CHAIR'S CORNER
by Mary McMannes

We're all returned from our summer climbs, hi-jinks, recoveries from surgeries, and more. It was good to see everyone in high spirits and looking well and unusually attractive (from the summer glow of high altitudes) at the Oktoberfest party hosted so graciously by Elaine and Dave Baldwin. I saw several new faces, and all enjoyed a faire that could never be rivaled by the best German restaurant outside of Hamburg or Munich. Outings and potluck dates are rolling in, so check the Outings page here in the Sage and later the DPS website. Angeles Schedule will cover dates, March 1st through July 4th, months that are perfect in the high and low deserts.

It's good to get and give reminders about the lure and magnetism of desert peaks in the winter months. If you talk to people during their conditioning hikes on Baldy (or HPS peaks), be sure to give them your email address for more details. I carry calling cards with my email address on them. A couple of fellows wrote me about the December Potosi climb after I casually said to them, "If you like Baldy, then you'd love a desert peak, especially in Death Valley." In the waning days of September, Tina and Tom Bowman (and I), led the easy smooth hike of Muah (Mooah due to so many cows and cowpies) where the participants were mainly the youngsters. On the peak, we gave a verbal advertisement for DPS, and sure enough, many have signed up for upcoming trips. Pamela Rowe, an HPS List Finisher, offered to assist on some desert peaks, too. Many of you talk about new blood; well, this is the formula for gathering people into our flock. Grass roots and personal invitations work better than anything. Some of our best leaders were recruited at their jobs by the hikers seated in the next cubicle.

List Finishers are in the autumn air, and I like getting emails from people telling me they are close to winning the coveted List Finisher pin as the ram looks over his shoulder at those gaining on his heels. Dave and Anne Perkins, Anne Rolls and Bob Hoeven, will lead us up Old Woman and host a grand party in celebration of their achievements in gaining all these worthy and difficult desert peaks. Mark your calendars for November 22. The Perkins have also generously offered their lovely Northridge home for our Dec. 7th holiday party, and Doug Mantle and I will arrange the Potosi (Dec. 5 and 6) weekend so climbers can return for the party. Asher Waxman writes he has recovered from a torn leg ligament (ACL) and is back to his old tricks again! He is close to his own DPS List Finisher with four peaks left: Ruby Dome, Stirling, Virgin, and Spirit. A possibility of a June snow climb of Ruby is in the works. I'd predict another autumn List Finisher weekend on Spirit Mountain led by Asher, Dan Richter, and other favorite DPS leaders. When asked how close he is to finishing, Jack Wickel said he had 11 peaks remaining plus the Mexican peaks. Let's lead some of Jack's peaks and help him get to the Finish Line.

It's the age of the Internet which both hurts and helps traditional climbing organizations. Many people simply hook up with private climbs via the Internet, but we are now all email-close in coordinating our own efforts and offering the beauty and solitude of our beloved desert peaks. Once someone experiences the desert, he or she will be hooked. With the state of the nation and the economy, these getaways are more important than ever. Recently, the Daily News featured a front page travel (Continued on page 8)
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In order to participate on 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. 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.

♦ NOV 1-2 SAT-SUN DPS, WTC

MR: Moapa Peak (6471’), Virgin Peak (8071’): Climb these two desert peaks in Southern Nevada. The trip will be two day climbs with a car camp in the local desert; happy hour on Saturday night. Sat climb Moapa via a class 3 route (6 mi, 3400’ gain). Route entails 3rd class ledges and a knife-edged ridge. Sun climb Virgin, a class 1 peak, via SE ridge (4 mi, 2200’ gain with 4WD vehicles). Class 3 rock experience is required. Restricted to Sierra Club members (medical form will be required). Send detailed resume including class 3 rock experience via SASE or email (preferred) to Leader: Kathy Rich (KathrynARich@gmail.com). Assistant Leader: Alex Amies.

♦ NOV 9 SUN DPS

O: DPS Potluck and Management Meeting: Come to the home of Karen Leonard in LA. Management Committee meeting starts at 4:30 and the potluck starts at 6 pm. Bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to be shared. Please RSVP. (kbleonard@uci.edu).

♦ NOV 15-16 SAT-SUN DPS, LTC, WTC, HPS, SPS

I: Indian Cove Navigation: Navigation noodle at Joshua Tree National Park to satisfy the Basic (I/M) level navigation requirements. Sat for practice, skills refresher, altimeter, homework, campfire. Sunday checkout. To participate, send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare, to Leader: Robert Myers (rmmyers@ix.netcom.com). Assistant Leader: Harry Freimanis.

♦ NOV 22-23 SAT-SUN DPS

I: Old Woman Mountain (5325’): Yes, I know it’s been led recently, but Ann and Dave Perkins are finishing the list on this peak and invite you to join them. We will also be celebrating the list finishes of Anne Rolls and Bob

THE DESERT SAGE 4 November/December 2008
Hoeven, who recently completed the list on other peaks. We will be doing Drive and Climb route A; 3200' gain, 7 miles. 2wd ok. Bring an appetizer or dessert to share for the potluck; main courses will be provided. Email or SASE to Leader: Dave Perkins (david.perkins@csun.edu) or Assistant Leader: Ann Perkins (aperkins@csun.edu).

♦ NOV 23  
DPS, LTC, SPS, WTC
M/E: Mt. Rubidoux Rock Workshop/Checkpoint: This and E rock must be pre-arranged. It is a restricted trip; to participate you must be a member of the Sierra Club and have suitable rock climbing experience. Helmet, basic climbing gear, and completed medical form required. Send or e-mail climbing resume, Sierra Club Number, address and phone number to Leader: Tina Bowman (tina@bowmandesigngroup.com). Co-Leaders: Doug Mantle and Tom Bowman. Intermediate and advanced workshop is based on the rock requirements for M and E leadership. Checkoffs for M.

♦ DEC 6  
SAT  
DPS, WTC
I: Potosi Mtn (8512'): Come and climb Clark Gable's most unfavorable peak near Vegas. Prospective DPSers, WTC students, oldtime DPSers welcomed. You can't catch Doug, but you can keep up with Mary! Saturday, climb 5 miles, 2800' gain. Return home for DPS holiday party on Sunday or maybe Doug needs one more peak! Send e-mail, sase, telephone number, recent conditioning and rideshare information to Leader: Doug Mantle or Assistant Leader: Mary McMannes (marymuir@earthlink.net).

♦ DEC 6  
SAT  
DPS, LTC, SPS, WTC
M/E: Stoney Point Rock Workshop/Checkpoint: This intermediate and advanced workshop is based on the rock requirements for M and E leadership. Checkoffs for M and E rock must be pre-arranged. It is a restricted trip; to participate you must be a member of the Sierra Club and have suitable rock climbing experience. Helmet and climbing gear required. E-mail or send climbing resume, completed medical form (2 copies - include Sierra Club membership number on form), address and phone number to Leader: Ron Hudson (rfhudson@att.net). Co-Leaders: Dan Richter, Alex Amies and Pat McKusky.

♦ DEC 6  
SAT  
LTC, WTC, HPS
O: GPS Class: Intro to Global Positioning System at Eaton Cyn Nature Center, Pasadena. Apply early, no registration at door, start 9 am indoors. Focus on Garmin models includes features, selection, operation, use with maps (provided), hands-on field practice in afternoon. We have loaner GPS. Send email/sase, phones, GPS experience & model, $20 (LTC-no refund later than 5 days prior) to Leader: Harry Freimanis (hfreimanis@ca.rr.com). Assistant: Robert Myers.

♦ DEC 7  
SUN  
DPS
O: DPS Holiday Potluck and Management Meeting: Come to the home of Dave and Ann Perkins in Northridge. Management Committee meeting starts at 4:30 and the potluck starts at 6 pm. Bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to be shared. Please RSVP. (aperkins@csun.edu)

♦ DEC 13  
SAT  
LTC, WTC, HPS
I: Mt Lowe (5603') Beginning Navigation Clinic: 4 mi, 500' gain. Spend the day one-on-one with an instructor, learning/practicing map and compass. Beginners to rusty old-timers welcome. Not a checkout. Many expert leaders will attend; many I-rated leaders started here in the past. $25 deposit, refunded at trailhead. Send sase, phones, deposit (Sierra Club) to Leader: Diane Dunbar (818-248-0455). Co-Leader: Richard Boardman.

♦ DEC 14  
SUN  
DPS, WTC, SPS, HPS
I: Warren Pt Navigation: Navigation noodle at Joshua Tree National Park for either checkout or practice to satisfy the Basic (I/M) or Advanced (E) level navigation requirements. To participate, send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare, to Leader: Robert Myers (rmyers@ix.netcom.com). Assistant Leader: Harry Freimanis.

♦ JAN 10  
SAT  
DPS
O: DPS Potluck and Management Meeting: Come to the home of Audrey Goodman in Santa Monica. Meeting starts at 4:30pm and the potluck starts at 6pm. Bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to be shared. Please RSVP. (music2835@gmail.com).

(Continued next page)
**JAN 11**

**SUN**

**DPS, LTC, WTC, SPS, HPS**

I: **Warren Pt Navigation:** Navigation noodle at Joshua Tree National Park for either checkout or practice to satisfy the Basic (I/M) or Advanced (E) level navigation requirements. To participate, send email/sase, contact info, nav experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare to Leader: Robert Myers (rmyers@ix.netcom.com). Assistant Leader: Harry Freimanis.

**JAN 31**

**SAT**

**DPS, LTC, SPS, HPS**

M/E: **Local Baldy Snow Practice:** Come review snow climbing, rope travel, ice axe, and snow anchors. Practice your skills or brush up on new techniques. Especially for aspiring M & E leader candidates. Restricted to SC members with prior experience with the ice axe. Lack of snow may cancel. Send sase or email with SC#, climbing resume, phone # to Leader: Nile Sorensen (nsorensen@pacbell.net). Co-Leader: Tina Bowman.

**FEB 7**

**SAT**

**DPS**

O: **DPS Potluck and Management Meeting:** Come to the February Potluck at Michael and Julia's home in Woodland Hills. Management meeting starts at 4:30 and potluck begins at 6 pm. Bring your preferred beverage and your favorite food dish to be shared. Please RSVP. (michaelgosnell@hotmail.com)

**FEB 14**

**SAT**

**DPS, LTC, SPS, HPS**

M/E: **Local Baldy Snow Practice:** Come review snow climbing, rope travel, ice axe, and snow anchors. Practice your skills or brush up on new techniques. Especially for aspiring M & E leader candidates. Restricted to SC members with prior experience with the ice axe. Lack of snow may cancel. Send sase or email with SC#, climbing resume, phone # to Leader: Nile Sorensen (nsorensen@pacbell.net). Co-Leader: Doug Mantle.

**FEB 14-16**

**SAT-MON**

**DPS**

**ER:** **Superstition Mtn (5057') and Weaver's Needle (4553':** (Advanced Notice) Leaders: Larry and Barbee Tidball. Details pending. Safety Committee approval pending. (lbtidball@earthlink.net)

**FEB 28**

**SUN**

**DPS, WTC**

I: **Corkscrew Peak (5804')**: Never leave home without a Corkscrew! Journey to Death Valley with Tina and Mary Mac for an old favorite. Prospective DPSers, WTC students, old seasoned DPSers welcomed! Saturday - climb 3300' gain and 6 miles and join Potluck & Poetry on Saturday night. Time to sightsee in Death Valley on Sunday. Send email/sase, telephone/recent conditioning and rideshare information to Leader: Tina Bowman (tina@bowmandesigngroup.com). Assistant: Mary McMannes.

**MAR 21-22**

**SAT-SUN**

**DPS**

I: **Mitchell Pt (7048'), Edgar Pk (7162')**: Trip to these Mojave National Preserve peaks to be led by Barbee and Larry Tidball. Details to follow in the next Sage and Angeles Chapter Schedule. (lbtidball@earthlink.net)

**MAR 28**

**SAT**

**DPS**

E: **Baboquivari Peak (7734')**: Dodge javelina hunters as we track down this beast from the EAST (not the usual route), including spots of 5th class. Helmet, basic climbing gear and completed medical form required. Send SASE w/ climbing and catering experience to Leaders: Doug Mantle, Tina Bowman (tina@bowmandesigngroup.com).

**APR 4**

**SAT**

**DPS**

O: **DPS Potluck and Management Meeting:** Come to the home of Larry and Barbee Tidball in Long Beach. Meeting starts at 4:30 pm, and the potluck starts at 6 pm. Bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to be shared. Please RSVP. (lbtidball@earthlink.net)

**MAY 16**

**SAT**

**DPS**

O: **DPS Annual Banquet:** The Desert Peaks Section will host their Annual Banquet at TAIX French Restaurant, located 1911 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles. The featured Speaker will be Dave Shollie. More details to come or contact Banquet Chair Elaine Baldwin (dwbaldwin@aol.com). Please save the Date!

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**COVER PHOTO:** Pyramid Peak from Borax BM. Photo by Bob Sumner.
MEMBERSHIP CHAIR / ACTIVITY REPORT, October 8, 2008

Membership Summary

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Activity Report

Achievements

List Finish
#150 Anne K. Rolls 8/10/08 Mt Charleston

New Members

Marcelo Altamirano
13475 Lochin Lane
Sylmar, CA 91342-1855
andres120011@yahoo.es

Jeff Bonds
PO Box 244
Bowling Green, KY 42102-0244
270-782-5322
jmboons@juiceps.com

Jim Margadant
PO Box 1870
Rapid City, SD 57709-1870

Scott Surgent
3315 N DeSoto St
Chandler, AZ 85224-1018
480-363-4702
surgent@asu.edu

Renewed Lapsed Members

Kristofer Korpi
9236 Red Twig Dr
Las Vegas, NV 89134-6037

Eric Schumacher
4249 Woodcliff Rd
Sherman Oaks, CA 91403-4339
ellenlady@sbcglobal.net

New Subscriber

Annemarie Mikolaitis
PO Box 7082
Tahoe City, CA 96145-7082
annemarie.mikolaitis@gmail.com

Address/Info Changes

Delores Holladay
205 S "U" St #75
Lompoc, CA 93436-6468

Robert Wyka
PO Box 50
Lake Arrowhead, CA 92352-0050
310-673-3307 (cell)
r.wyka@att.net

Membership Renewals

Bob Anderson 1 year
Tom & Lynda Armbruster 1 year
Wynne Benti 2 years
Daryn Dodge 1 year
Delores Holladay 1 year
Kenneth Jones 3 years
Betty McRuer 1 year
Theodore Tassop 2 years
Greg Vernon 1 year
Asher Waxman 2 years

OUTINGS CHAIR

Finally, the heat is gone (my family just moved to Woodland Hills-whew!) and it's time to get out and head up to some of our wonderful desert peaks. A couple of special outings are quickly approaching: the 16th Annual Chili Cook-Off, Oct 25-26 and 4 list finishers on Old Woman Mountain, Nov 22-23. They are Dave and Ann Perkins, Bob Hoeven and Anne Rolls. Both will be huge DPS get-togethers with lots of delicious food and drink, so make sure to add one or both weekends to your calendar.

Our management committee just decided on a date and location for the upcoming DPS Banquet. It will be held May 16 at the TAIX French Restaurant located at 1911 Sunset Blvd in Los Angeles. Our featured speaker will be Dave Scholle. Now I know you're saying, "Not another banquet there!" But, we considered several places and TAIX was, by far, the least expensive and we will be providing free wine for each table with dinner. So we're hoping it will be a well-attended and enjoyable evening.

Mary Mac has been leaning on some of you to lead trips this season--please consider leading one trip for the season. That would give us a full and varied schedule for our hiking/climbing members. To our M-rated leaders, please consider leading one of our class 4 peaks or even Little Picacho. The upcoming deadline for the Big Schedule is Nov 3, but you can still plan trips after that deadline and put them in our Sage and on the DPS website. Thank you to all our leaders who are leading trips during the upcoming months. These are tough times for our country and it's understandable that our section may be going through a slow patch, but we are still enjoying our beautiful deserts. Yes, we drive quite a few miles to our destinations, but the lodging and food costs are pretty minimal and you can't beat DPS Potlucks and comradery.

One final note, as you head out this season and take pictures on your outings, send your good ones to Larry Hoak, our webmaster and Bob Sumner, our Sage Editor. They are always looking for new photos to display. Please send them in JPEG format. Hope to see you out there. - Michael
CHAIR’S CORNER (continued)

article on Highway 395. Many have bought the hybrid cars, so we are traveling green. As a local therapist remarked about the growing ennui and angst more and more prevalent with each passing day, "Being rich is not the only answer to happiness. There are other things to please the psyche as art, movies, beautiful music, and sojourns into Nature to feed the soul on a deeper level. We have to surrender, to let go of material things." Hear Hear! Come with us to the desert and choose your passion; whether it's the climb or the camp chair sitting and later we share song and food around our inimitable DPS campfires. Mary Austin (Land of Little Rain) got it right when she said, "Let's have done of stranger faces, let's be quiet of staring eyes. Let's go back across Mojave, where the hills of Inyo rise." Hope to see every member on the DPS roster at one of our many social and climbing events. Then in the spring when the wildflowers begin to bloom, we'll reunite as a group once again at our annual DPS banquet in May. See you on the peaks and around the heavily laden potluck tables. Happy, safe, and successful climbing until we meet again. –Mary

MEETING MINUTES

Our first Management Committee meeting of the season was held this past Saturday at the home of Dave and Elaine Baldwin. Present at 4:45 pm for the start of the business portion was Mary MacMannes - Chairperson, Audrey Goodman - Secretary, Elaine Baldwin - Programs, Michael Gosnell - Outings, Ron Bartell - Membership Director, and Brian Smith, one of the folks on the Mountaineering Committee. Our Treasurer, Gloria Miladin couldn’t make it this time.

- The meeting essentially involved reconnecting, and looking at what the 'issues' are for the upcoming season.
- We discussed all pooling together to make a big effort and get the Outings for the season scheduled and into the SAGE and on the website.
- Elaine had the Treasurer's report submitted by Gloria on hand, and happily, DPS is solvent, and money has come in monthly for dues renewals, SAGE subscriptions, and merchandise purchasing.
- There will be a year end report submitted and published in the next SAGE (after this one).
- Most of our members will have their dues expiring during the months of Dec-Jan and will need to plan to renew. The cost has not changed (yay!)
- Michael has a list of leaders who are CURRENTLY confirmed as leaders and an upcoming issue is how to help leaders 're-up' when their First Aid expires this year. More to be discussed on that during the next meeting.
- We discussed the need to answer each other's emails quickly, now that the season is about to officially LAUNCH!
- It was voted to hold our yearly banquet at TAIX this year, so as to avoid having to charge high prices. The Reef in Redondo, our usual spot, has gotten quite exorbitant.
- There will be complementary wine on each table.
- Under new business, we discussed the website and how we would like to see it continue, and what our 'web policies' need to be vis a vis board member information listing, what to update, etc.
- Larry Hoak is to be complemented for a beautiful site which is very user friendly. Thank you to Larry.
- Michael said he would research what website policies if any exist for DPS by virtue of being a Sierra Club section.
- Meeting was adjourned at 6:35.

Following that, a wonderful party and feast was had by all. We had a great turnout of many members.
Next meeting will be November 9th at the home of Karen Leonard. See TRIP listings in this issue for more information. Respectfully submitted, Audrey Goodman, Secretary

HELP WANTED - CONSERVATION

If you enjoy writing and are passionate about conservation, especially of our Southwest desert areas, please consider the position of DPS Conservation Chair. Based on the position description in the DPS bylaws ("The Conservation Chair shall direct the conservation activities of the Section"), the duties are minimal; they include writing a short column every other month for the Sage on a desert-related conservation topic of your choice, and maintaining contact with the Angeles Chapter Conservation Committee and other regional conservation groups. It's a good way to get involved! If you are interested, please contact the DPS Chair, Mary McMannes (marymuir@earthlink.net).
In Memory of Bill Bradley, 1933-2008

The Big Mountain in the sky has claimed another member of the Golden Age of Mountaineering. Long time leader Bill Bradley passed away June 9, 2008, after a long and debilitating illness.

Bill left the paper industry in Connecticut and moved to California with his family. He entered the roofing industry and was employed by SPSer, Wilson Harvey. Wilson's favorite conditioning hike was Mt. Baldy which he did faithfully every weekend unless he was on a Sierra or desert peak. In a short time, he had lured Bill to the mountains and finally the Sierra Club. Like many others, peak bagging and mountain climbing became both an addiction and avocation. Bill soon found his way to the newly structured leadership program offered up by the Angeles Chapter Sierra Club. He received his M rating in 1973, E rating in 1974, TSAC Chair 1976-1977, LTC Snow Chair 1977-1999, and was awarded the Angeles Chapter Sierra Club Service Award in 1982. In the Sierra Peaks Section, he served as Alternate Office 1979, Vice Chair in 1980, and SPS Chairman in 1981. Bill was Emblem Holder #440 in 1982 and gained his SPS Senior Emblem in 1983 (#75.) His service to the DPS (Desert Peaks Section) included section Chairman in 1997 and finishing the DPS List on October 28, 1995, on Nelson Mountain. The Angeles Chapter again awarded this active leader with a DPS Service Award in May, 2000. Along with Sierra peaks and desert peaks, Bill worked on the HPS peaks list, too, and received his Hundred Peaks emblem in 1983.

People who climbed with Bill knew his forte was snow climbing. He was a past master at standing glissades and led or participated in countless numbers of climbs for the Angeles Chapter Sierra Club. A few notable trips fondly remembered by Bill were: San Jacinto via Snow Creek, the famous yearly Ron Jones' Burro Bakes in Homewood Canyon, Mt. Russell (both east and west summits), and of course Mt. Bradley, which he considered his namesake peak.

The Sierra Club Outings program has been fortunate over the years to have men and women of the caliber of Bill Bradley who served tirelessly for the cause. Many friends are thankful for Bill who led climbers safely up and down so many peaks creating memories for a lifetime. Much can be said for the camaraderie and long time friendships the ACSC groups have fostered.

Bill's swan song as chairman of the DPS may be expressed in his own words taken from a banquet speech: "I think that of all the groups that I have climbed with, my hands-down favorite is the Desert Peaks Section. The good times have been too numerous to mention, and the trips where we have had problems or which have been controversial seem to fade away, with just an overall mellow feeling remaining. Another desert dweller, Edward Abbey, sums it up best for me. 'The desert is different. Not so hostile as the snowy peaks, nor so broad and bland as the ocean's surface, it lies open...to leisurely exploration...the desert waits outside, desolate and still and strange, unfamiliar and often grotesque in its forms and colors...'"

Rest in peace, dear Bill. Our lives were much better because you passed our way leading us into exhilarating wilderness experiences. You won't be forgotten.

- Barbara Reber, 2008, assisted by Mary McMannes and friends of the DPS
I've returned from nearly five weeks in pristine, pure, and heavenly Colorado, and what in the heck am I doing in Reseda? (Oh yes, now I remember...the real estate bonanza and bust!) I can see why gnarly Bill Oliver, Bob Michael, and Mario and Yolanda Gonzales all moved to Colorado when the getting out was good. Anyway, mine was a great road trip via Vegas, St. George, Grand Junction, and finally Crested Butte. You can tell the difference in cultures, by listening to the radio. There are local shows continually talking about guns, hunting and fishing. I especially liked the country music when there was nothing else to listen to. Memorable songs -- "What's a Man Without a Shed?" "All my Exes live in Texas, so I hang my hat in Tennessee," and, "I'm having daydreams about night things in the mid afternoon." One of the big pluses of residing in Colorado was joining the West Alliance Hiking Group of Crested Butte who led multiple weekly hikes much like our HPSers. One isn't a stranger long when hooking up with hikers and climbers. At the same time, Don Crowley and Laura Stockton (Les and Pudge Stockton's daughter) flew to Colorado and were collecting some more 14ers.

DID YOU KNOW from our 4-Ever Young Old-timers Corner that George Toby celebrated his 87th birthday in great style, September 18? See the photo! George is a repeat of the Lazarus story in that he rebounded from death's doorway. He checked out of assisted living and is back at his condo doing well and very happy. Roy Magnuson's birthday is a few days after George's, and Roy and Barbara have relocated to the state of Washington. Hooking up with Henry Heusinkveld was a pleasure, as I tracked him down in a nursing home in Kansas City (thanks to Bob Cates). Henry answered the phone right away when I called him, and he was happy to hear he had been featured in one of the last Sages. Henry will be 90 in January (born 1919), and if you'd like to send him a card, call me or email me for the address. I was sad to hear about Candy Ross' passing and recalled our happy conversation not-so-long ago at the 50th SPS banquet. Our condolences go out to our favorite Sierra photographer, Tom Ross. Did you know that Joe McCosker has returned home from the hospital, and I bet Joe and Betty would love to hear from you, too. Don't forget I still have copies of Betty's book for loan or purchase.

DYK, summit registers never lie? For years, we'd summit those peaks, and we hoped for a sunny lazy day where we'd loll near the cairn and read the register entries. Often, the entries would make our eyes widen as we learned of new climbing teams and trysts. Some of us still have red faces for drawing hearts in the registers and writing some mushy entry. Bob Hartman recently wrote an amusing tale of a long day climbing Muah (October's Echo). When some of us climbed Muah a few weeks later, we saw his name in the register with a lady who accompanied him on the grueling day. She wrote, "Thanks, Roberto, for a good climb." Now, was that before they ran out of water or after? Anyway, once a Roberto, always a Roberto!

DYK there have been some mighty interesting tidbits in the news, lately? (oops, I'm sounding like Sarah Palin, wink wink.) One of our San Fernando Valley fellows Roger Homrich walked solo for 225 days through Death Valley finally finishing in waist deep snow on Last Chance Mountain. He had planted food and water caches prior to the trip but was strictly on his own carrying compass, GPS, and no cell phone. Gaining 30,000 ft. of total elevation, he survived 50 mph winds, sleet, snow, 100 degree plus temps, and all the other rigors of a Death Valley adventure. We can all relate to this, but at least, we get to go home after the weekend. Carrying a 45 pound backpack, Roger consumed 1.5 gallons of water, daily, from his various caches. If you want to know more, visit his website at www.rogerhomrich.com/deathvalley or call REI to get a schedule of his appearances. DYK while Gene Mauk and the Motherals were up in the Shasta area, gaining another 70 miles on the Pacific Crest Trail that an unfortunate 62 year old woman died of hypothermia on the PCT near Tinker Knob (Tahee)? Phyllis Hall was hiking with three others, but they were caught out in the elements and bivouacked in less than desirable conditions. I credit BMTC (and WTC) for imprinting in stone the message that the mountains don't care, and you carry winter gear in all conditions. DYK that on Tuesday (Oct. 7th), a woman jogger was nipped by a coyote while she was hanging out near the merry-go-round area in Griffith Park? Rangers reported the trash cans had been cleaned out, and the coyote was pretty hungry. Another good reason for hiking poles!

Did You Catch the amazing photos of the Mark Goebel family on top of Half...
Dome as their graduation hats and gowns waved in the breeze? (Echo, October, '08?) What a family to be lauded and admired! I thought of them when reading the latest news flash that a huge slab of rock broke off above the Curry Village demolishing trees, cabins, and sending over 1,000 tourists scurrying for their lives. I don't know about you, but one sound that send chills up and down my spine is the sound of rockfall. In looking again at the cable route up Half Dome, I'd say that climb is being loved to death much to the chagrin of the rangers.

Ingeborg Prochazka emails that we are now allowed to carry our trekking poles on board airplanes! That's good news for all of us who don't want to leave those clickity-clackity poles at home.

DYK, Pete Yamagata surfaced again sending me a short note about this and that? He's got a pretty wonderful website at http://www.peteshithousandpeaks.com. I was happy to hear from Barbara Reber who is now birding in Australia. Thanks for the good words about Bill, Barbara. Doug Mantle is back to collecting more DPS and SPS peaks mainly solo after bagging more Classic Climbs in North America during July and August. One story I recall from the past was when Doug had a slight confrontation with another legendary solo climber. The climber glared into Doug's eyes and said, "You don't know WHO you are talking to." Nonplussed, Doug simply answered, "Whom you are talking to." Doug reports being rosted by the ranger as he slept in Mono Meadows, but I didn't get to hear the rest of the story which is probably for the best.

Sorry and dismayed were all of us in hearing the Fish Hatchery near Independence was washed away by the floods and walls of mud. It barely escaped the fire that consumed Dolores Holladay's house, and now it's gone, and so are all the trout that would have gone to Sierra lakes and streams. Whenever I pass the Fish Hatchery sign, I can't help but think of that trick Jon Lutz played on Sherry Harsh and me on day one of the Nevada climbing trip of 1988. Leaving L.A. in Jon's VW bus, we didn't bring lunches assuming we'd eat en route. Jon promised us lunch at an outstanding fish place where live trout were featured. Sherry and I licked our lips in anticipation of trout sautéed in a buttery sauce and sprinkled liberally with almonds. Much to our surprise and dismay, Jon and Betsy turned off at the fish hatchery. There were many fish to be viewed but none available for eating. As I recall, we settled for peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.

As promised, in the last DYK, Ron Jones’ saga of Death Valley’s moving rocks is such an excellent rendition that I’ll add it in a separate column for your enjoyment. We're looking forward to a grand and glorious List Finisher party for the Perkins and Bob Hoeven and Anne Rolls, Nov. 22. We want to see everyone at the pending potlucks Nov. 9 and Dec. 7. and we hope you'll come out for Climbing Season, end of '08 and into the winter months of '09. Happy and safe climbing to all. May stability return to all our lives and our land, and we'll truly have a meaningful Thanksgiving.

- Mary McManness, October 2008 (marymuir@earthlink.net)

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### 2008 ANGELES CHAPTER AWARDS

Submit your nominations now! Awards nominations are due Thursday, December 4, 2008!

Do you know of a fellow Angeles Chapter member who volunteers tirelessly in service to the Club through conservation, outings, activism, or advocacy? With 50,000 members in a very diverse Chapter, we need to congratulate our individual and collective efforts. Now is your chance to recognize your hard-working peers who have given so much of their time and effort to the Sierra Club and the Chapter! The Chapter Awards Committee wants your ideas on awards candidates.

**YOU DON'T NEED TO BE A LONG-TIME MEMBER TO RECEIVE AN ANGELES CHAPTER AWARD – WE CELEBRATE VETERANS, ROOKIES AND RERUNS (PAST AWARDEES) WITH CHAPTER AWARDS. ANY CHAPTER MEMBER OR ENTITY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CAN NOMINATE ANOTHER MEMBER FOR AN AWARD, with a few exceptions: Current At-Large Angeles Chapter Executive Committee and Awards Committee members aren't eligible; nor are deceased Sierra Club members eligible posthumously. Preference goes to candidates that received little to no recent recognition. A list of the awards categories, past awardees, and the nomination form can be found on the Chapter Awards page - http://angeles.sierrclub.org/about/Awards.asp.** Additional awards information can be found on the Chapter's history pages. How do I nominate another member for an award? Review the awards list and other information, then complete the downloadable form. Please return the form and any additional background information on your candidate by Thursday, December 4, 2008, to Lori Ives at ives@ivesico.net (email preferred), or by mail to Lori at 112 N. Harvard Ave, PMB 297, Claremont, CA 91711-4716. Background material on awardees will be included in the Awards Banquet program and in the Southern Sierran, so please include pertinent information on your awards candidate, along with which award your candidate is nominated for. Late applications will be held over for the next year's awards. The Awards Committee looks forward to receiving your nominations!!

Thank you! - Sherry Ross, Angeles Chapter Awards Chair

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THE DESERT SAGE 11 November/December 2008
THE MOVING ROCKS OF DEATH VALLEY

Thanks so much to Ron who sent me his story about Death Valley and the Moving Rocks for my Did You Know column. Anyway, enjoy...this is good! George Noory, midnight radio, KFI, are you listening?

Ron Jones and The Night of the Moving Rocks

I have visited the "Racetrack," in Death Valley Park many times, and it is 20 or 30 rough, high clearance miles from anywhere, the closest named place being Scotty's Castle in the north part of Death Valley.

Some of you know that I have a degree in geology from UCLA...so here goes my story.

Once I drove out here a week or so after a series of rains in this part of the Park. The year, I believe, was 1972-3? The lake bed was dry except for the southeast corner which might be a tiny bit lower than the rest of this dry lake bed. The lake bed was hard packed with super-fine clay particles (hence the name, "Racetrack Playa"), and the clay was slightly moist and slippery in that distant corner of the playa. As the afternoon went on, the moist area in that corner slowly expanded toward the west as the recent rain seeped through and down the distant slope. As the day wore on, I checked the expansion of this moist clay which might have 0.01-0.02 inches of water on the surface.

After climbing into my sleeping bag that night, the wind came up more and more strong, blowing in gusts, maybe SE, with greater and greater intensity to 50-60 m.p.h. At midnight, I was curious, so got up with my flashlight and fought my way in the strong gusts of wind out onto the playa. The moist area on the surface had progressed quite a bit closer to me. The first thing I saw moving in the moist clay (mud) was a small piece of dry brush, shaped with three points of contact on the mud, maybe 18 inches long sliding across the mud and leaving small "scratch" marks in the clay. The sticks moved smoothly 24 inches, maybe 48 inches depending on the length of time the wind blew, and then either stopped or slowed down if the wind stopped. They'd change direction by ten to thirty degrees following the changing direction of the wind gusts. They adhered to the clay mud, and I don't recall any of them tumbling in the wind or blowing away. Next I saw burro pies moving in the same manner and leaving a very shallow mark. Finally, I got halfway across the south end of the playa to where there had been rocks which had rolled down the opposite slope at some time ago and probably years ago. I watched a number of these stones move and leave a track commensurate with their weight. The rocks probably weighed from 5 pounds to several hundred pounds.

After an hour or so of observing, I return to my sleeping bag. Before the next morning, the wind had died, and it was perfectly calm and sunny. I went out again onto the playa bed and checked out the sliding rocks. Their tracks were fresh but drying out. Some had moved quite a distance, maybe 30-40 yards, and the tracks looked slick and without any crack marks from the dry mud. I noticed that many of the rocks were tagged with paint and marked from several studies (by geologists, who else?), and some were identified as from my alma mater, UCLA. These rocks all have originated from that slope in the SE corner.

I've related this story to friends many times, but never have written it out before. Happy Trails, Ron.

And to add to this: "The moving rocks, also known as sliding rocks or sailing rocks are a geological phenomenon found in Racetrack Playa, a seasonably dry lake located in the Panamint Mountains in Death Valley National Park. The rocks move across the surface of the playa, leaving behind long tracks behind them as they go, without human or animal intervention. They have never been seen or filmed in motion." And we thought Halloween was scary! - Mary McMannes

TRIP REPORTS

WHEELER PEAK, RUBY DOME
August 1 - 4, 2008
By Ann Perkins

On August 1st, DPSers headed for the high country of Nevada to climb Wheeler Peak and Ruby Dome. Ann and Dave Perkins camped on the night of the 1st at the Upper Lehman Creek campground – all the campgrounds in the Wheeler Peak area are quite lovely and well-maintained. We had driven to the Wheeler Peak campground first but it was full, and we saw no sign of Virgil Popescu and Gloria Miladin, who were to join us. Since Dave was still recovering from pneumonia he had not planned to climb, so Ann was contemplating doing the climb alone, but the next morning we met Gloria and Virgil who had come in late and camped at the trailhead. Virgil kindly took over as assistant leader. The weather was fine and the climb, being entirely on trail, was uneventful except for the altitude slowing our steps as we approached the summit. On the summit we met two climbers from the Czech Republic, so with Virgil’s Romanian background, and Gloria’s Croatian background, we had quite an international group! We finished the climb about 2:00 pm, and joined Dave for a tour of Lehman Caves, which is well worth doing if you have the time. We stayed that night again in the same campground, and the next morning started off for Elko and Ruby Dome. Driving in Nevada is very scenic for desert buffs and relaxing, as one seldom sees another vehicle!

After lunch in Elko, we drove up to the locked gate leading to the campground and trailhead for Ruby Dome (we hadn’t been able to arrange for a key since we were arriving on Sunday), and fortunately a truck was just leaving and let us in. Ron Bartell, Christine Mitchell, Igor and Suzanne Mamedalin, and Jim Farkas and his son Ian were camped in a beautiful spot in Lamoille Canyon about 5 miles away, and Sue Holloway was in a motel in Elko since she had flown in to Reno and didn’t have camping gear. We all met the next morning at the locked gate and Dave took everyone up to the trailhead, except for Ron and Igor, who were doing their own trip up Seitz Creek Canyon and would meet us on the summit. Sue Holloway took over for Dave as assistant leader on this climb. Ruby Dome is a beautiful climb – the most Sierra-like peak on the Desert Peaks List, and follows a use trail most of the way. We had planned to take summit route A if there was no snow in the chutes, but we ended up on the B route, which has more large blocks of rock to climb around and over. The party slowed at that point, and the intrepid leader slowed even more – there’s not much higher than 6000’ in Washington, where we had been all summer, and the altitude was finally taking its toll! Since I had already climbed the peak and didn’t want to slow the group too much, Virgil and Sue led the last 500’ or so of the climb. We agreed on a large flat area below the summit for a rendezvous, and all the other climbers attained the summit, Sue for the second time. She lacks only a few peaks for a two time list finish! We followed our route back down, improving on it in several places, and were back at the trailhead by 7:00 p.m. There we said goodbye to Jim and Ian who had to get back home. This was Ian’s first desert peak and we think we may have a new convert! We all camped in Lamoille Canyon that night – it’s certainly the recommended place in terms of scenery and comfort. Ron, Christine, Igor and Suzanne were off to climb another peak near Wheeler the next day, and Gloria, Virgil, Ann and Dave headed for home. Thanks to everyone for their participation and especially to Sue and Virgil for taking over leadership duties when needed. Note: as of this writing, Dave has recovered from his bout with pneumonia, and we plan to climb Dubois later in October in pursuit of the list finish.

POTLUCK MADNESS AND GLADNESS
October 4, 2008
By Mary McMannes

Ja, das ist eine Liechensteiner Potluck, mein schatz… Potluck, mein schatz, mein schatz! No one puts on an Octoberfest potluck better than Dave and Elaine Baldwin; and they know how to do it authentically after living in Germany for a spell. All the DPSers were back from many summer sojourns and ready to eat some
hearty German fare on the heavily laden table in the Baldwin's dining room. Gott in der Himmel, it was delicious!

Featured were Mirna and Greg Roach's cabbage stew, Gerry and Pat Holleman's Chicken Divine (which WAS divine), Mary Mac's well-guarded recipe of cheesy potatoes, Audrey's couscous, Elaine's cooked red cabbage, Julia (and Michael) Gosnell's German potato salad, Julie Rush's beautifully concocted fruit salad and many other recipes that I failed to connect chefs with entrees. The desserts were magnificent with homemade ginger cake (real whipped cream) from Jan and Dave Reneric, and THE CAKE brought by Vic and Sue Henney. Mirna outdid herself with brownies inscribed with little m&ms spelling DPS, and there was much much more. Of course, we had an array of beers, brookies, and wines. Brian Smith happily brought in Octoberfest beer which was enjoyed by many. Dave was outside hovering over the barbecue perfecting his inimitable brats and pork roast. It's pretty nice now and then to leave the world of chicken and salmon and sink one's teeth into a delicious bratwurst (or two.)

It was great to see the Sholles, Jack Wickel, the Bartells, the Rich Henkes, Janet Damen, and some newcomers, the Rugalos (high school classmates of the Baldwins newly discovered at a high school reunion.) After dinner, there was a great slide show in the den, and again I award Mirna Roach as the Most Helpful Potluck Cleaner-Upper.

Surely your mouth is watering after reading of these gastronomical delights, and you'll join us Nov. 7th at Karen Leonard's in L.A. and then again on Dec. 7th (after climbing Potosi, of course), the fabulous holiday party at the Perkins in Northridge. They'll be glowing, still basking in their success as DPS List Finishers (Old Woman, Nov. 22).

Danke schon, Frau Elaine and Bergermeister Dave for a wonderful evening of polka, food, and delightful conversation.

Photos provided by Elaine Baldwin
The Historic Desert: Part 1, Cabeza de Vaca: The Journey

After reviewing more than 150 desert volumes during the past ten years, it’s come time to consider the literature regarding the first non-native Americans to set foot in the desert Southwest.

Beginning with this issue of Desert Sage, and on an irregular basis in the future, look for reviews of works by and/or about the earliest explorers, including Coronado, Diaz, Alarcon, Kino, Garces, and Anza. I think you too will be fascinated by the adventures, heroics and sympathies of those early desert adventurers.

In the spring of 1536, four Spanish slavers riding north from the Culiacan area, between the Gulf of California and the Sierra Madre Mountains in what is now the Mexican State of Sinaloa, came across a group of thirteen skin-clad, barefoot Indians. Rather than fleeing, which was usually the case, this group headed straight toward the horsemen.

And as they grew closer, the Spaniards realized that two of the small band were not just ordinary, run of the mill natives. Indeed, one, with hair that hung down to his waist and a beard that reached his chest, was white; another was black. Even more surprising, both men spoke Spanish.

The white man, they discovered, was Cabeza de Vaca (Head of a Cow), and his companion was the Berber slave, Esteban. The two men constituted half of the four survivors from an original party of three hundred that had, eight years earlier in 1528, set out to colonize a large area along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico. Overcoming disastrous navigation, shipwrecks, captivity by Indians and an extraordinary passage across the Southwestern U.S. and Northern Mexico, these men became the first non-Natives to explore the area in which the DPS now climbs, and the first ever to cross the North America continent.

The route of Cabeza de Vaca has been the subject of more than sixty books and articles since historian Hubert Bancroft first published his History of the North Mexican States and Texas in 1886. Later, others set out to make a specific point regarding the venture. In 1890, for instance, A.F. Bandelier, in a contribution to the Papers of the Archaeological Institute of America, attempted to prove that the four survivors “never trod the soil of New Mexico.” Between 1896 and 1899, three long-term residents of Texas, as might be expected, proposed that Cabeza de Vaca’s journey took place primarily in Texas.

Several studies followed in the early 1900s, most of which, because their conclusions were based on inaccurate geographical information, i.e., mountains existing in an area of Texas where there are none, are now discounted. The 1930s brought additional theories to print, including Carl O. Sauer’s, The Road to Cibola (1932), in which the author opined that the northern Chihuahua desert was too formidable to be crossed by the four travelers, and that they must have passed through to the north, probably well within the United States. In 1936, C.E. Castaneda published Our Catholic Heritage in Texas, 1319-1936 (1936) in which it was posited that the men traveled from the Texas seacoast west along the Balcones Escarpment, reached the Rio Grande near Del Rio, continued up the Pecos, passed below the Davis Mountains, followed the Rio Grande to El Paso and then, Castaneda apparently losing interest, set the foursome off “across southern Arizona.” In 1936 and 1938, Alessio Robles, while attempting to determine the identities of first Europeans to enter northeastern Mexico, proposed that the four travelers crossed the Rio Grande near Roma, TX, passed the present Mexican towns of Cerralvo, Monterrey and Monclova, continued through the Big Bend area, up the Rio Grande to El Paso, and finally entered New Mexico and Arizona.

More recently, three excellent books on Cabeza de Vaca’s incredible journey have been published, all of which propose more probable routes. Due to space limitations, however, these volumes and the routes they propose, will be reviewed in the next issue of the Desert Sage.

In the meantime, let's consider the fascinating life story of this man with the strange name, and attempt to understand how he became of such historic importance.

Alva Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca—his surname was granted to his mother’s family in the 13th century after
an ancestor aided a Christian army in routing their Moorish enemy by discovering a secret mountain pass and marking it with a cow’s skull—was born into a distinguished family in the town of Jerez de la Frontera, 50 miles south of Seville. One of his famous relatives was Luis Cabeza de Vaca, tutor to King Charles prior to his elevation to the Spanish throne and to the Holy Roman emperorship. His boyhood role model, however, was probably his paternal grandfather, Pedro de Vera Mendoza, the man who conquered Gran Canaria Island in the 1480s, an accomplishment which paved the way for Spain’s conquest in the New World.

Prior to turning thirty, Cabeza de Vaca had been employed by a powerful Andalusian family and had served the King in military campaigns in Italy and against Castilian rebels. In 1526, at approximately 40 years of age, thanks to friends in high places and his distinguished military record, he was appointed as Royal Treasurer to an expedition to be led by Pánfilo de Narváez, the objective of which was to colonize a large portion of northern Mexico and the southern U.S.

In June 1527, five ships, carrying as many as 600 passengers, set sail from Seville, heading for the New World. Overwintering in Cuba, the expedition then resumed in the early spring of 1528, sailing due west for the mouth of the Rio de las Palmas on Mexico’s east coast. Unfortunately, using dead reckoning as a means of navigation, and not taking the strong current of the Gulf Stream into account, the ships landed near Tampa Bay, Florida, a mere 1,000 miles off course.

The expedition then split up with approximately 300 men landing to begin what they believed would be a 30 or 40 mile trek north to the Rio de las Palmas, the remaining 100 or so remaining on board. The plan was for the two groups to meet at the mouth of the river, an event which did not occur. Although the ships lingered along the gulf coast for almost a year, the land based party never reappeared. Finally, the fleet headed back to Cuba.

The men on the land continued north and west for four months until they reached what they called the Bay of Horscs, probably between the mouth of the St. Marks River and the Apalachicola Bay on the coast of the Florida Panhandle. There, in September 1528, with fifty or so of the original group dead due to disease, exposure and Indian attacks, the remaining 242 set out to build five or six large log crafts on which they planned to sail west and south along the gulf coast to the nearest Spanish settlement in Mexico. Bad luck continued to dog them, however, as two months later, during a series of early winter storms, their rafts were cast ashore at various locations along the Texas Gulf Coast. Exposure, starvation, dehydration, drowning and Indian attacks by then had reduced the party to about 100.

Then things got worse. During the winter of 1528/1529, those who were lucky enough to survive the shipwrecks either themselves perished or became enslaved by the local Indians. And three years later, due to the hard labor to which they were subjected, the nomadic life style of their masters, the brutal weather conditions, the poor nourishment and the lack of clothing, most of the rest of the would be conquerors were also dead. Finally, in 1532, only six of the original 300 men were left—Cabeza de Vaca, Andres Dorantes, Alonso del Castillo, Esteban and two others.

The survivors, bereft of all their worldly possessions, were forced to become adept at the native skills, including sign language. Cabeza de Vaca, for instance, because he was considered a neutral, became a successful inter-tribal trader; Castillo, making the sign of the cross, saying a Pater Noster or an Ave Maria, and begging God to restore the health of his Indian patients, became well known for his healing skills.

In the fall of 1532, Cabeza de Vaca, Dorantes, Castillo and Esteban chanced to meet at the annual multi-tribal pecan harvest along the lower Guadalupe River, where they laid plans to make their escape. For a variety of reasons, however, it took two more years, during the annual gathering of prickly pear fruit (tunas), along the lower Nueces River, west of Corpus Christi Bay, before they could make their successful get away.

During the next year and a half, with the help of friendly Indians, including one group with whom they lived for eight months, the four men proceeded southwest, crossing the Rio Grande near the present Rio Grande City, passing east of the Cerralvo Mountains, and eventually reaching a point near present day Monterrey. There they abandoned their plan to continue south toward the mouth of the Rio Pánuco, the closest Spanish settlement, and instead, passing from tribe to tribe, they journeyed through the present Mexican States of Nuevo Leon, Coahuila, and Chihuahua, into Texas once more—possibly even into New Mexico and Arizona—and finally into Sonora and Sinaloa. Unfortunately, we can only guess at their exact itinerary, as, similar to the quandary posed by Manly and Rogers’ route across the Panamints in 1849, there were neither maps nor place names available at the time to provide exact waypoints.

In April 1536, eight years after first stepping foot on
Florida soil, the four were at last reunited with Spaniards in Sinaloa.

Cabeza de Vaca later wrote that he and his companions brought nothing back other than their story. "This alone is what a man who came away naked could carry out with him." They had become slaves, linguists, faith healers, traders, and lizard and spider eaters. They had become, in other words, whatever it took to stay alive.

**EPILOGUE**  In Mexico City, at the end of their eight-year odyssey, the three Spaniards and Esteban conspired to write the *Joint Report*, which was later paraphrased and included in a history of the West Indies by the historian Gonzalo Fernandez Oviedo. Several months later Cabeza de Vaca returned to Spain, where he wrote his personal account of the journey, a work now known as the *Narrative*. This latter account, however, was self-serving, intended to further his petition to the Spanish King for a commission to colonize Florida, an authority which, to Cabeza de Vaca's dismay, was granted instead to Hernando de Soto. It took three more years of patient lobbying, until 1540, for Cabeza de Vaca to secure the right to become the Governor of another new Spanish territory, one that included portions of present-day Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay. He didn't last long at that job, however. Having come to respect the Native Americans during his eight-year odyssey, Cabeza de Vaca demanded that they be treated fairly. As Andrés Reséndez, author of *A Land So Strange*, a volume to be reviewed in the next issue, describes it, "His methods of conquest were decidedly unconventional. Instead of riding on horseback, Cabeza de Vaca went barefoot ahead of his men, calling out to the Indians...trying to lure them gently. He gave out gifts...and ordered his men to pay scrupulously for all the goods received from them. To prevent any abuses, Cabeza de Vaca always set up his camp away from native villages and allowed his men to trade with the Indians only through a licensed agent."

A man ahead of his time, in the spring of 1544, Cabeza de Vaca was seized by his own men and sent back to Spain, where he was accused of several trumped up charges. In 1551, after a long legal ordeal, he was found guilty and sentenced to five years in a penal colony in present day Algeria. By 1552, however, most of the charges were dropped, and by 1555 he had come close to complete vindication.

Reséndez summarizes up Cabeza de Vaca's life thusly: "(He) was a self-made man, a visionary, a fervent Catholic and a consummate survivor who had overcome the most adverse circumstances while holding fast to his ideals."

Look for reviews of the latest books on Cabeza de Vaca and a discussion of his most probable route across the Chihuahuan and Sonoran deserts in the next issue of *Desert Sage*. 
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THE DESERT SAGE

November/December 2008

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DPS NEWSLETTER - The DESERT SAGE - Published six times a year by the Desert Peaks Section of the Angeles Chapter of the Sierra Club. SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT SAGE IS DECEMBER 13, 2008.

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