rappelling using a variety of techniques with a heavy emphasis on redundancy, safety, and efficiency. All participants must have prior roped climbing experience and commit to all four classes. Registration opens at 8:00 a.m. the Monday two weeks after the final previous class outing. Please see website for cost. To register, please see: http://www.advancedmountaineeringprogram.org. Leaders: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com); Patrick McKusky (pamckusky@att.net); and, Matthew Hengst (matthew.hengst@gmail.com).

♦ MAY 4-5 SAT-SUN LTC
E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program: Anchors and Real World Application: Fourth of four climbing workshops aimed at developing skills for 3rd, 4th, and 5th class climbing, both as a participant or a future Sierra Club M and E leader. This weekend completes the series of AMP workshops at Joshua Tree National Park and focuses on building anchors and applying previously learned skills in real world climbing situations and multiple participants. All participants must have prior roped climbing experience and commit to all four classes. Registration opens at 8:00 a.m. the Monday two weeks after the final previous class outing. Please see website for cost. To register, please see: http://www.advancedmountaineeringprogram.org. Leaders: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com); Patrick McKusky (pamckusky@att.net); and, Matthew Hengst (matthew.hengst@gmail.com).

♦ OCTOBER 9 WED LTC
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THE REVISED DPS LIST IS NOW AVAILABLE!

The 30th edition of the DPS Peak list is now available. Please visit the DPS website at http://desertpeaks.org/ to download a copy. You can also request that a copy be mailed to you, for free, by contacting the DPS Merchandiser, Laura Newman, at desertpeakstreasurer@gmail.com.

In order to participate in one of the Sierra Club's outings, you will need to sign a liability waiver. If you would like to read a copy of the waiver prior to the outing, please see http://sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms or call 415-977-5528.

In the interest of facilitating the logistics of some outings, it is customary that participants make carpooling arrangements. The Sierra Club does not have insurance for carpooling arrangements and assumes no liability for them. Carpooling, ride sharing or anything similar is strictly a private arrangement among the participants. In addition, participants assume the risks associated with this travel. CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.

OCTOBER 12 SAT  LTC
E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program: Belay Skills: Second of four climbing workshops aimed at developing skills for 3rd, 4th, and 5th class climbing both as a participant or a future Sierra Club M and E leader. This workshop will focus on belaying and related principles starting with standard sport climbing all the way up to advanced techniques to move large groups across dangerous terrain. All participants must have prior roped climbing experience and commit to all four classes. Registration opens at 8:00 a.m. the Monday two weeks after the final previous class outing. Please see website for cost. To register, please see: http://www.advancedmountainingprogram.org. Leaders: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com); Patrick McKusky (pamckusky@att.net); and, Matthew Hengst (matthew.hengst@gmail.com).

OCTOBER 19 SAT  LTC
E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program: Rappelling: Third of four climbing workshops aimed at developing skills for 3rd, 4th, and 5th class climbing both as a participant or a future Sierra Club M and E leader. This workshop will focus on rappelling using a variety of techniques with a heavy emphasis on redundancy, safety, and efficiency. All participants must have prior roped climbing experience and commit to all four classes. Registration opens at 8:00 a.m. the Monday two weeks after the final previous class outing. Please see website for cost. To register, please see: http://www.advancedmountainingprogram.org. Leaders: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com); Patrick McKusky (pamckusky@att.net); and, Matthew Hengst (matthew.hengst@gmail.com).

OCTOBER 26-27 SAT-SUN  LTC
E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program: Anchors and Real World Application: Fourth of four climbing workshops aimed at developing skills for 3rd, 4th, and 5th class climbing, both as a participant or a future Sierra Club M and E leader. This weekend completes the series of AMP workshops at Joshua Tree National Park and focuses on building anchors and applying previously learned skills in real world climbing situations and multiple participants. All participants must have prior roped climbing experience and commit to all four classes. Registration opens at 8:00 a.m. the Monday two weeks after the final previous class outing. Please see website for cost. To register, please see: http://www.advancedmountainingprogram.org. Leaders: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com); Patrick McKusky (pamckusky@att.net); and, Matthew Hengst (matthew.hengst@gmail.com).
Treasurer's Report
By Laura Newman
DPS Account Summary from January 1, 2018 to July 31, 2018

INCOME
Banquet Silent Auction $579.00
Banquet Ticket Sales $1,685.00
Donations $130.00
Membership/Subscriptions $1,545.00
Merchandise $90.00
Outings Income $120.00

TOTAL INCOME $4,149.00

EXPENSES
Banquet Expenses $2,433.86
Donation to Charity $120.00
Merchandise Expenses $5.60
Sage Expenses $602.92
Sales Tax $15.08
Web Page Expenses $191.76

TOTAL EXPENSES $3,369.22

PAY PAL BALANCE $9.41

CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE $3,543.90

Conservation Chair

Conservation Chair Dave Perkins is on vacation, and his conservation column will return in the next issue of The Desert Sage.

DPS Membership Report
By Ron Bartell

Membership Summary

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Activity Report

New Member
Catherine Rossbach
Charleston Pk

Sustaining Renewals
Gary Murta 3 years
Anne K Rolls 1 year

Renewals
Pat Arredondo 1 year
Michael Dillenback 1 year
Diana Neff & George Estrada 1 year
Burton A Falk 1 year
Andy Knapp 1 year
Karen Leonard 1 year
Edward Stork 1 year

Donations
$100 from Andy Knapp

Welcome to new member Catherine Rossbach! Catherine took up peak-bagging as an alternative to running long distances, and as a way of returning to childhood hikes back east. She got pretty obsessive about the HPS list, finishing in January 2018 on Allen Peak. Catherine looks forward to new challenges the DPS peaks will present.

The Desert Sage 10 September-October 2018
Malpais Mesa (7,731’)
By Debbie Bulger
April 20, 2018

Photo Credits: Richard Stover and Debbie Bulger

This lovely hike starts from the inactive Santa Rosa Mine where Richard Stover and I camped the night before amid snow flurries and high winds. Hey, it’s April in the desert, anything can happen. The climb is straightforward: a mostly evident trail goes up from the mine area to the mesa rim, starting at the BLM sign, then on an old mine road to a use trail leading up to a notch on the rim. Once on the mesa itself, we walked a mile and a half across easy terrain to the summit at the northernmost bump.

As one tops the mesa rim, the view of the Sierra explodes with grandeur.

Spread out across the horizon are snow-capped mountains.

As usual we found two balloons on the relatively flat mesa top (actually two partial balloons) to add to the one we had found on the desert road the day before.

We were about a week too early for a wildflower display although there were basal rosettes of Golden Evening Primrose peppering the slopes and a few Desert paintbrush.

Joshua trees dotted the flats as we proceeded to the summit. Below to the west was mostly dry Owens Lake with the Sierra behind. Chartreuse and orange lichens added foreground color to the view.

At the summit we removed (and subsequently disposed of properly) seven lead-acid batteries from a long-retired installation. There was probably an eighth battery, but we couldn’t find it. The three benchmarks were dated 1947.
Once back on the mine road we spotted an artfully colored Western side-blotched lizard and strange lilac-colored growths on the Rubber Rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*). Several plants had lots of these half-inch diameter spiked balls on their branches. I later looked them up and discovered they were galls caused by fruit flies.

That night we had an adventure with another desert denizen. Snuggled in our bed (in the back of our truck) that night, Richard quickly fell asleep. I lightly dozed off, then awoke to “critter noises.” Naturally I thought they came from outside. I sat up and put my glasses on. The quarter moon lit up part of the interior of our camper shell. Lickety-split a mouse raced across my suitcase! INSIDE THE TRUCK BED. Inside the camper shell. “Richard,” I shouted, “there’s a mouse in here!” Richard woke, put his boots on and got out of the truck. I stayed inside. Bit by bit I handed him items from the interior: our suitcases, 3-gallon water containers, a plastic tub containing tools and jumper cables. Gingerly I turned up the edges of the quilt on which our sleeping bags rested. No mouse yet. I rolled up the bedding, and we carried it to the truck cab. Finally all that was left were the Masonite pieces over the insulating foam board. There were many gaps where a mouse could hide. Out came the Masonite in two pieces. By now Richard was in the truck, and I was outside. He pulled out one piece of foam. Then set another on end. Cowering in the corner was a small mouse. Richard used a small piece of foam to guide the unwanted visitor toward the tailgate. Then it was gone. How it got in remains a mystery. At last I can cross “becoming a Mouseketeer” off my bucket list.

Kelley Laxamana and I left Southern Cal early Saturday, driving up Interstate 15 and U.S. Highway 95 past Las Vegas and then following the sign to the Desert National Wildlife Refuge and its visitor center. From there, we traveled Alamo Road about 15 miles and then Hidden Forest Road about 3 miles to the Hidden Forest trailhead, which were both graded dirt that probably require a vehicle with some ground clearance. From the end of the road, we left the truck at 11:30 a.m. with our backpacks loaded with our overnight gear and made our way up Deadman Canyon following a faded, old road with an occasional duct to the old Game Warden’s cabin, arriving about 2:30 p.m.; the backpack in is about 5 miles with 2,000’ gain. The trail starts off in the desert with Joshua trees and transitions to a very nice pine forest at the 7,800’ elevation of the cabin. Also, the area around the cabin has many nice campsites with picnic tables and even piped in spring fed water, all shaded under very large pine trees; however, the spring was flowing at the rate of about one liter per minute and may even dry up in some years. Kelley did not want to climb the peak for a second time, so she set up camp while I made the 2.5 mile trek with 2,100’ of gain to the peak. I took the DPS standard route up the ridge to the summit, which has a decent use trail most of the way. After signing the summit register, I returned to our campsite to find dinner waiting for me. My round trip time to the summit and back was 4 hours, which included about ½ hour on top looking at the summit register. The next morning, Kelley and I left camp at 7:40 a.m., arrived at the truck at 9:40 a.m., and were back home at 4:30 p.m. We managed to avoid some, but not all, of the Sunday Las Vegas traffic on I-15 heading back to Southern Cal.

Trip stats: 15 miles round trip and 4,100’ of elevation gain.
A Nevada Exploration to Three P2K Peaks
By Sharon Marie Wilcox
July 6-9, 2018

The goal of this Sierra Club trip was 3 Nevada peaks on the Nevada P2K list: Mount Callaghan, Roberts Creek Mountain, and Pilot Peak.

Our trip left Reno early with plans to hike Mount Callaghan (10,187’) that afternoon. In Austin we topped off gas and then drove north on highway 305 to Silver Creek Road. We parked a couple of miles shy of the summit for a short hike after the long drive. With plans to camp near our next peak, we didn’t linger on Callaghan’s summit.

The second peak, Roberts Creek Mountain (10,134’) sits in the Roberts Mountain Wilderness Study Area located in central Nevada. This peak in addition to its P2K listing is also on the Great Basin Peaks list.

Our hike began at the wilderness boundary and followed a steep road through an abundance of wildflowers. A pond provided a swimming stop for my pup. I kept a close watch noting the shoreline display of fresh deer and mountain lion tracks. I didn’t want the lion to catch a chocolate lab dinner. An amazing variety of butterfly species circled around during our leisurely summit break.

In search of a camping spot prior to Pilot Peak, we drove down Nevada State Route 882 (Old Belmont Road) through Monitor Valley. At the intersection with Wallace Canyon we paused to sign the Geographic Center of Nevada register. Looks like the location sign was stolen again! A green box at the intersection contains the register.

In the morning we headed up Telephone Canyon to Pilot Peak (9,182’) the highest peak in the Pilot Range. The springs in the lower canyon provided a home to numerous chukar that scurried across the road ahead of us.

Skirting around the radio facility we enjoyed another 360-degree view, though on all three summits this trip, our views were obscured by distant brown haze from various wildfires.

Another great trip exploring Great Basin peaks!
DESERT BOOKS
By Burton Falk

PALM SPRINGS: The Landscape, The History, The Lore (2001), Mary Jo Churchwell

PALM SPRINGS: First Hundred Years (1987), Mayor Frank M. Bogert

DESSERT BOOKS
ON PALM SPRINGS

PALM SPRINGS, The Landscape, The History, The Lore (2001), Mary Jo Churchwell

In his 2007 anthology of Palm Springs-inspired literature, The Grumbling Gods, Peter Wild describes Mary Jo Churchwell’s Palm Springs: The Landscapes, the History, the Lore thusly: “(O)ne will find no more heartfelt and sometimes heart-wrenching yet authoritative probing of the town’s charms and conflicts... It was written by (a woman), who, in the process of growing up there, lived deeply and sensitively with her shifting surroundings.”

After reading the volume, however, I was fascinated as much by Churchwell as I was about the history of Palm Springs. The first biographical information I could find on the author was that offered on the Amazon Books webpage, i.e., “In 1980, Mary Jo Churchwell gave up her unromantic career at a large bank in Southern California to pursue adventure among the ragged peaks of central Idaho. During the next ten years, she and her husband scratched out a living on a patch of mountainside near Challis, Idaho, in a log cabin they built by hand—privy, pitcher pump, slop bucket. Following the seasons, they subsisted entirely on undomesticated meat ranging from porcupines to elk--Mary Jo pounded out the details on a vintage manual typewriter, a daring tale entitled The Cabin on Sawmill Creek. Later, she published, Palm Springs: the History, the Landscape, the Lore, a personal narrative that amounted to a homecoming, a re-exploration of her roots and origins.”

Still lacking what I considered to be sufficient information, I discovered Churchwell’s old email address which fortunately still worked. In her reply to my inquiries, the author, now in her mid-seventies, wrote, “When I was four, my dad moved us from Santa Barbara to Palm Springs to start his practice. I attended Cahuilla Elementary School, College of the Desert, UCR and UCLA...These days I spend my time here in Borrego Springs working as a volunteer at the (Anza-Borrego) State Park’s visitor center, as well as in the Colorado District Headquarters botany lab. However, most of my work involves collecting plant specimens for The San Diego County Natural History Museum’s herbarium.”

No longer married after her stint in Idaho, Churchwell moved to Palm Springs to live with her mother and write a history of her hometown. Assembling material from the nearby public library, she began her history of the town by poring over the works of area pioneers such as Francisco Patencio, ceremonial leader of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians—the original inhabitants of Palm Springs—who, in an oral history collected in 1943, remembered: “We used the leaves of the palm trees to thatch our roofs and sides of our houses. The floors of the houses were covered with soft skins and fine woven blankets. At night, before it was time for the children to go to bed, some mother would tell a story. Then children from other houses would come to listen. They would be around on the rugs and skins, and some would go to sleep before the story was started...The (mothers) would tell them stories about the sun and the moon and the stars, the air, the wind, the water, the sky, the world, and the people, and the animals and fish upon it.” She also read George Wharton James, who in his The Wonders of the Colorado Desert (1906), describing an immersion in the town’s hot springs, wrote: “Immediately, the bather reaches this quicksand he sinks with a swift motion that makes the heart leap unless he is prepared. In a moment the warm liquid sand closes around the body and it feels as if he were being sucked in and down by the clinging tentacles of
some living creature...Then, suddenly, with a convulsive effort, but gentle as if one were being lifted up in his mother’s arms, the water of the shaft gives an upward ‘bubble’ upon which the bather is lifted completely out and the pool becomes placid.” In his 1920 volume, *Our Araby*, J. Smeaton Chase noted: “The village itself is a place of two or three score of unpretentious cottages scattered along half a dozen palm and pepper-shaded streets. We don’t run much to lawns and formal gardens; we live in the desert because we like it, hence we don’t care to shut ourselves away in little citified enclosures.”

Churchwell notes that during the Great Depression the local paper, *The Desert Sun*, seemed more interested in a local bird which won first prize in a national singing contest, and “the doings of the churches, (and) the endless social rounds of parties,” than the “cold hard images of bank failures, business failures, bread lines, and suicides...” World War II is given scant attention as well. “Khaki jeeps and uniforms filled the streets—a night on the town for the boys stationed at Camp Young, fifty miles east of Palm Springs. There on a windswept landscape, at one desert and deserted, the echo of artillery duels could be heard in the surrounding Chuckwalla Mountains as everything from tanks to sunglasses was tested in preparation for the North Africa campaign.”

Four-year-old Mary Jo arrived in Palm Springs in March 1946, when her father, Hugh E. Stephens, M.D., who was suffering from emphysema, moved his family from Santa Barbara to the desert.

Noting that as a child she had never paid much attention to the movie stars whose fame and renowned homes had put Palm Springs on the map—“Think of the New Yorker who has never taken the ferry out to the Statue of Liberty”—Churchwell, in preparation for her volume, took a “Homes of the Stars” bus tour and subsequently commented on several of Hollywood’s rich and famous, including Dean Martin, Frank Sinatra, Dinah Shore, and Bob Hope.

Also recalled are spring breaks during the late sixties and seventies when Palm Springs became crowded with party-loving young people. “How they cruised Palm Canyon Drive bumper-to-bumper, hooting, whistling, burning rubber in their muscle cars, popping wheelies in their Harleys, their babes in thong bikinis hanging on to their backs.”

Regarding the Aqua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, who for years lived in squalor on the non-contiguous sections of mostly useless land of their reservation, Churchwell says little. She does note that the man who represented the band as their federally-appointed agent, Judge John Guthrie McCallum—not an actual judge—was accused of taking improper title to tribally-owned land, and that, furthermore, he and a local hotel owner, Dr. Welwood Murray—who himself was not a real doctor—diverted water from the tribe’s hot spring for the pleasure of guests from Dr. Welwood’s nearby hotel. The same pseudo-titled men were also sued for disinterring bodies from the Aqua Caliente’s ancestral burial grounds. She ends this section by noting that although both McCallum and Murray have been commemorated with local place names—the McCallum Theater, McCallum Oasis, Murray Canyon, Murray Hill, “It has long been a matter of local discussion on whether Murray and McCullum were visionary pioneers or rascally scoundrels.”

The best part of Churchwell’s ode to Palm Springs comes as she hikes the mountains and canyons surrounding the resort town. First exploring Palm Canyon—“a far stretch of backcountry, of cactus, mesas, surprise oases, and little creeks that somehow manage a few waterfalls before meandering out through the sand”—Churchwell then visits two of its smaller but lovely side canyons—Murray and Andreas, the latter of which—“a creepered world of...
endless shade, a fantasy of palms, cottonwoods, sycamores, and birches”—was named for an Indian who lived there and made his living by growing grapes, then distilling their fermented juice into “something that might have come straight out of the Kentucky hills.”

The next-to-last adventure in Churchwell’s personalized history of Palm Springs is a week-long backpack trip on Mt. San Jacinto, via the tram, during which she climbed the peak. Resting on its 10,804’ summit late one afternoon, she mused, “Half an hour passes in blissful solitude; apparently I am rooted to my rock.” Later, stumbling into her tent, she notes, “Exhausted with the relief of having made it, I settle down to a cold dinner that is undeniably perfect.”

During her last adventure, a backpack into the Skunk Cabbage Meadow area of the San Jacintos, Churchwell searched for and found the ruins of Law’s Camp—a cabin built by the freelance journalist, George Law in 1916—near the confluence of Willow Creek and Tahquitz Creek. Camping nearby, she reflected that “the smell of the pines was the same (as it been for Laws a hundred years ago). The spring where I knelt and plunged my head was George Law’s, and I came away from it all fresh and glowing with the cold as he had. The sun I watched set, round and red, and the moon I watched rise, yellow and bright in the green twilight, were his as well. I settled there for three days and pretended nothing had changed.”

In 2004, having become undone by the growth of her hometown, Churchwell moved to Borrego Springs, “a putting-green paradise in the desert of San Diego County (post office, public library, mom-and-pop grocery store) ...” In 2007, Churchwell published, Arizona: No Ordinary Journey, which is described as, “partly a nature book, partly a Southwestern history, and, if the reader is in the right frame of mind, partly a comedy of errors. It is also a personal narrative—seven long months of living in a Saturn sedan; making and breaking camp; hiking official and unofficial trails; fly-fishing for Apache trout; and wandering around Arizona’s little flyspeck towns, recording in loving and lingering detail the true spirit of the state.”

Oh, yeah! Another Desert Books review called for.

**PALM SPRINGS: First Hundred Years (1987), Mayor Frank M. Bogert**

Frank M. Bogert (1910 – 2009) was an actor, professional rodeo announcer, author, and a politician best known as a longtime mayor of Palm Springs. He arrived in the small town in 1927, where he became the manager of the Palm Springs Racquet Club, and twelve years later was hired as the city’s first chamber of commerce manager.

First elected to the Palm Springs City Council in 1958, the civic-minded Bogert eventually served as mayor for a total of twelve years. In 1987, he published Palm Springs: First Hundred Years, a 338-page coffee-table-style book, which, replete with over 300 historical photographs, provides an excellent description of the ups and downs of Palm Springs’ first century.

Beginning as it should with a chapter on the area’s first residents, the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, Palm Springs: First Hundred Years supplies one of the best histories of the band that I’ve come across. Indeed, Bogert’s description of those native Americans is worth repeating verbatim, i.e., “The Agua Caliente Band is one of ten or more independent clans of the Cahuilla tribe from the Shoshonean division of the Uto-Aztecan language family. Their traditional communities were located in the Palm, Andreas, Murray, Tahquitz, and Chino Canyons. Closely allied with the Cahuilla clans of Indian Wells, and San Gorgonio Pass areas, the Agua Calientes also maintained social, religious, and economic relationships with Indians from Los Angeles to the Colorado Rivers.”

The head man of the band was the Net, who in 1925 was Alejo Patencio. “He knew all the clan songs and legendary history as well as the landmarks of the clan’s territory and food-gathering areas.” The Net ruled his domain from the round house, or Kishumnawut, located in Section 14, a square mile reservation, site of the famous hot springs, where, circa 1900, several Agua Calientes, who numbered about 76 at the time, lived in shacks across the street
from the small village.

The band’s history was permanently changed in 1876 when the Southern Pacific extended their track east through the San Gorgonio Pass and beyond. At that time, for 10 miles on either side of the track, the mostly useless desert land was divided by the government into a checkerboard pattern, the railroad receiving the odd-numbered sections while the even-numbered sections remained government property. Many of the even-numbered, non-contiguous sections were designated as reservation for the nearby clans, including Section 14, which, ceded to the Agua Caliente Band, extended from current-day Indian Canyon east to Sunrise Way and from Ramon Road north to Alejo Road.

Bogert discusses the crucial role that “Judge” John McCullum (1826-1897) played in the development of the village then called Palm Valley, by his purchase of 6,000 acres from the Southern Pacific, surveying the 320 acres which now constitute most of downtown Palm Springs, co-founding a water company which built 19 miles of rock-lined cement ditches to bring water from Snow Creek, Whitewater River, and Chino and Tahquitz Canyons into the area, and persuading “Dr.” Wellwood Murray to build the area’s first hotel adjoining the hot spring.

Development was slow but steady. “Artists, writers, and photographers, most of whom had come to the desert for their health, soon spread word of its beauty and beneficial climate.” John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club, and his daughters, Wanda and Helen, visited the area in 1905, while J. Smeaton Chase, who married a local woman, Isabel White, published books regarding the area, California Desert Trails in 1919, and Our Araby, in 1920.

Considering that Bogert became one of the town’s most ambitious promoters, it’s no surprise that the quantity of material included in his book increases substantially upon his arrival in the area. In fact, the last four chapters, “Creating a World-Famed Resort, Fifty Golden Years, A Desert Playground, and The Valley Today,” provide a cornucopia of photographs—many including the photogenic Bogert himself—and interesting information on the growth of the community, including its influx by Hollywood folks, the building of the Mt. San Jacinto tram, and visits by several sitting U. S. Presidents, beginning with Dwight Eisenhower and extending through Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford.

Outings Chair

By Sandy Lara

Hello Fellow Climbers!

I hope you had a great summer climbing our high peaks. My husband, Peter, and I climbed Patterson, Boundary, Montgomery, Ruby Dome, and Wheeler in July. One of the things I like about a list is that it takes you places you might never have gone otherwise. Did you know there are white lupine on the way to Patterson? That there is a super fun traverse between Boundary and Montgomery? That the wildflowers on the way to Ruby Dome are incredibly varied and beautiful? That 13K’ Wheeler is an interesting “island in the desert” in Great Basin National Park?

Now we are getting into transitional weather months. The gold standard is to check the weather forecasts regularly, not just for the expected weather during a trip, but to note the night-time lows and be prepared for a bivouac in case of emergency. It’s time to add more warm clothing (warm hat, buff, gloves, extra socks, insulating layers, etc.) and gear (such as hand-warmers) to your pack.

Leaders, some of our best hiking weather will be coming soon. Please plan your trips and enter on Campfire Events or submit to me (ssperling1@verizon.net) for publication. More trips means more fun, and earlier publication usually means more participation--by very happy participants!

Happy Trails!
## Desert Peaks Section Merchandise

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For T-shirt orders, add $3.50 for 1 shirt and $4.00 for 2 or more shirts per order for shipping and handling  

$3.50 / $4.00

### Mail order form and payment to:

Please make check payable to the Desert Peaks Section. 
Questions: desertpeakstreasurer@gmail.com

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*Sorry, sold out of medium T-shirts*
Anyone can subscribe to the Sage, for $10/year, or $20/year for a Sustaining subscription. New subscriptions are free for the first calendar year, and subscribers will receive the electronic Sage. We suggest that if you are currently receiving a hardcopy Sage you subscribe at the Sustaining level. Only one (1) subscription is required per household. To become a member of DPS (eligible to vote in our elections), you must be a Sierra Club member, climb 6 of the 96 peaks on the DPS peaks list, and subscribe to the Sage. Send subscription/membership applications, renewals, and address changes to the Membership Records Chair: Ron Bartell, 1556 21st St, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266; ronbartell@yahoo.com. Include your name, address, and email address; and for renewals, a check payable to DPS; and to apply for membership, include your Sierra Club member number and the 6 peaks you’ve climbed (with the dates if possible).

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Hm Phone: Wk Phone:
Fax: eMail:
SC #: Leader Status: (Circle as appropriate): O I M E
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Make Check Payable to Desert Peaks Section
Send to:
Ron Bartell, DPS Membership Chair
1556 21st Street
Manhattan Beach, CA, 90266
(310) 546-1977 (home)
ronbartell@yahoo.com

If you haven’t already done so, please consider renewing your DPS subscription or membership, which cost $10.00 per year; also, multiple year subscriptions or memberships are encouraged. Please note that the DPS offers a Sustaining membership or subscription dues option, which costs $20.00 per year.

Ron Bartell
1556 21st Street,
Manhattan Beach, CA, 90266

For your convenience, you may use the Subscription/Membership form at the bottom of this page.
DESER T PEAKS SECTION

DPS NEWSLETTER - The Desert Sage is published six times a year by the Desert Peaks Section of the Angeles Chapter of the Sierra Club.

SUBSCRIPTION/MEMBERSHIP: Anyone can subscribe to the Sage, for $10/year, or $20/year for a Sustaining subscription. New subscriptions are free for the first calendar year, and subscribers will receive the electronic Sage. We suggest that if you are currently receiving a hardcopy Sage you subscribe at the Sustaining level. Only one (1) subscription is required per household. To become a member of DPS (eligible to vote in our elections), you must be a Sierra Club member, climb 6 of the 95 peaks on the DPS peaks list, and subscribe to the Sage. Send subscription/membership applications, renewals, and address changes to the Membership Records Chair: Ron Bartell, 1556 21st St, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266; ronbartell@yahoo.com. Include your name, address, and email address; and for renewals, a check payable to DPS; and to apply for membership, include your Sierra Club member number and the 6 peaks you’ve climbed (with the dates if possible).

EMBLEM AND LIST COMPLETION STATUS: Emblem status is awarded to DPS members who have been a member for one year, who have climbed 15 peaks on the DPS Peak list, including five of the seven emblem peaks, and who send a list of peaks and dates climbed to Membership Records Chair Ron Bartell, 1556 21st Street, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266, or ronbartell@yahoo.com. Recognition is also given for completion of the DPS list by notifying Ron of peaks and dates climbed. Please see the DPS website for additional Emblem recognition categories.

DPS MERCHANDISE: DPS T-shirts, the DPS Road and Peak Guide, the DPS Peak List, Emblem, Explorer and List Finish pins, and other merchandise is available for purchase from the DPS Merchandiser (see the Merchandise page in this issue of the Sage for more information). Please note that the DPS Peak List is also available as a free download on the DPS Website. In addition, individual peak guides may be downloaded from the DPS website for free by DPS members and subscribers; please contact Ron Bartell at ronbartell@yahoo.com for further information.

SAGE SUBMISSIONS: The Sage editor welcomes all articles, trip reports and photographs pertaining to outdoor activities of interest to DPS members. Trip participants are encouraged to submit a trip report if the participant knows that the trip leaders are not going to submit a trip write-up. The editor may modify submittals in an attempt to increase clarity, decrease length, or correct typos, but hopefully will not modify meaning. Please note that digital documents and photographs are required for submissions to the Sage. Trip reports should include trip dates and identify trip participants and photos should indicate when and where the photo was taken, what it is of, who is in it, and who took it. Please email Sage submissions to the editor no later than the second Sunday of even numbered months; the next submission deadline for the Sage is October 14, 2018.

ADVERTISEMENTS: You can advertise private trips that are of interest to DPS members in the Sage for free. Other announcements/ads are $1 per line or $25 for a half-page space.

EDITOR: Greg Gerlach, 23933 Via Astuto, Murrieta, CA 92562, email: gregg1955@verizon.net.