Dear DPS climbers, saunterers, singers, writers, supporters - here it is December again, and 2008 has zoomed by. The years are stacking up faster and faster since New Year's Day, 2000, and there appeared Dougie Mantle and Dougie Bear up to hi-jinks in setting off New Year's Eve fireworks. I will have to say that November and December have produced exceptional feats and festivities for the DPS with our wonderful List Finisher climb and celebration, and the equally superb potlucks at Karen Leonard's home and the Perkins' in Northridge. We must give great applause to Bob Hoeven, Anne Rolls, Dave and Ann Perkins for winning and dining us in the manner we could only dream about.

Old Woman was a great climb, where we explored far more of the mountain than we ever wanted to. It all turned out well once we got to the summit, and there were four handsome and beautiful people basking in the sunshine, receiving their List Finisher pins, and hugging one another. I liked it when they paused to invite Sue Holloway and Gary Craig on the summit, thanking them for all they did in aiding and abetting the collection of those peaks! At the blazing campfire, there were speeches and stories and great laughter; Bob Hoeven became quite poignant in talking about the valuable friendships that had been carved and nurtured in their quest for the List. Since then I've thought a lot about what he said. I had flashbacks to several DPSers on Summit Day who jumped in when help was needed on an arduous climb that made old women and old men out of all of us. (We regained our youth, once on the summit!) Sue Holloway offering to carry Dave's pack when he became momentarily ill in the first hour, Elaine Baldwin walking Maui-the-dog down from the summit and stopping often to tickle little thorns out of Maui's paws, five people jumping in to bandage Rich Gnaagy when he fell on his head, and everyone being so gracious in letting the three birthday kids carry in their Lowrider Birthday cake homing in on the List Finisher glory. Bob commented that a person once said she wouldn't even attempt the DPS List, because the hard peaks are never listed in the Schedule. This sounds dreamy that all peaks would be led all the time, but part of our pioneering spirit is to join the Section, we form the friendship bonds, and in order to seriously chase the List, we end up doing some pretty grand private hikes. I think of all the additional bonding that has taken place in my own life from private trips which were forged by the necessity of needing certain peaks. I don't view this as cliques, but rather an on-going process where new people join, and new groups are constantly gathering in shared goals and pursuits. You can meet the best people on the face of the earth in the DPS, SPS, and HPS. It's a river of relationships, forever flowing. And you can finish the List without every peak being in the schedule (although Babo, Weaver's Needle, and Big Picacho are forthcoming.)

Thanks for all the spirit and camaraderie of 2008, as we've crossed Club borders and joined with other sections in leading a multi-faceted trip or shared advertisements in each other's newsletters. I couldn't make it as well without the support of HPS Karen Leverich, and editors, Sara Danta and Joe Young. Thus far, we're in tandem with HPS, SPS, Griffith Park Hikers, Desert Wilderness, Mule Packers, Canyon Explorers, and these combos energize each section. DPS Outings are offering trips that will be easier for shy newcomers or climbers who feel they are less than the tigers they were of yesteryear.

(Continued on page 8)
TRIPS / EVENTS
JANUARY Through JUNE 2009

| JAN 10 | SAT | DPS | DPS Potluck and Management Meeting |
| JAN 10 | SAT | WTC, HPS | Warren Point |
| JAN 11 | SUN | DPS, LTC, WTC, SPS | Warren Point Navigation |
| JAN 31 | SAT | DPS, LTC, SPS, HPS | Local Baldy Snow Practice |
| FEB 7  | SAT | DPS | DPS Potluck and Management Meeting |
| FEB 14 | SAT | DPS, LTC, SPS, HPS | Local Baldy Snow Practice |
| FEB 14-16 | SAT-MON | DPS | Superstition Mtn, Weaver's Needle |
| FEB 28 | SUN | DPS, WTC | Corkscrew Peak |
| MAR 14 | SAT | DPS | DPS Potluck and Management Meeting |
| MAR 14-15 | SAT-SUN | DPS, HPS | Martinez Mtn and more |
| MAR 14-15 | SAT-SUN | DPS, HPS | Pinto Mtn, Queen Mtn |
| MAR 21-22 | SAT-SUN | DPS | Mitchell Pt, Edgar Pk |
| MAR 28 | SAT | DPS | Baboquivari Peak |
| APR 4  | SAT | DPS | DPS Potluck and Management Meeting |
| APR 4  | SAT | DPS, Natural Science | Chuckwalla Mtns, Chuckwalla Bench |
| APR 5  | SUN | DPS, Natural Science | Carey's Castle |
| APR 5  | SUN | LTC, WTC, HPS | GPS Class |
| APR 18-19 | SAT-SUN | DPS, WTC | Clark Mtn, New York Mtns |
| APR 18-19 | SAT-SUN | DPS, SPS, LTC, WTC | Indian Cove Navigation |
| MAY 2  | SAT | LTC, WTC | Nav Till It Hertz, Malibu Creek State Park |
| MAY 9-10 | SAT-SUN | DPS, LTC, WTC, DC | Nav Noodle, Mojave National Preserve |
| MAY 16 | SAT | DPS | DPS Annual Banquet |
| MAY 23 | SAT | LTC, WTC, HPS | Mt Lowe Beginning Navigation Clinic |
| MAY 23-25 | SAT-MON | DPS, WTC | Inyo Crest Traverse |
| JUNE 7 | SUN | DPS, SPS, LTC, WTC | Grinnell Ridge Navigation |

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://sierrachub.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.

♦ JAN 10 SAT DPS

**O: DPS Potluck and Management Meeting:** Come to the home of Audrey Goodman and Brian Smith in Santa Monica. Management 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 to Audrey (music2835@gmail.com).

♦ JAN 10 SAT WTC, HPS

**I: Warren Point (5103')**: Practice navigation for Sunday's checkoff on this 6 mile rt, 1300' gain hike in the pinyon pine and juniper region of western Joshua Tree National Park. We will take a cross-country route to Warren Pt and practice micro-navigation skills along the way. Send email (preferred) or sase, with contact info & recent conditioning to Leader: Robert Myers (rmyers@ix.netcom.com). Co-Leaders: Ann Pedreschi, Jane Simpson.

♦ 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 (nsorenso@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 (nsorenso@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 14        SAT             DPS
O:  DPS Potluck and Management Meeting:  Come and celebrate St. Patrick's Day with DPS List Finisher, Tommy O' Sumner, and his dog, Danny Boy in Sylmar. Management meeting begins at 4:30 p.m. and potluck begins at 6 p.m. Bring your preferred beverage and your favorite food dish to be shared. Please RSVP at locornr@aol.com or marymuir@earthlink.net.

♦ MAR 14-15     SAT-SUN         DPS, HPS
I:  Martinez Mtn (6560') and more:  Join us on this nearby (in desert terms!) hike/camp/party. Saturday's hike of DPS/HPS co-listed Martinez will be a full day, 3700' gain, 18 miles, 12 hours, mostly just trail-walking. Camp that evening at Pinyon Flats campground (small camping fee), with traditional and famous DPS potluck happy hour and dinner. Sunday will be flexible and feature HPS peaks in the area, depending on the group's energy and desire. Rain or snow cancels. Send email (preferred) or SASE with cond/exper/email/phone to Leader: Gary Craig (gary@usc.edu). Co-Leader: Sue Holloway.

♦ MAR 14-15     SAT-SUN         DPS, HPS
I:  Pinto Mtn (3983'), Queen Mtn (4500'):  Join us for two easy climbs in Joshua Tree National Park, and maybe some wildflower and cactus bloom displays. On Saturday we'll climb Pinto (2400' gain, 9 miles rt), and proceed to a campground near Queen for an excellent DPS potluck. Sunday climb Queen (1100' gain, 4 miles rt). All vehicles ok. Send SASE or email to Leader: David Perkins or Assistant Leader: Ann Perkins (ann.perkins@csun.edu).

♦ 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).

(Continued next page)
APR 4
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. (lttidball@earthlink.net)

APR 4
O: I: Chuckwalla Mtns (3446'), Chuckwalla Bench: In search of the Munz Cholla and other desert flora. Dirt road drive along bench between I-10 and Salton Sea. Optional climb of DPS listed Chuckwalla Mtn (class 2), 3 mi r/t, 1600' elev gain, observing flora along the route. High clearance vehicles required. Consider staying for Sunday hike to Carey's Castle. Email or phone George with contact and rideshare info and indicate which option. Leaders: George Wyssp, Ginny Heringer, Jennifer Washington.

APR 5
O: I: Carey's Castle: Visit this wonder of SE Joshua Tree NP (8 mi r/t 1300' elev gain x2), observing flora along the route, or just check out the desert flora in the vicinity of the trailhead or along the Cottonwood road near Joshua Tree National Park south entrance. Email or phone George with contact and rideshare info and indicate which option. Leaders: George Wyssp, Ginny Heringer, Jennifer Washington.

APR 5
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@cc.rr.com). Assistant: Robert Myers.

APR 18-19
O: Clark Mtn (7907'), New York Mtns (7532'): Climb two classic 3rd class desert peaks in beautiful settings in the Eastern Mojave with a car camp in the local desert. Happy hour Sat night. Both climbs are moderate 3rd class. Sat we will climb Clark (2 mi r/t, 1900' gain), Sun New York (4 mi r/t, 1900' gain). Class 3 rock experience required. Restricted to Sierra Club members (medical forms required). Send email/sase, detailed resume including class 3 rock experience to Leader: Dan Richter. Assistant Leader: Asher Waxman.

APR 18-19
O: Indian Cove Navigation: Navigation noodle at Joshua Tree National Park to satisfy the Basic (I/M) level navigation requirements. Sat for practices, skills refreshers, altimeter, homework, campfire. Sun checkout. Send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare, to Leaders: Robert Myers (rmmyers@ix.netcom.com). Assistant: Harry Freimanis.

MAY 2
O: Nav 'tilt it Hertz: Intermediate level Navigation Clinic, Malibu Creek State Park: 5 mi, 300' gain. Spend most of day with Navigation Instructors sharpening your skills with map & compass. Not a checkout - but you'll be prepared. Send email (or sase) for required materials to Leader: Marc "Roadkill" Hertz (marc.hertz@sierraclub.org). Co-Leaders: Robert Myers, Adrienne Benedict, Jane Simpson.

MAY 9-10
O: Places We've Saved Navigation Noodle in Mojave National Preserve: Join us for our seventh annual journey through this jewel of the Mojave; preserved under the California Desert Protection Act, as a result of the efforts of Sierra Club activists and others. A basic to intermediate xc navigation day-hike workshop will be conducted out of the Mid Hills campground in the pinyon and juniper forests at 5500 elevation. Potluck and social on Sat, and for those arriving early on Friday. Limited to 14 participants. Send email/sase to Leader: Harry Freimanis (hfreimanis@cc.rr.com). Assistant. Virgil Shields.

MAY 23
O: 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
MEMBERSHIP CHAIR / ACTIVITY REPORT, December 12, 2008

Membership Summary

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Activity Report

Achievements

List Finish
- #151 Bob Hoeven 11/25/07 Cerro Pinacate
- #152 Dave Perkins 11/22/08 Old Woman Mtn
- #153 Ann Perkins 11/22/08 Old Woman Mtn

New Subscriber
Paul Garry
2304 11th St
Santa Monica, CA 90405
310-399-2394
pwegian@earthlink.net

Address/Info Changes
- Steve Corona
  310-739-2443
- Jerry Keating
  jkeatinghiker@att.net
- Christopher Libby
  lightningsurvivor@hotmail.com
- Linda M. McDermott
  iuuvmts@live.com
- Neal R. Scott
  oldbuzzard32@yahoo.com
- Bruce & Terry Turner
  ttturner@lundmarine.com

Sustaining Renewal
- Larry & Barbee Tidball: 1 year

Membership Renewals
- Diane Baker: 2 years
- Daniel Baxter: 1 year
- Tom & Tina Bowman: 3 years
- Richard L. Carey: 1 year

John Cheslick: 1 year
Steve Corona: 1 year
Guy Dahms: 1 year
Steven Dover: 1 year
Kevin & Lisa Heapy: 1 year
Ron Jones: 1 year
Jerry & Nancy Keating: 2 years
Christopher Libby: 1 year
Gene R. Mauk: 2 years
Mary McMannes: 1 year
Robert Michael: 1 year
Gloria Miladin: 3 years
Rayne & Mary Metheral: 1 year
Chuck Pospishil: 1 year
Jim Pritchard: 2 years
George Quinn: 1 year
Kathryn Rich: 2 years
Daniel & Ruth Richter: 1 year
Gerry & Jennifer Roach: 1 year
Jim Scott: 1 year
Neal R. Scott: 1 year
Nile Sorenson: 1 year
Bob Sumner: 1 year
Bruce & Terry Turner: 1 year
Ronald A. Young: 1 year

will attend; many I-rated leaders started here in the past. Send sase, phones, $25 deposit (Sierra Club, refunded at trailhead) to Leader: Diane Dunbar. Co-Leader: Richard Boardman.

♦ MAY 16

O: DPS Annual Banquet: The Desert Peaks Section will host their Annual Banquet the evening of Saturday May 16 at TAIEX French Restaurant, located 1911 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles. The featured Speaker will be Dave Sholle presenting his video “Crossing Baffin” detailing a twelve-day backpack crossing the Cumberland Peninsula of Baffin Island through spectacular Auyuittuq National Park. Roast Top Sirloin, Salmon or Vegetarian. Complimentary wine provided at each table. Any questions contact Elaine Baldwin at dwbaldwin@aol.com - Please save the Date!

♦ MAY 23-25

SAT-MON

I: Inyo Crest Traverse (Mt Inyo, Keynot Pk, New York Butte, Pleasant Mtn): On Saturday, set up car shuttle then backpack from Cerro Gordo to the Inyo crest and out to Pleasant Mtn (9,690'); explore Salt Tram on the way. Sat eve camp near New York Butte (10,668'), climb peak Sun am, then continue 4 mi along crest to Keynot Pk (11,101'). Spend Sun eve at Bedspings Camp, Mon climb Mt Inyo (10,975') and head down to cars. Total stats ~15mi, 2000', mostly xc, carry own water. Send email detailing experience, conditioning and rideshare info to: Leader: Kathy Rich (KathrynARich@gmail.com). Co-Leaders: Barbee and Larry Tidball.

♦ JUNE 7

SUN

I: Grinnell Ridge Navigation: Navigation Noodle in San Bernardino National Forest for either checkout or practice to satisfy Basic (I/M) or Advanced (E) level navigation requirements. Send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideinfo, to Leader: Robert Myers (rmyers@ix.netcom.com). Assistant: Harry Freimanis.

COVER PHOTO: Canyon Point from Cottonwood BM. Photo by Bob Sumner.
Thanks to everyone who heartily responds to my emails in leading trips, singalongs (Audrey G.), and writing up trip reports for the Sage. I am grateful to Bob Sumner for an incredibly great Sage and for Larry Hoak who patiently runs the website. I am indebted to my strong management committee, Michael Gosnell, Gloria Miladin, Christine Bartell, and Elaine Baldwin. Thanks to Audrey Goodman who has given so much of herself and time during these past couple years to make DPS a better organization.

My Christmas card reads—"I get high with a little help from my friends," or a second printing for my more conservative friendship list, "I SIT high with a little help from my friends." Hope you all had a great holiday season and will join us monthly in the New Year. Don't forget the great lead of Corkscrew by Tina Bowman and much slower me, Feb. 28, plus an evening potluck and singing. Since we've passed through a spiritual and holy month, I'll give you one of my favorite quotes from Isaiah (definitely an ancient DPSer) 55:12, "the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing, and all the trees shall clap their hands." Let's see more friendships gained, continued rejoicing, and listen to the singing and clapping in 2009. Be safe, be healthy, and I'll see you on the peaks and at the potluck tables. - Mary McMannes

OUTINGS CHAIR

First off, some good news from Tina Bowman: DPS leaders do not have to obtain a special permit for outings in Death Valley. As it turns out, that permit is only for commercial outings.

Our climbing season is in full gear and we have many outings in this new year to choose from. Don't forget, it's still not too late to schedule an outing for the DPS. It will not appear in the big schedule, but it can be published in the Sage and on the DPS site. Check out our Outings page and think about leading a trip on an open weekend. Much thanx to Bob Sumner for keeping up on the outings in our Sage and Larry Hoak for his prompt work in posting our outings/info on the webpage.

The Chili-Cook Off and the Perkin's Old Woman Mtns lead/list finish extravaganza were both very successful and well-attended. Thanks to Dave and Elaine and Dave and Ann for their leadership of these mega-outings. I (We!) hope that the Baldwins will continue to organize the Chili-Cook Off.

Just a reminder to our leaders: think about leading a trip this summer. We have several wonderful peaks that can be lead during the hot months. The DPS does not need to go dark when it heats up. We can and should lead trips year around!

FYI, Audrey Goodman has stepped down from her position as Secretary and I'd like to say 'Thanks' to Audrey for her hard work with the DPS for the past year and a half. Hope to See You Out There! - Michael

SPECIAL THANKS

Thanks, Audrey, for the many many hours of hard work on Outings and DPS Management. We'll look forward to ascending those high notes on your led Sing-a-longs.

- The DPS Management Committee

Right: Audrey hiking Colorado's San Luis Peak with Charley the dog and Ceà the adventure kitten.
TREASURER’S REPORT

DPS ANNUAL TREASURY REPORT 2008

DEBITS:
SAGE PRINTING 1,785
SAGE MAILING 747
BANQUET COST 2,278
BANK SERVICE FEES 80
ADMINISTRATION 113
SALES TAX 55
PARTY REIMB. 200
TOTAL DEBITS 5,258

CREDITS:
BANQUET INCOME 2,123
SUBSCRIPTIONS 2,220
DONATIONS 20
MERCHANDISE SALES 741
INTEREST EARNED 8
TOTAL CREDITS 5,112
LOSS OF REVENUE -146

BANK BALANCE ON 1/1/08 4,400
BANK BALANCE ON 12/9/08 4,366
ESTIMATED COST OF OPERATION FOR 2009 $3,200

CONSERVATION

Make your voice heard on the Future of Griffith Park, the place where we all get our fantastic weekly conditioning hikes. Tell your city council person that we must designate Griffith Park with the same status and protection that many other parks and treasured L.A. sites now carry. You can email your city council member (Tom LaBonge, Tony Cardenas, Janice Hawn, Dennis Zine, and the others) that it is of utmost importance this Park be kept as a wilderness for generations to walk and recreate without the intrusion of roads, buildings, trams, and urban tomfoolery. -Mary

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 email the DPS Chair, Mary McMannes (marymuir@earthlink.net).

HELP WANTED - MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Help Wanted: Run for DPS Management and bring zeal and enthusiasm in making decisions regarding Outings, Website, Membership Outreach, Desert Conservation, Social Events, the Yearly Banquet, and more. Qualifications: that you are a member in good standing and willing to attend monthly meetings. You'll find the meetings are great fun as they are followed by delicious and amiable potlucks. Contact Gloria Miladin (gm500@yahoo.com), Dave Baldwin (dwbaldwin@aol.com), Kathy Rich (KathrynARich@gmail.com), or Mary McMannes if interested.
BANQUET UPDATE

Banquet Program features “Crossing Baffin” by Dave Sholle

The Desert Peaks Section is pleased to have Dave Sholle present “Crossing Baffin,” his video of a twelve-day back-pack crossing the Cumberland Peninsula of Baffin Island through Auyuittuq National Park. Baffin Island, located in the Nunavut Territory of Northeastern Canada, is the fifth largest island in the world. Auyuittuq National Park is a nearly untapped wilderness offering deep valleys, spectacular fjords, dramatic peaks and magnificent landscape. The trip took place north of the Arctic Circle, with the group crossing the circle from north to south on the final day of hiking. Brian Elliot organized and led this CEC trip and Ron Bartell was the sweep. Several other DPS members participated. The group was taken by Inuit through ice floes on the ocean to the end of a fjord at the start of the hike, and was unsupported until being picked up at another fjord at the conclusion of the hike.

The main difficulties were carrying enough food for twelve days and sufficient gear to deal with uncertain Arctic weather and hiking on muskeg. The main dangers were numerous fast, cold, opaque stream crossings and the potential for Polar Bears. The payoff was hiking with friends through an awesome arctic landscape passing some of the most unique mountains on earth.

Dave Sholle has been a Sierra Club member for over thirty years and is a Professor of Physics at Long Beach City College, where he was instrumental in planning and building the LBCC planetarium and teaches introductory astronomy to hundreds of LBCC students. His interests include digital photography, videography and multimedia. With his wife Barbara he enjoys traveling, hiking, bicycling and telemark skiing.

If you would like to view Dave’s presentation, meet other lovers of the desert plus enjoy an elegant meal, the Desert Peaks Section invites you to attend our banquet on Saturday, May 16 at the TAIX French Restaurant, 1911 W Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles. Dinner choices: Roast Top Sirloin, Salmon or Vegetarian. Complimentary wine provided at each table. Any questions contact Elaine at dwbaldwin@aol.com.

DPS Banquet May 16
PLEASE SAVE THE DATE !!!
HART PEAK
October 25, 2008
By Gary Craig

Hart Peak (1689.5m, 5543’) is a sharp, distinctive bump at the eastern edge of the Mojave National Preserve. I climbed this peak with Ron Bartell and Christine Mitchell as a prelude to the 2008 DPS Chili Cook-off, in the nearby New York Mountains. We recommend Hart to those who find themselves nearby. It’s not tough or majestic enough to recommend for DPS List nomination, but it is a fun climb nevertheless.

I was a passenger with Ron and Christine for this year’s “chili party”. We had some serious problems with Las Vegas traffic on I-15 east of Barstow on Friday evening, but ultimately found our way to the Nipton exit from I-15 not too far west of the Nevada state line. We drove I-15 for a better approach to our Saturday morning goal, Hart Peak, as opposed to coming via the less-traveled route on I-40 directly to the Chili site. From the Nipton exit we drove E to the Ivanpah road, and then S and SE to the end of its pavement. Just at this point, a dirt road (a dead-end spur about a mile long) joins on the right shoulder, leading to Slaughterhouse Spring. We drove a short distance (less than ¼ mile) along this minor spur road to a wide spot for our Friday night camp.

Saturday morning around 6, I was awakened by vehicles passing by on our lonely spur road. R & C were asleep in the back of their Pathfinder, and I had just thrown a tarp and bag down in a flat spot in the bushes to sleep. In my bleary state I figured these two jeeps were heading up the road to set up a roving crystal meth lab for the day, but really it’s more likely they were hunters, given that quail season had just opened. The sound of gunfire up the road later on validated this hypothesis. At any rate we had breakfast, packed up, and headed south for the day’s adventure.

On the road again, we encountered some of the chili cook-off “chefs” and “judges” as they were starting their hike along the railroad grade, just north of the summit of the Ivanpah road, and we stopped to chat briefly. Then, at the “Barnwell” site (noted on the AAA map, near the road crest) we turned left onto the Hart Mine road. This is an “excellent” dirt road heading downhill first SE and then NE, more or less. 4.9 miles from the turn off the Ivanpah road, the main road veers right, but a much less well-traveled road continues straight along an abandoned railroad bed. For Hart Peak, continue straight along the rail-bed road for (coincidentally) another 4.9 miles; I’d recommend a high-clearance vehicle along this latter segment, due to at least three washouts, but mostly the
road is OK. There are excellent south-side views of the Castle Peak buttes on this stretch. About 9.8 miles from the turn off from the Ivanpah road there is a crossroads with a power line road. Turn right here. Follow this road (much better condition than the road you were just on) S for about ¼ mile to a junction with a faint road on the left. We turned and followed this faint road for maybe ½ mile at most, as it heads first SE, then crosses a wash and heads NE, then loops back S again. We parked at a wide spot next to some mining claim stakes where the route to the saddle S of the peak was clearly visible. In a DPS Sage article from 2001, Bob Michael described a route on Hart via this saddle. Thanks Bob for this route from the south! Our parking spot was at UTM 11S 672941E 39120710N, according to Google Earth (which I believe uses the WGS84 datum).

Our hike started with a very gradual climb through moderate cacti and a few washes, heading for the "yellow volcanic tuff" gully described by Bob in his write-up as his descent route. This gully was steeper than the first bit from the car, but it provided a reasonably direct route to the S ridge, and was class 1, but a bit loose at times. It was pretty warm at this point (we got a late start), so we were happy to reach the S ridge where there was a cooling breeze. Then, we made a left turn toward the peak across easy terrain (with one minor cliff band), and then tackled the final summit pyramid, with five or six hundred feet of climbing remaining for us through DPS-typical 1st or 2nd class terrain. Unfortunately along this stretch "yours truly" attempted (accidentally, I promise!) to use a juvenile Joshua Tree as a handhold, with the expected bloody results. But we otherwise reached the summit without incident, although all three of us were feeling the effects of the warm temperatures. It took just 1:25 to reach the summit from our parking spot.

We had a nice lunch break on the summit of at least ½ hour, and enjoyed perfectly clear views off to infinity in all directions. In particular we noted the town of Searchlight, Nevada, and DPS peaks such as Charleston and Mummy, McCullough, Tipton, Spirit, New York, Clark, and so on.

Our return to Christine’s Pathfinder took about an hour. Instead of descending the gully that we had climbed on the way up, we walked to the peak’s south saddle (just another 5-10 minutes farther down the S ridge from our ascent “tuff” gully), and walked down the road W from there. Yes, it is possible to drive to this saddle with 4WD, I think, by following the road from where we had parked. But it is more direct to walk, as the road bends far from a straight line, and the terrain is easy. The car was a welcome sight and we all got cleaned up and quenched our collective thirst on this increasingly warm day. Afterward, we drove back to the Ivanpah road, retracing our route in, and headed south to the New York Mountain road, where we headed west to meet the Chili Cook-off crowd.

Here, this story ends, but a new one begins, one of flavorful meats, chilis, and margaritas (!), which I will let another tell.

*Photos by Christine Bartell.*

**2008 DPS CHILI COOKOFF & NEW YORK MOUNTAIN**

**October 25-26, 2008**

**By David Baldwin**

"...accomplished in the open air without benefit of piped water, electricity, or other conveniences of modern living."

So read certificates presented to eight champion chefs at the 16th Annual DPS Chili Cookoff. On Saturday, October 25, 2008, 22 DPS members and friends gathered at a primitive campsite nestled in sandy rock formations and rimmed with desert oak near the mouth of Caruthers Canyon at the base of the New York Mountains in the eastern Mojave National Preserve. It’s perhaps interesting to note that we first located the campsite using Google Earth satellite imagery, confirmed the place on a scouting trip using GPS, then felt lucky to find it vacant on the chosen day due to the fact that it was hunting season and there were several groups of deer and quail hunters in the area. Fortunately, a few other people arrived Friday afternoon to help us hold the site.

Saturday began strangely in the wee hours when I was awakened by something walking on my legs and looked up to see the silhouette of a 4-legged animal against the open back of the truck. Thinking "Coyote!", I shoved...
and visit with the cooks and master artisans Janet, Gloria, Elaine Baldwin, and new grandmother Linda McDermott carved jack-o-lanterns for the pumpkin carving competition. At 4:30 happy-hour fare was laid out and the chefs pitched their entries to the taster-judges, joined now by eight hungry hikers from another DPS group fresh off New York Mountain. There followed a frenzy of tasting and comparison as everyone tried to rank all the entries from favorite to least and single out a few for special awards. While most retired to the campfire, Ron Bartel ran the scoring computer to determine the winners:

Best Overall Chili – Larry Tidball

Categories:

Texan (no beans): Best – Larry Tidball, 1st runner-up – Dave Baldwin

Traditional (with beans): Best – Janet Damen, 1st runner-up – Ed Herrman

Vegetarian: Best – Mima Roach, 1st runner-up – Gloria Miladin

Special Recognition:

Spiciest Chili: Julie Rush
Best Presentation: Mima Roach
Most Original Recipe: Gloria Miladin
Best Pumpkin: Elaine Baldwin

Back at the campfire, each chef received a certificate hand-lettered by Elaine and category winners received

The Chili Cook-off Apron designed by Christine Bartell, modeled by Mima Roach. Photo by Greg Roach.
embroidered aprons with original block prints of a DPS ram chef and chili pot designed by Christine Mitchell. Congratulations to all the Champion Chefs!

Sunday, 18 participants were up early and carpooled up the road to climb New York Mountain. Larry & Barbee selected the route from Caruthers Canyon to climb New York. Hiking begins on an old dirt road for about 3/4 of a mile and then up a gully to the summit area. There was plenty of brush, trees and rocks but a route could be fairly easily found all the way. The day stayed reasonably cool and the trees provided any extra needed shade. The last 400 feet of the climb is on 3rd class rock. For this section the group mixed between stronger climbers and those who wanted a spotter. Seventeen climbers – David & Elaine Baldwin, Christine Mitchell, Ron Bartell, Rich Gnagy, Gloria Miladin, Bill Gaskill, Jan Reneric, Ed Herman, Winnette Butler, Jim Fleming, Greg Roach, Julie Rush, Jack Wickel, Glenn Justice and Barbee & Larry summited. One climber, David Reneric stayed back to calm the dogs - Tillie and Little Dog who could not do the climb. Round trip stats were a bit long 9 am – 3:30 PM but with a large group that is to be expected.

Following the climb we returned to camp to clean up before everyone headed back to Los Angeles, Las Vegas and other destinations.

Footnote: Camping or hiking with a group over 15 persons and/or over 7 vehicles requires a special use permit from the National Park Service (NPS). Obtaining the permit was easy but it takes a bit of pre-planning. An application must be completed (obtainable from the applicable NPS office) and a $50.00 processing fee is charged. In addition the permit application will need to be sent to the Local Outing representative at Sierra Club (SC) National so that the SC can have SC’s insurance broker provide the required insurance certificate. We were able to complete the application, obtain the insurance, submit the application and payment and receive back the necessary permit in less than 2-weeks. I would recommend allowing at least 4-weeks to avoid having to use Express Mail and to not have to rush either the NPS or SC.

SMOKIN TOM TOM CHILI
(Pork with smoked tomatoes
and tomatillos chili)
Serves 12-16

Ingredients:
6 pounds cubed (about ½” size) pork shoulder or other stew meat
¾ cup vegetable oil
2 large onions (about 4 cups)
6 cloves garlic
1 tablespoon sea salt
1 tablespoon fresh pan roasted and ground cumin
2 quarts chicken broth
6-8 fresh pasilla chile peppers roasted over fired then peeled, seeded and chopped
2-3 red bell peppers roasted over fired then peeled, seeded and chopped
2-3 jalapeno peppers seeded and chopped
3 pounds fresh tomatillos, husks removed and diced chunky
4 pounds roma type tomatoes smoked, peeled, seeded and diced chunky – save all juice from tomato seeding process – you should have about 8 cups tomatoes with their juice. (for smoking directions see below)
1 bunch cilantro coarsely chopped

Smoke tomatoes
Prepare Weber grill or smoker. If using Weber build a small fire in center of grill with hard wood (oak works very well). Note this is a good time to roast pasilla chilies. Wash and slice tomatoes in half. Place in a metal basket with sliced side up. Let the fire burn down half way then divide the coals in half and push the coals to each side of the grill. Add a small amount of additional
wood, flame and cover grill. After a few minutes place tomatoes in center of the grill away from the coals. Leave cover on grill except to check coals – the grill will be at about 300 when you start smoking and should average about 200 – 225 degrees. You’ll maybe add a little wood one more time. Smoke tomatoes for 90 min to 2 hours. Be careful to not over smoke the tomatoes or they will taste sour. Let tomatoes cool. Then peel and seed over a fine strainer catching all juices. Push seeds and peel around the strainer to push through every drop of juice. Dice tomatoes and cover with juice till ready to use.

Chilies preparation

It is best to wear rubber gloves when working with chilies. Roast pasilla chilies over oven wood fire. Place in plastic bag to cook and loosen skins. Remove pasilla skins and seeds. Dice. For jalapenos, remove seeds and dice. Taste chilies now – you need to know how hot they are to judge how many to put in the chili.

Chili preparation

In a large stock pot saer pork in oil over a high heat – try to get the pork golden brown by pouring off excess juices. Reserve oil and juices. Put pork into a bowl and cook garlic and onion in reserved oil and juices till tender, but not brown. Season with cumin and return pork to the pot. Add stock and simmer 30 minutes.

Next all remaining ingredients. Based upon how hot the chilies were add ½ to 2/3 the total amount. Let the chili simmer 20 minutes, taste and then add more chilies if it isn’t too hot. Remember it is easy to add and impossible to remove hot chile flavor. Continue simmering for a total of 45 to 60 minutes.

Serve hot garnished with fresh cilantro and cheese (jack and/or cheddar).

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**NOVEMBER POTLUCK**  
**November 9, 2008**  
**By Mary McMannes**

Our November 9th meeting and potluck found us all at the beautiful home of Karen Leonard who so graciously invited DPSers in for our monthly meeting and party; AND, she cooked us all a special Indian meal* which we enjoyed tremendously. Karen’s home is a showcase in itself with artwork and artifacts from her constant worldwide travels.

The dinner was one of our more exotic and delightful repasts, which we complemented it with our own additions, desserts, and wines. We were pleased to see Dan Richter make an appearance, and he had that Sierra glow and a look of satisfaction as he had just climbed Mt. Sill, via the Swiss Arete. Pretty impressive, I’d say. Long-timer Larry Hsk came, too; along with Mary and Rayne Metheral, Dave and Elaine Baldwin, Gloria Miladin, Michael and Julia Gosnell, and Karen’s son, Sam, along with his lovely wife Kimberly and cute daughter (Karen’s granddaughter), Marly. I always keep my ear cocked for some more tidbits to add to, “Did You Know?” And did you know that Dan had lived a year in India where he was engaged to an Indian fiancé from Hyderabad. Karen chimed in that Hyderabad was one of her favorite areas, and many of her recipes were garnered from that very place.

Thanks, Karen, for your generous hospitality especially since you were preparing for your annual trip back to, you guessed it! India. It was a great and fun evening for all, and DPS management worked on lots of good and new projects. Be sure to join us for our January meeting at Audrey Goodman’s in Santa Monica! For the record: the great brownies at Octoberfest decorated with M&Ms spelling DPS came from the culinary kitchen of Barbara Sholle.

*Among Karen’s tasty treats were Tamater Kat (tamarind tomato sauce with boiled eggs). Bagura Begun (eggplant in tamarind sauce.) Both of these are specialties of Hyderabad.
CLARK MOUNTAIN
November 20, 2008
By Bob Hartunian

I got back from a day climb on Clark Mountain but almost didn’t. Started climbing at 10 am on Thursday and found my way to top in 3.5 hrs. Along the way, there was a stretch of 3rd class that was ok to go up but down climbing alone might be a little awkward for someone who hasn’t done much of it lately. And I didn’t take a rope; too much weight for an old guy.

So after getting on top and signing in, I looked at an alternate descent route and it appeared that going straight down off the summit was my best choice and would avoid any down climb on rock. But in the back of my mind were the voices of old climbing friends who said that a cardinal rule is to always go back the way you came up because you never know what may be down there. And looking down may not reveal a waterfall or other obstacle.

Down I went on crappy loose rock and everything looked good and I could see my truck a mile away. No problem. Then I was in a high-walled canyon with steep sides and as I looked down, the floor of the canyon dropped off to a waterfall about 250’ high with absolutely no way to go around or down. By that time it was 3:30 pm. I knew I had an hour and a half of light and if I was strong, I might have been able to re-climb the whole mountain and down climb as I should have. But at 69, I just didn’t have the energy to do it, especially on that loose shale crap. So I decided to bivy and wait for the morning. But in checking my equipment, I only had a sweatshirt and rain jacket to put over the shirt I was wearing. And at the 7000’ level there, it would get below freezing.

I decided to try for help. I did carry a cell phone, although its charge condition wasn’t checked before leaving. I climbed up to a knife-edge ridge to see what was over the side and it was 500’ down to ground. Decided to try a 911 call and see if I could get a helicopter rescue. Yeah, sure, who would come to me in the darkness and find me on this sharp ridge with nowhere to land. I made the call and got a dispatcher in Vegas who had no idea where Clark Mtn was, asked all kinds of stupid questions like color of my cap and my call was breaking up. She handed me off to another lady and another round of the same questions and finally a 3rd lady. By that time my batteries were getting low. I told the lady to get me a helicopter and my phone didn’t work after all that talking.

I figured I’d be on this ridge all night and would be lucky to survive the temps. Tried to find wood and it’s scarce up on the rocks. But I managed to get enough to get a small fire started in a small pocket in rocks. I wanted to stay high and exposed just in case someone did actually come for me. I got the fire going as it got dark and I realized that I didn’t have sufficient wood to be warm all night.

At around 6:30 pm, I heard the sounds of a helicopter approach in the black night with no moonlight. Got up and shined the flashlight at it and I’ll be damned, they saw it and flew around me. They searched for a landing spot but there was none the rotor blades could fit into the canyon. So they vanished. Half an hour later, I could see the helicopter shining its light for 2 cars driving slowly to my parking place. It took them forever. I assumed they were search and rescue guys who might try for a climb in the morning at 8 am, the usual delay period. By that time, old Roberto might not be in the rescue mode and a little stiff.

At 7:15 pm, the helicopter came back up and made a try to get me. I worked my way to the very tip of the knife edge. The pilot slowly brought the ship’s skid onto a rock but it slid off. He tried again and as soon as it was on, I jumped into the ship! They ferried me down to my truck where a couple of Sheriff’s were waiting. They checked my ID and I left for home. By midnight, I was in a warm bed and alive. Thank God for a good helicopter pilot and cell phones and the 911 system. Otherwise, you wouldn’t be reading this story.

Here is a picture of the route looking down from the peak. It looks easy and straightforward. The problem is the waterfall dropoff at the bottom is only apparent when right at it. Photo by Bob Hartunian.
OLD WOMAN LIST FINISH
November 22, 2008
By Ann Perkins

We had beautiful weather for the list finish climb of Dave and Ann Perkins, and the list finish celebration of Bob Hoeven and Anne Rolls, on Old Woman Mtn. We camped Friday night about ½ mile short of the roadhead for the A and B routes, at a spot where an old road intersects the sandy main road, providing plenty of camping spaces. Several of us arrived early and enjoyed the campfire and Subway sandwiches purchased earlier in Barstow (more about that later!) Twenty-six people and an Australian shepherd mix dog gathered the next morning and began the hike about 8:00 am, past the gate and wilderness boundary and up the road to the Florence Mine. The leader, Dave Perkins, set his usual brisk pace, but by the time we had left the road and were making our way up the canyon to the saddle on the B route, he was feeling definitely unwell. After a couple of bouts of nausea, we decided that it must be due to food poisoning (oh, those Subway sandwiches), and he was wondering if he would make the peak. We were also worried about the possibility of dehydration, and Sue Holloway graciously volunteered to come with him at a slower pace until he was feeling better. Alex Amies was good enough to take over the leadership duties at that point, and Ann Perkins continued as sweep. We proceeded up the ridge, contouring around point 4981 to the right, and then to a notch and up the final slopes to the summit. Dave was feeling better toward the end and attained the summit with no problem, as did the rest of the 26 climbers and the dog, who was a good sport and issued not a sound of complaint. The rest of us, however, did occasionally complain that this was harder and taking longer than we had expected! In retrospect, we might have chosen an easier peak or route for our list finish, but the C and D routes for Old Woman, although shorter, involve 4WD road and a more restricted camping area.

There were many summit pictures, including one of all the list finishers who were on the trip (14), and Mary McMannes had ordered pins for Dave and me, and Anne Rolls and Bob Hoeven, so we had a “pinning” ceremony on the summit! It’s great to celebrate this accomplishment with climbing friends, and just generally good people that we enjoy and trust. We left the summit about 2:00 pm, and wasted no time descending in order to get to the road before dark. We returned by a slightly different route, heading down the slopes to the notch, and then more directly down the canyon, avoiding point 4981. This route, which was closer to the B route, went well and we were on the road by 5:00 pm and treated to a spectacular sunset as we walked back to the cars. For such a large group, including one person who had never climbed a desert peak before, we had no major mishaps except for some scrapes (there is always a contest to see who will draw first blood!), and Jim Fleming sprained his foot on the way down which with the aid of an ace bandage fortunately proved to be no major hindrance.

The dinner was up to the usual DPS standards, with abundant appetizers and celebratory champagne. Anne Rolls brought turkey soup and I provided turkey chili and beef stew. After all that, we still managed some dessert, including the cake Mary McMannes had brought for the birthdays of Gary Craig, Rich Gnagy, and herself. Participants were Alex Amies, Mike Baca, Dave and Elaine Baldwin, Ron Bartell, Winnette Butler, Emily Coombs, Jim Conley, Gary Craig, Ron Eckelmann, Edna Erspermer, Jim Fleming, Paul Garry, Rich Gnagy, Ric Gunn, Bob Hoeven, Sue Holloway, Cliff Jones, Mary McMannes, Gene Mauk, Christine Mitchell, Mary Motherall, Dave and Ann Perkins, Virgil Popescu, Anne Rolls, John Thau, and the dog Maui. Thanks to all of you.
for joining us on this adventure, and special thanks to Sue Holloway for staying with Dave, Alex Amies for taking over leadership duties, Elaine Baldwin for helping with the dog and assisting as sweep, and Dave Baldwin for his expert foot bandaging.

On Sunday most of the group went home, but Gary, Ron and Christine, and Dave and I continued the fun by climbing the high point of the Marble Mountains in the Trilobite Wilderness. Since the climb was short, we relaxed on the summit, where the views were good except to the north where we had an excellent view of Interstate 40! Christine and Ron were continuing on for some climbing in Death Valley, and eventually to Weed to visit the Mamedalins. Virgil, Ron Eckelmann, and Paul Garry headed off to climb Sheephole Mtn near Joshua Tree National Park, and we assume they met with success.

leaving some of their food! It was great to swap stories with old friends, and meet some new ones. Attendees included Virgil Popescu, Asher Waxman (close to finishing the list) and his sister Rebecca Cross, Ron Hudson, Kathy Rich, Dave and Elaine Baldwin, Christine Mitchell, Mary McMannes (our esteemed Chair), Gloria Miladin, Rich Gnagy, Pat and Gerry Holleman, Darrick and Sara Danta, Sherry Harsh, Ellen Schumacher (husband Erik hurt his back bicycling and was unable to attend), Pamela Rowe (new to DPS, has finished HPS list), Walton Kabler (former DPS leader – he led the Big Picacho climb Dave and I did in 1976), and Dave and me. Apologies if I’ve left anyone out – as we get older, memory is not what it used to be! Hope to see you all at the next DPS potluck on January 10th at Audrey Goodman’s in Santa Monica.

DECEMBER XMAS PARTY & POTLUCK
October 4, 2008
By Ann Perkins

About 20 DPS members scaled the heights of Tampa Avenue in Northridge to reach the holiday party at the home of Ann and Dave Perkins. The award for the longest trek goes to Rich Gnagy who drove from Sacramento to join us! The management committee began their meeting about 5:00 pm, and were enjoying their meeting so much that we finally had to drag them out of their room to join the festivities at 6:00 pm. Appetizers and wine fueled a lot of good conversation, and then we had a wonderful array of main dishes (including Mary Mac’s famous cheesy potatoes), and finished with a variety of pies. One of the benefits of hosting the party is that you can enjoy great leftovers for several days – thank you to those who insisted on
DESSERT CATS
By Mary McMannes

After the successful Muah climb, Tina and Tom Bowman, and I stopped at the Exotic Feline Breeding Compound in Rosamond before the final journey home. Prior to visiting the cats, we searched for Tina and Tom’s anniversary brick which was embedded in the brick wall sidewalk near the entrance. The cats (jaguars, Bengal tigers, bobcats, panthers, mountain lions, and many more) plus exotic birds and strolling peacocks were quite frisky as it was near feeding time.

A highlight was seeing Rocco, a baby leopard, playing in his water tub with a blue ball. A caretaker explained the delicacy of saving the cubs, as timing is of the essence. If the male is not taken out of the cage when the babies are born, he has the natural instinct to eat the offspring. In Rocco’s case, his parents (Annie and Nacon) are soul mates and bonded for life; thus separating them was not an option. Caretakers chose to remove Rocco from his parents and hand-raise him. Rocco seems to be happy, and he’s the first cat I’ve seen who splashes joyfully in his little tub. His final destination as an adult is the Wildlife World Zoo in Litchfield Park, AZ.

One can join this worthy wildlife and preservation center for $20. Twilight tours are conducted in 2009, April 25, June 20, and September 19. Regular tours are $10 (free if you’re a member) and well worth your time as you drive home from the Sierras or Death Valley. Contact http://www.cathouse-fcc.org/.

Rocco, a 3 1/2 month old Northern Chinese leopard. Photo by Tina Bowman.

NEW YORK’S HIGH POINT
MOUNT MARCY
October 2008
By Bob Michael

Like most born and bred Westerners, I have, or had, a certain superior condescension towards the Appalachians -- pretty enough, especially in the Fall, and they sure beat Iowa, but really they’re just the worn-down nubs of past Paleozoic glory, not REAL mountains like we have between Denver and the Pacific. Well...some real time in the Adirondacks has given me some new respect for the Appalachians and the people who climb them. (Geologically, the Adirondacks are a distinct range from the Appalachians, so I am using the latter term geographically to describe the entire old low Eastern mountain system from Alabama to Quebec.) New York’s high point is only about 300 feet higher than the room where I am typing this in Fort Collins, Colo., but it was one of the most grueling outings I’ve had in years. I have possibly never so underestimated any peak.

Granted, most Appalachian highpoints are pretty uninspiring drive-ups or nearly so. (Some like Pennsylvania, are jokes.) The two exceptions -- both serious all-day wilderness treks -- are Marcy and 5,267’ Mt. Katahdin in Maine. The stats on Marcy are 14 trail miles RT and 3200’ elevation gain. In the West, given these figures, we would expect a hearty all-day workout. The kicker on Marcy is the “trails” -- something I recalled from my last hiking in the Appalachians 40 years ago. In the West, we expect a well-used major trail to be more or less well-graded and switchbacked, and to have a pathway that, with the odd boulders and tree roots, is at least significantly smoother than the native
terrain. Apparently the trails in the Appalachians were constructed before humans invented the concept of switchbacking; they go STRAIGHT UP the mountain. But that's not the worst of it; where they go straight up, they are literally PAVED with boulders, rocks, and tree roots, and, because of the climate, as like as not there's mud in between the aforementioned. Certainly not all of the 14 miles consists of this kind of going, but a sizeable fraction does. My buddy George Quinn came up with the perfect term after about the eleventh mile; "TORTUOUS". So help me, some Colorado Fourteeners are easier!

This trip was many years in the hatching. Quinn, a New Yorker (now living in Idaho), had always wanted to bag the state summit. I'm sort of a casual "Highpointer" (I've got 25; I'll never get the 50) who got a good start on Eastern highpoints (including Katahdin) 40 years ago when I spent one school year in the East. So we've been kicking the idea around for years. Quinn remembered that our best chance with the notoriously lousy Northeastern weather was the second half of September; the black flies would be dead by then; and we'd get to see the start of the glorious fall color in the hardwood forests. So, the evening of September 21 found us at road's end in the "Adirondack Loj" (sic), a short drive southeast of the mountain resort and old Olympic venue of Lake Placid (where we had a surprisingly excellent Sushi dinner at Aki Sushi). The Loj is operated by the Adirondack Mountain Club and offers cozy bunk-type accommodations with convivial hiker folk as well as bounteous breakfasts and dinners. As long as Marcy turned out to be, it's highly recommended.

Blissfully unaware of the trial awaiting us, we hit the path at 8:30 after a leisurely breakfast. We had perfect weather (and I can't imagine doing the peak in anything but); in a providential stroke of luck, a high pressure system sat on New England most all week delivering almost beach weather during the days. The first two miles are easy enough, a mostly smooth dirt trail with a slight drop to a man-made lake at Marcy Dam, where we had our first good views of the peaks and the mixed spruce-hardwood forest flaming red with maples. (Dense forest severely limits the views in the Appalachians.) Past Marcy Dam the fun begins; the straight-up bouldery unpleasantness discussed earlier. Occasional smoother flat stretches offer brief respite before the next boulder ladder. The hardwoods thin out and the forest begins to take on a taiga look with thick stunted spruce. The most tedious stretch of all comes just before the trail flattens out on a ridge at 1300 meters (4260') elevation which curves around to end up on the northeast ridge of Marcy, a broad turtleback of granite* slabs which reaches above timberline – thus giving the first distant views of the entire day. The entire Adirondacks were overrun by the Laurentian ice sheet during the Ice Age, and glacial striations can still be seen on the summit slabs. The taiga thins to tangles of spruce krummholz which on the very top is replaced by patches of Arctic-Alpine tundra between the slabs. (A sign at the trailhead requests you to do the "rock walk" and stay off the tundra, which is surely one of Earth's most restricted ecosystems – the sign estimates there are some 80 acres above timberline in New York State.) Although you've broken out above the boulder-tree root torture, the "trail" is still no saunter – it's basically a route between and up friction slabs which are not rock climbing but are not casual walking either.

Cloudless skies, a light breeze, and limitless views – into Canada and Vermont – greeted us on the bald summit, probably as fine weather as this country ever gets. We were in the middle of Western-sized wilderness – the core of the Adirondacks is obviously no place for settling or farming, apparently has nothing worth mining (although there are iron and titanium mines in the Precambrian rocks which surround the core), and is too rugged for major logging, and so remains roadless and virtually impenetrable except by trail. We probably spent a little too long on top, and as a result finished the last couple hours by flashlight in a spooky, thick, menacing darkness so total that when we turned off our lights it was like being in a cave. (No wonder Steven King lives in this part of the world.) At least we had made it off the boulders/roots before it got pitch dark. Running on fumes, we stumbled into the Loj a little over twelve hours after we so innocently left. I munched on left-over sack lunch for dinner, ran a toothbrush around my mouth, and collapsed into bed without a bath – something I normally take great pains to avoid.

Fortunately, the next day was a driving day, as we drove some scenic back roads past beautiful Lake Champlain to the Green Mountains of Vermont, to bag Vermont's highpoint, 4393' Mt Mansfield, the next day. (Much easier, but still a fun scenic and fascinating hike, in lovely weather, with extensive Arctic tundra at about the elevation of CAJON PASS!) My knees were so shot from miles of roots/boulders/mud that they needed a day of R&R. I bow in admiration to the folks in the "46'er's Club", who have bagged all 46 Adirondack peaks over 4,000' (many of which have little or no views), but I don't think I'll be joining them. I'll take our nice comfy Western trails any old day.

* actually anorthosite, a bizarre rock composed almost totally of feldspar

Here's a little bit of US history I found just fascinating. Turns out that Teddy (Bully!) Roosevelt was a peakbagger of sorts. He was camped with his guides at Lake Tear-of-the-Clouds, a tarn on the south side of Marcy that is the presumed ultimate source of the Hudson River. He was on a different, and probably even
longer, route than we had used. The Vice President and a small party had bagged the peak the day before with a guide -- the "slippery and muddy" trail was noted. (What else is new, Teddy?) A guide hoofed it up to the camp when news came that President McKinley had died in Buffalo after being shot by an anarchist. The most remarkable part of the story is the report -- if true -- (after all, it was a century ago) that Teddy made it out 12 miles in THREE HOURS. If this is true, and he booked down those tortuous trails at an average 4 MPH, TR was a STUD and a MENSCH. Bully indeed!

The lake at Marcy Dam. Note the "slides" where thin post-glacial soil simply sloughs off to the naked, glacier-polished bedrock in heavy rains.

Also titled The Journey and Ordeal of Cabeza de Vaca, the Narrative has been translated into English on multiple occasions. I possess Cyclone Covey’s version, first published in 1961, however most researchers now prefer the Rolena Adorno/Patrick Pauz translation, published in 1999, which includes the Spanish text on the facing page.

Covey’s translation includes parenthetical explanations as to where Cabeza de Vaca and his companions may have been at various points in their journey as proposed by Cleve Hallenbeck in his 1940 volume, The Journey and Route of Alva Nuñez de Cabeza de Vaca: The Journey and Route of the First European to Cross the Continent of North America, 1534-1536. In light of more recent research, however, Hallenbeck appears to be considerably off base. Indeed, he, and therefore Covey, would have the four survivors wandering through Texas, New Mexico and Arizona, prior to turning south into Sonora. This, as you will note in the following reviews, takes them too far north.

Covey further explains that on many occasions Cabeza de Vaca related his adventures out of sequence. That being the case, and due to several other obvious errors, Covey devotes a good deal of time in clarifying Cabeza de Vaca’s text. Were I to do it over again, I would skip the translation(s), and go straight to the volumes below, the reviews of which have been fashioned to present the authors’ varying ideas of where the four survivors may have traveled on their amazing cross-continental journey.

We Came Naked and Barefoot: The Journey of Cabeza de Vaca Across North America (2003), Alex D. Krieger

Alex D. Krieger (1911-1991) was an archeologist and research scientist at the University of Texas at Austin and later a professor of anthropology at the University of Washington. His doctoral dissertation, written in Spanish and submitted to the faculty of the University of Mexico in 1955, was entitled “A New Study of the Route Followed by Cabeza de Vaca Across North America.” Upon retiring from academia in 1979, Krieger settled down to refashion his scholarly work on Cabeza de Vaca into a popular book. Unfortunately, he died in 1991 before his effort was complete. His wife, Margery H. Krieger, who is first to admit she is neither a historian nor an anthropologist, decided that it was important to make her husband’s work public, and so, editing the manuscript and adding several updates, Krieger’s epic effort was finally published by the University of Texas Press in 2002.

Giving only brief consideration to the intrepid foursome’s adventures prior to escaping their Indian captors early in the autumn of 1534, and interspersing his own conclusions with selected portions of text from the Narrative, the Joint Report and other sources,
Krieger effectively undermines the arguments of earlier researchers (e.g., Hallenbeck), who would have the men wandering through Texas, New Mexico and Arizona. Instead, he proposes his own route, sometimes over explaining his conclusions to the point of boredom.

Rather than discuss Krieger’s itinerary in detail, see his map (illustrating two possible alternatives across northern Chihuahua and Sonora), below.

Krieger devotes the second half of We Came Naked and Barefoot to his own translations of both the Narrative and the Joint Report, thus eliminating any reason to purchase either or both of those texts.

Until more compelling evidence becomes available, it’s my opinion that Krieger is the most reliable source as to how and where the four wanderers crossed the North American continent. Indeed, the authors of the two following books give Krieger high praise.

A Land So Strange (2007), Andrés Reséndez

Andrés Reséndez, born and educated in Mexico City, is a Professor of History at the University of California, Davis, and has authored several books and articles on the history of Mexico and the American Southwest.

Although a careful researcher (e.g., Reséndez devotes 53 of the 314 total pages to footnotes), due to the lack of hard data, he only allocates one nineteen-page chapter, “Following the Corn Trail,” to De Vaca and his companions’ cross-continental journey.

Attempting to explain “one of the most mysterious and stunning decisions” the four men made during their odyssey, Reséndez writes: “In the summer of 1535, when the four castaway walked south of the Rio Grande, they discovered an east-west trade route connecting the Gulf of Mexico coastal area with cultural centers deep in what is now the American Southwest.” Although this thoroughfare was never mentioned in their recollections, the men “shifted their course away from the coast and the promise of salvation,” in order to explore the area to the north and west.

And, as if to confirm their decision, they soon met two Indian women carrying maize flour, then another group possessing cotton blankets and a large cast copper ball upon which a face was etched, both of which were indications of wealthy Indian settlements somewhere inland.

Rather than continuing south to the nearest Spanish outpost—a mere 300-mile, two week’s journey away—the men, treated as demigods by the Indians because of their purported healing powers, and thinking perhaps that “God himself was looking after them,” veered sharply to the west to explore “the strange and beautiful land in which they found themselves.”

In his own Narrative, Cabeza de Vaca mentions that he, his companions and their large group of camp followers soon passed through “a sierra of seven leagues and the rocks in it were of iron slag,” after which they came to an Indian village on the bank of a beautiful river. There, he continues, they found small pine trees with cones “like small eggs,” and pine nuts that were better than those of Castile “because they have very thin shells.” Because “botanists have recently identified a pine-nut species with extraordinarily thin seed shells” to be common at low elevations in central and northern Coahuila, Reséndez posits that this spot was near the current steel-producing city of Monclova, about 100 miles north-north west of Monterrey.

Approaching the eastern flanks of the Sierra Madre Oriental, the party turned north, and eventually crossed “a very great river in which the water came up to our chests,” probably the Rio Grande.

The next solid waypoint is La Junta de los Ríos (The Juncure of the Rivers), at the confluence of the Rio Grande and the Rio Conchos, near present-day Presidio, TX. Fifty years after Cabeza de Vaca passed through the area, Antonio de Espejo, a merchant from Mexico City, visited that agricultural settlement, consisting of five pueblos with 10,000 or so inhabitants, where he was told by the residents there that “three Christians and a negro had passed through there.”

Lingering in the pueblos for “some weeks,” the four men and their entourage then continued, following “most likely” the Rio Grand northwesterly. Seventeen days (jornadas) later they again turned west, probably passing near the ancient city of Paquime, now known as Casas Grandes, about 125 miles southeast of Douglas, AZ.

Although Reséndez doesn’t speculate on how far north the men might have ventured, he continues, “after two or three months of arduous marches, the three Spaniards and the African arrived in the ‘land of maize,’ sometime in late 1535 or early 1536.” They had entered the fertile valleys of Northern Sonora, on the Pacific slopes of the Sierra Madre Occidental, where Castillo found an Indian
wearing a Spanish buckle and a horseshoe nail around
the neck. Their long journey, they must have sensed,
was nearing an end.

Brutal Journey: Cabeza de Vaca and the Epic First
Crossing of North America (2007), Paul Schnieder

Whereas Andrés Reséndez is a historian and his A
Land So Strange is a well-told, informational read, Paul
Schnieder is a story teller, and his Brutal Journey is a
compelling page-turner. Indeed, Schnieder, the author
of The Adirondacks, a New York Times Book Review
Notable Book, and The Enduring Shore: A History
of Cape Cod, Martha’s Vineyard and Nantucket, truly turns
Cabeza de Vaca and his three companion’s journey into
an epic story of hardship and heroism.

As an example, Reséndez describes the diet of the
Texas Gulf Coast Indians, who enslaved the four
survivors, thusly: “As the winter eased into spring, and
the (aquatic) roots began to sprout and were no longer
edible, the (tribes) began making preparations to go to
the mainland in search of the one food that was available
all year round: oysters."

On the same subject, Schnieder writes: “For three
months (the Indians) subsisted on nothing but oysters
and other shellfish collected from vast beds that became
exposed at low tide, washed down with brackish water.
This kept the humans only slightly better fed than the
clouds of mosquitoes that descended every evening,
driving everyone into lean-tos clogged with the thick
smoke of smudge-fires, built not for warmth but to keep
the insects at bay.”

Regarding the cross-continental journey, Schnieder
differs from Reséndez on several points. He believes,
for instance, that the four men and their entourage stayed
only two days in the “cow town” at La Junta de los Ríos
(The Juncture of the Rivers), where Reséndez believed
they lingered for “some” weeks. Schnieder does agree,
however, that, for 17 days thereafter, the men proceeded
up, most likely, the Rio Grande, until “they reached a
point where the trail split and one road went west across
the river through a pass in the mountains. This may
have been the place that later became known as El Paso
del Norte (now just El Paso) but more likely it was a bit
south, near Banderas, Mexico.” Schnieder continues,
“For twenty days, more or less, the three Spanish, one
African, and assorted Indian guides and hangers-on
walked through the mountainous highlands of northern
Chihuahua. They passed the ruins of Casas Grandes…
then the trail climbed up into the pine forests, over range
after purple range of the massive western chain of the
Sierra Madre.” From there they dropped into a fertile
valley, in a land of flat-roofed adobe houses. They had
reached Yaqui country in Sonora, a mere twenty or thirty
miles from the Gulf of California. Cabeza de Vaca and
his companions had crossed the continent.

Interlinear to Cabeza de Vaca: His Relation of the
Journey from Florida to the Pacific (1936), Haniel Long

This thirty-one page book by Haniel Long—later
reissued as The Power Within Us—sheds absolutely no
new light on Cabeza de Vaca and his companions’ route
across the North American Continent. The reason I’ve
included in this review is that, although small, this work
is considered to be a gem of Southwestern literature.
The Encyclopedia Britannica’s Gateway to Great Books,
edited by Robert M. Hutchins, Mortimer Adler and
Clifton Fadiman, states that “(The Interlinear) may be
characterized as an adventure story, as history,
anthropology, as religion; and it will stand up under the
scrutiny of all these disciplines. But its place as a classic
is assured first of all by its beauty. It is a piece of prose
that had to be written by a poet. It was.” Noted
Southwestern bibliographer, Lawrence Clark Powell
includes it in his Southwestern Classics, while Henry
Miller, in his preface to a later edition of Interlinear,
writes, “(the book) lifts the drama to a plane whereon it
may be compared with other great spiritual events in the
chain of man’s ceaseless effort toward self-liberation.”

So just what is the Interlinear? Well, it’s an imaginary
addition by Cabeza de Vaca—as written by Long—to
his Narrative, which he had previously sent to King
Charles V. The text opens, “I am that Nuñez Cabeza de
Vaca who lately sent you a Relation of his shipwrecks
and mischances during the eight years he was absent
from your dominions. In painful doubt whether my
words were clear enough, I write again.”

Cabeza de Vaca goes on to explain to the King that
the Spanish should end the brutality commonly
practiced, and rather “teach the world how to conquer by
gentleness, not by slaughter.” Cabeza de Vaca (i.e.,
Long) also makes the point that although he and his
companions were enslaved and stripped of all their
worldly possessions, they were able to heal the natives
by God-given powers within. “If one lives where all
suffer and starve, one acts on one’s impulse to help. But
where plenty abound, we surrender our generosity
believing that our country replaces us each and several.
This is not so, and indeed a delusion. On the contrary
the power of maintaining life in others, lives within each
of us, and from each of us does it recede when unused. If
you are not acquainted with it, Your Majesty can have
no inkling of what it like, what it portends, or the ways
in which it slips from one.”

In 1929, after teaching literature at Carnegie Tech for
20 years, Haniel Long (1888-1956) retired with his
family to Santa Fe, NM, where he became associated
with a circle of poets and writers, including Mary
Austin, Erna Fergusson, Paul Horgan, Oliver LaFarge
and Frieda Lawrence. Among his other published works
are Malinche (1939) and Piñon Country (1941).
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