The DPS Banquet Gala is right around the corner, and we’re looking forward to a summer including some List Finishers, climbing the higher summits both Desert and Sierra peaks. Don’t forget this is the time to climb Telescope, Dubois (took me 3x to get that one, and stay out of the willows!), Nevada peaks like Ruby, Wheeler, and a state high point Boundary (plus Montgomery). Mark your calendars for Asher Waxman’s DPS List Finisher on Spirit (plus, if you’re real nice, you’ll get McFarland, too) and a desert potluck which will rival any fancy dinner party that Hollywood types crave. We are hopeful that Ed Herman will bag Big Picacho this month or in May, paving his way for a List Finisher on Pleasant in the fall. John Hooper has three Mexican peaks left and will finish on Edgar. See DID YOU KNOW for pending and recent achievements, peak-wise.

The Election for 2009-2010 has come and gone with final desserts at the Tidball residence, and new and incumbent management members are settling in. It was an outstanding slate, and thanks to Dave Baldwin, Gloria Miladin, and Kathy Rich for culling the enthusiasts to serve. I will continue into 2010 as Chair, a position that proved to be more fun than I’d ever imagined. The new Outings position is filled by Wonder Woman Tina Bowman, and we’re elated to have her on Board. She and Kathy Rich are magnets for new members especially from the WTC graduates. Gloria Miladin continues as our fine treasurer (the hardest job on management, and she’s the best). Welcome back to Christine Mitchell who brings much experience and peak-bagging to the table. She’ll record our history as it happens plus is our sentinel for anyone straying off the By-Laws. Elaine Baldwin, our desert artist, brings both artistic talents and organization ideas back for major events as the DPS banquet and the Chili Cook Off. Asher Waxman and Virgin Popescu join us as our Alternates. I’m looking forward to working with Ed Herrman as Guidebook Editor along with Dean Acheson, now Guide Book Emeritus. Send all peak changes, additions, coordinates to Ed and cc: to our outstanding and patient Sage editor, Bob Sumner. Thanks to Larry Hoak, webmaster, and Michael Gosnell leaving Outings to be our Conservation Chair. Ron Bartell is invaluable for his continuing advice and maintaining the membership roster. I’m exceedingly grateful to the many generous and fabulous hosts who allowed us to sample their fares while enjoying potlucks extravaganzas in the lovely homes on a monthly basis. The warmest of welcomes is available to all at the DPS potlucks, and gastronomy runs rampant. Barbara Reber and Dan Richter, thanks for collecting our Archives and journeying them over to UCLA for safe keeping.

The upcoming Angeles Schedule covers July 5 through Oct. 31 - please join us on climbs, potlucks, management meetings, and see what Desert Peaking is all about. Tina and I will be pestering leaders at the end of June and opening of July to lead trips for the winter schedule (running from Nov. 1 through Feb. 28). One final thank you to Karen Leverich, Sara Danta, and Elizabeth Saas for added support and help in featuring DPS activities for many seeking new and wild adventures. - Mary

Inside this issue:
- Cerro Pinacate
- Jan & Feb Potlucks
- Fountain Peak
- Martinez Mountain
- Pinto Peak, Ryan Mountain
- Mount Mellenthin, Utah
- Book Reviews

NEXT SUBMISSION DEADLINE JUNE 13, 2009

The Desert Sage is published six times a year by the Desert Peaks Section of the Angeles Chapter of the Sierra Club. Subscription to The Desert Sage is ten (10) dollars a year. See back cover for ordering details. The Desert Peaks Section’s Sage is the property of the Desert Peaks Section of the Angeles Chapter of the Sierra Club. All rights reserved. The Desert Peaks Section maintains a website at:

http://angeles.sierracclub.org/dps/

The Desert Peaks Section explores the desert mountain ranges of California and the Southwest, stimulates the interest of Sierra Club membership in climbing these ranges and aids in the conservation and preservation of desert wilderness areas.
TRIPS / EVENTS
MAY Through SEPTEMBER 2009

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 16-17 SAT-SUN LTC, DPS, SPS Sierra Snow Checkoff/Practice
MAY 23 SAT LTC, WTC, HPS Mt Lowe Beginning Navigation Clinic
MAY 23-25 SAT-MON DPS, WTC Inyo Crest Traverse
JUNE 6 SAT LTC, WTC, HPS Heart Bar Peak Navigation
JUNE 7 SUN DPS, LTC, WTC, SPS Grinnell Ridge Navigation
JUNE 12-14 FRI-SUN LTC, WTC, HL Wilderness First Aid Course
JULY 18 SAT DPS White Mountain Peak
AUG 15-18 SAT-WED DPS Ruby Dome, Wheeler Peak, Mt Moriah
SEPT 19 SAT LTC Leadership Training Seminar Deadline
SEPT 19-20 SAT-SUN DPS, WTC Glass Mtn Ridge, Mount Patterson
SEPT 23 SAT DPS, WTC McFarland Peak
SEPT 23 SAT DPS Spirit Mountain
SEPT 27 SUN DPS, LTC, WTC, SPS Grinnell Ridge Navigation
SEPT 30 WED LTC, WTC Advanced Mountaineering Program - Basic Safety Systems

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://sierracclub.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.

♦ MAY 2 SAT WTC, LTC

I: Nav 'tilt 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. Nct a checkout - but you'll be prepared. Send email (or sase) for required materials to Leader: Marc "Roadkill" Hertz (marc.hertz@sierracclub.org). Co-Leaders: Robert Myers, Adrienne Benedict, Jane Simpson.

♦ MAY 9-10 SAT-SUN LTC, WTC, DPS, Desert Committee

I: 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 16 SAT DPS DPS Annual Banquet: The Desert Peaks Section will host their Annual Banquet the evening of Saturday May 16 at TAIX 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. Price: $35. Dinner choices: Roast Top Sirloin, Fish or Vegetarian and includes complimentary wine provided at each table. Any questions contact Elaine Baldwin at dwbaldwin@aol.com.

♦ MAY 16-17 SAT-SUN LTC, DPS, SPS

M/E: Sierra Snow Checkoff/Practice: For M & E candidates wanting to check off leadership ratings or others who wish to practice new techniques. Restricted to SC members with some prior basic training with the ice axe. Send
SC#, climbing resume, email, H&W phones to Leader: Tina Bowman(tina@bowmandesigngroup.com). Co-leader: Tom McDonnell.

♦ MAY 23  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 1-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 23-25  SAT-MON  DPS, WTC
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 Bedsprings Camp, Mon climb Mt Inyo (10,975') and head down to cars. Total stats ~15 miles, 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 6  SAT  LTC, WTC, HPS
I: Heart Bar Peak (8332'): Practice navigation for Sun checkoff on this 7 mi rt, 1400' gain hike. We will take a cross-country route to Heart Bar Peak and practice micro-navigation skills along the way. Send email (preferred) or sase, with contact info & recent conditioning to Leader: Robert Myers (rmmyers@ix.netcom.com). Co-Leaders: Jane Simpson, Adrienne Benedict.

♦ JUNE 7  SUN  DPS, LTC, WTC, DPS, HPS
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, rideshare, to Leader: Robert Myers (rmmyers@ix.netcom.com). Assistant: Harry Freimanis.

♦ JUNE 12-14  FRI-SUN  LTC, WTC, Harwood Lodge
C: Wilderness First Aid Course: Runs from 8 am Fri to 5:30 pm Sun. Fee includes lodging, meals and practice first aid kit. Proof of CPR within previous 4 years required to enroll. Fee $205 with SC#/$215 non-member (full refund through May 8). For application, contact Leader: Steve Schuster (steve.n.wfac2@sbcglobal.net).

♦ JULY 18  SAT  DPS
O: White Mtn Pk (14,246'): Hike a California 14er, 15 mi, 2400' gain on dirt road. Outstanding views of the Sierra, opportunities to visit the ancient bristlecone pines. Send e-mail or sase w/conditioning and recent altitude experience to Leader: Tina Bowman (tina@bowmandesigngroup.com). Co-leader: Tom Bowman.

♦ AUG 15-18  SAT-WED  DPS
I: Ruby Dome (11,387'), Wheeler Peak (13,063'), Mt Moriah (12,067'). Climb Ruby Dome, (12 mi rt, 5400' gain, some class 2 scrambling) the most Alpine peak on the DPS list, in a spectacular area, plus Wheeler (8.5 mi rt, +3100', all trail) with magnificent Bristlecone pines near the top and very beautiful Lehman Caves in its gut. To be followed by an optional exploratory climb (details available upon request). Send email with interests, H&W phones, experience, time available, vehicle and rideshare info to Leader: Asher Waxman. Co-Leaders: George Wysup, Michael Gosnell.

♦ SEPT 19  SAT  LTC
Deadline for Leadership Training Seminar: Last day for receipt of application and payment by LTC. Register for Oct 3 seminar. Next seminar: Spring 2010. See ad in back pages of the Angeles Chapter Schedule.

♦ SEPT 19-20  SAT-SUN  DPS, WTC
O: Glass Mountain (11,140'), Mount Patterson (11,673'): First Day, pitter patter up Patterson with Tina and Mary Mac for 5 miles and 1600' gain. Day #2, climb the black obsidian peak for 3 miles and 1900' gain. Evening potluck will add to our merriment. E-mail Leader: Tina Bowman (tina@bowmandesigngroup.com). Asst: Mary McMannes.
MR: McFarland Peak (10,742’): An “exploratory” climb of McFarland Peak - a beautiful, rugged and imposing limestone peak hidden deep within the northern portion of the Spring Mountains of southern Nevada. We will climb the peak via the Bristlecone and Bonanza Trails (13.5 mi rt, 4,500’ gain). Class 3 rock experience required. Restricted to Sierra Club members (medical forms required). Join us for Asher Waxman’s list finish on Spirit Mtn. the next day. Send email/sase, detailed resume including class 3 rock experience to Leader: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com). Assistant: Asher Waxman.

I: Spirit Mtn (5,639’): Join us for Asher Waxman’s list finish on this sacred and magical peak above Christmas Tree Pass. The peak overlooks Lake Havasu and Laughlin. We will climb the mountain from the pass by a beautiful cross-country route. (3 mi rt, 2,000’ gain). Join us for our “exploratory” climb of McFarland Peak the day before. Send email and sase to Leader: Asher Waxman (amuirman@yahoo.com). Assistant: Dan Richter.

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, rideshare, to Leader: Robert Myers (rmymers@ix.netcom.com). Assistant: Harry Freimanis.

M/E: Advanced Mountaineering Program - Basic Safety Systems
First of 4 climbing workshops. Today’s indoor evening workshop of 4 hours reviews ropes, knotted, harnesses, helmets, and basic climbing gear and will take place in Pasadena. Based on book: “Mountaineering Freedom of the Hills, 7th edition”; today: Chapter 9. Open to climbers who are SC members and have some climbing experience. As space is limited, priority will be given to participants who commit to all 4 workshops. Send or e-mail SC#, resume, phones to Leader: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com). Assistant: Pat McKusky.

MULE TRIPS

Mule Pack Section, Angeles Chapter, Sierra Club
All the joys of backpacking and more. Without carrying a pack!
2009 High Sierra Trips
June 25-28 Glen Aulin
July 19-24 Charlotte Creek
August 2-8 Garnet Lake
August 9-15 Pine Creek Canyon
August 16-22 Bernice Lake
September 4-7 Lillian Lakes
Visit the MPS website for more info. http://angeles.sierraclub.org/mps/

LETTER
Now rapidly approaching 80 and recovering nicely from a third open-heart surgery, I find that, more and more, I enjoy the mountains vicariously through trip reports and articles in The Desert Sage, seldom actually putting boots on a trail. Over the years much of this enjoyment has come from Burton Falk’s book reviews. The DPS members and other readers of the Sage are very fortunate to have Burton providing this unique service. - Jim Throgmorton

COVER PHOTO: Cerro Pinacate. Photo by Scott Surgent.
MEMBERSHIP CHAIR / ACTIVITY REPORT, April 9, 2009

Membership Summary

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Activity Report

Emblems

#574 Susan Cooper 10/2/08 Mt Inyo
#575 Jim Long 10/2/08 Mt Inyo

New Member
Mary Jo Dungfelder  Pinto Mtn

New Subscriber
Peter Dascalos

Sustaining Renewals
Robert A. Beach  1 year
Jim Hinkley  1 year

Membership Renewals
Dean Acheson  1 year
Gary Bowen  1 year
Graham Breakwell  1 year
Dennis Burge  2 years

Dave Cannon  1 year
John R. Castel  1 year
David Comerzan  1 year
Mark Conover  1 year
Michael Dillenback  1 year
Robert Emerick  1 year
Scott & Yvonne Jamison  1 year
Roy & Barbara Magnuson  1 year
Igor & Suzanne Mamedalin  1 year
Penelope May  1 year
Terry Morse  1 year
Don Ricker  1 year
Don Sparks  1 year
Bruce Trotter  1 year
Joseph Wankum  1 year

OUTINGS CHAIR

As this is my last column as Outings Chair, I'd like to say 'Thank You!' to all our great leaders for their time and effort. We have a full schedule this year including a couple of summer trips. Keep up your super work!

Since I started as a newbie to Sierra Club politics, it took awhile for me to learn about my duties. It seemed just as I figured most of it out, my term ended. I would recommend that future Outings Chairs try to keep their term for two years.

A couple of notes: Asher Waxman's list finish is September 27th on Spirit Mountain with Dan Richter co-leading. Try to make room on your calendar for this special occasion. And, longtime member Ken Jones, who is now in Seattle, is looking for trip mates on the following peaks: Ruby Dome, Moapa, Bridge, the Guardian Angels, Weaver's Needle, Pinacate, Pico Risco and Big Picacho. You can reach Ken at hiptken@hotmail.com

Thanks to my fellow board members for your hard work and thanks to Audrey and Tina for helping me learn my duties. - Michael Gosnell

Thanks to Michael Gosnell for being a fine Outings Chair the past year and DPS Chair before that.

Although summer isn’t far away, the DPS will offer some outings in the hotter months to some higher peaks with the Inyo Traverse of four peaks over Memorial Day, White Mountain Peak on July 18th, and Ruby Dome and Wheeler Mountain August 15-18. As summer winds down, join us for Patterson and Glass September 19-20, then join the exploratory of McFarland Peak in Nevada on September 26 as a fine warm up for Asher Waxman’s list finish on Spirit Mountain on September 27th.

Leaders: please start planning outings NOW for the November through February Schedule and the Sage when the DPS ramps up again in the fall! Happy trails, Tina Bowman

CERRO PESCADORES UPDATE

The traditional route in to Cerro Pescadores has been blocked by construction. The 25 Kilometer post was missing when I was there on March 2, 2008. When I first did Cerro Pescadores in 2006 on a trip led by Beth Epstein and Asher Waxman, we pioneered a new route out to the highway Mexico 5. The new route is straight forward and easy. It begins around Km Post 21 or 22 with a right turn at coordinates UTM 11S 653652 3587935. There is a left turn in approximately 1.1 miles at coordinates UMT 11S 652220 3586963. This road can be followed to the regular trail head. The local people have been using this route frequently. -Ed Herrman

THE DESERT SAGE  May/June 2009
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 backpack 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.

**When:** Saturday, May 16, 2009

**Where:** The TAIX French Restaurant, 1911 W. Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles

**Banquet tickets:** $35. Please Reserve by May 11

Time: 5:30 pm - Social Hour/No Host Bar

7:00 pm – Dinner (*Includes complimentary wine at each table*)

**Dinner Choices:** Roast Top Sirloin, Fish, Vegetarian

**Program:** Dave Sholle presents his video “Crossing Baffin” describing a twelve-day backpack crossing the Cumberland Peninsula of Baffin Island through Auyuittuq National Park.

**Raffle:** We continue our tradition of providing you a chance to win fabulous prizes. This year’s offerings include: A beautiful serigraph by Edna Erspamer, Framed watercolor print by Elaine Baldwin, REI gift Certificates, A copy of “Desert Summits” by Andy Zdon and other wonderful items. Tickets are available 5 for $3 if purchased in advance before May 11 or $1 each on the day of the event. Tickets will be held at the door.

**For reservations:** Please indicate number of banquet tickets at $35 a piece, specify your dinner selection/s: Prime Rib, Fish or Vegetarian, and specify number of raffle tickets. Tickets will be held at the door. Mail check payable to DPS to Treasurer: Gloria Miladin, 11946 Downey Ave., Downey, CA 90242. For questions e-mail: Elaine Baldwin: dwbaldwin@aol.com or Gloria: gm500@yahoo.com
Driving Instructions to the TAIX: At the junction of the 110 and 101 freeways in downtown Los Angeles head north on the 101 toward Hollywood, exit at Alvarado St. (Hwy 2) head north on Alvarado, Turn right at Sunset, the TAIX Restaurant will be on the left at the intersection with Park Ave. Valet parking provided.

CONSERVATION

The California Mountain and Desert Heritage Act

In a huge victory for environmentalists across the country, President Obama signed into law the Omnibus Public Land Management Act which included some new gifts for several desert areas affecting our peaks. They are enclosed in the California Mountain and Desert Heritage Act. It creates four new wilderness areas totaling 65,827 acres and seven new additions covering 127,297 acres. Here are some details:

Chuckwalla Mountains Wilderness (14,480 acres): Resembling a rock fortress rising dramatically above the desert lowlands, this area is home to the chuckwalla, the potbellied reptile for which the region is named. Contains rock rings, petroglyphs and other indications of thousands of years of Native American residence.

Joshua Tree Wilderness Additions (78,150 acres): Provides a multitude of recreational activities for visitors who come from all over the world to enjoy rock climbing, hiking, and riding. The park’s sweeping valleys, craggy peaks and narrow canyons provide refuge for bighorn sheep and desert tortoise, as well as cactus gardens and the distinctive Joshua tree.

Orocopia Mountains Wilderness (3,760 acres): Sliced through by the San Andreas Fault, earthquakes have twisted and broken this landscape into colorful canyons, cliffs, and jagged peaks. Home to desert fan palm oases and sensitive
species of bighorn sheep and prairie falcon.

**Palen-McCoy Wilderness (20,320 acres):** With mountains, dunes, and gigantic washes, this addition to the existing Palen-McCoy Wilderness contains sensitive species of desert tortoise, Mojave fringe-tced lizard, and bighorn sheep, as well as the largest midland ironwood ecosystem in the California desert.

**Pinto Mountain Wilderness (24,080 acres):** Rising sharply from the northern edge of the Pinto Basin, these mountains are designated by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as "Critical Habitat" for the future survival of the desert tortoise.

This bill also designates 66.9 miles of Wild and Scenic Rivers including portions of the Amargosa River, Owens River and Cottonwood Creek. Check out the California Wilderness Coalition’s webpage for more details. -Michael

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**DID YOU KNOW**

DID YOU KNOW that Robert Service writes,

> “There’s a race of men (and women) who don’t fit in
> A race that can’t stay still;
> So they break the hearts of kith and kin,
> And they roam the world at will.
> They range the field and they rove the flood,
> And they climb the mountain’s crest;
> Theirs is the curse of the gypsy blood,
> And they don’t know how to rest.

Sounds like a typical DPSer to me, and welcome back to the column that celebrates the worthiest and noblest of our members.

Condolences go to the family and friends of an early DPS/SPS tiger, Frede Jensen (pronounced Freddie) who passed away, Sept 13, 2008, at the age of 82. Frede emblemed (SPS) in 1959 and was one of the early promoters of desert peaks. Ron Jones recalls when Frede’s Citroen got stuck at the roadside to Big Picacho, and non-plussed, Frede returned a week later to reclaim his car. Being a frisky sort of fellow (despite his career in big-named universities teaching ancient classical Romance languages), Frede’s favorite joke was: “You ask about my favorite French breakfast? A roll in bed with my favorite honey.” Sounds much akin to another great climber and his cornball joke about lettuce alone without dressing. Bob Michael, who studied under Dr. Jensen at UCLA, was honored to scatter Frede’s remains from a majestic and high Rocky Mountain peak, an area where Frede spent his final climbing days. Rest in peace, Frede, and thanks for all the fondest of memories you left with your compadres, the peak-baggers of California and Colorado.

DYK, there are List Finishers pending and past? A bright Saturday in April (April 4th) found good friends gathering at Mission Peak in the S.F. Valley. Vic and Sue Henney were eager to lead their final peak on the Lower Peaks List (81 in all), and we were eager for a party as we sauntered through shoulder high mustard flowers to the easy summit. Later, we gathered over at Sylmar (Tom Sumner’s) where Mirna Roach made a salad out of the same mustard flowers (and tasty, indeed!). When quizzed about their most memorable lower peak, Vic and Sue spoke of the fun they had at Marlen Mertz’s Lower Peak List Finisher on Catalina. The trip back was reminiscent of the Titanic as waves slapped the deck, and climbers ran for their sea sick bags. I guess it proves that peakbaggers ultimately are land-lubbers. Speaking of leaders with true grit, what’s this about Sue Holloway leading Martinez after suffering a broken nose and two black eyes (no, George Wysup hadn’t gotten out of hand with peak fever) after falling over a log in the campground. And then there’s Gloria Miladin and Bill Gaskill who ran alongside Virgil Popp’s car as they came out of Pyramid in the dark and the barely distinguishable road had disappeared. No more short cuts from Rich Gnagy, they said!

DYK a pending HPS List Finisher is Dan Richter, Oct. 25th, San Guillerme, to be led by Tina, Doug M., Asher, and Mary Mac. And Asher is anticipating his Big Moment on Spirit and gaining the coveted DPS List Finisher pin. As mentioned in the Chair’s Corner, we’re watching for a List Finisher from Ed Herman and John Hooper (all depending on the Mexican peaks).

Gaining ground to List Finisher #3 is Ron Bartelli and Christine Mitchell (2x), and Ron hopes to celebrate by finding
a new route on ALL Desert Peaks. Jeez, Ron! Is that possible? Steve Smith (son of the famous Fran Smith who led Rabbit 14x and climbed it 18x) says he'll close in for a second List Finisher especially after his hip surgery has healed. And dare I mention Doug Mantle's 10x on Babo, as he and Tina led a new route up this mysterious and mystical peak to be followed by a Moroccan potluck orchestrated by Edna Erspermer.

DYK Joe Young traveled far to bag Kilimanjaro with Dave Comerzan, and he writes about his faithful guide, Edison. Kili guides assume no mercy depending on one's nationality. Thus, if the clients are German, the guides are aptly named Wolfgang, Kaiser, Reiner. Americans get the Roosevelts, Edisons, and now, probably the Obamas.

Voices from the past – DYK a great surprise arrived in the mail, and it was a tube from DPSer, Bill Hauser, who hails from San Jose. Bill's tube (luckily was not an anti-aircraft missile although it resembled one) carried his Mt. Rainier poster outlining newspaper reports and photos of his near-death experience on the Rainier summit, mid 1960s. Climbing with DPSer Gerry Roach (Colorado Peaks Guide author), Gerry, Bill, and four others found refuge in the sulfur caves after a blizzard blew in. All night, they were heated by a continuous sauna but were also burned and blistered by the steam bath. They did this for two nights, while constantly hauling away snow at the cave's mouth. Finally too weak to continue, they crawled out, their wet clothing turning to ice, and they descended. One reporter wrote, "They whooped with joy as they vaulted a snow bank into the parking lot." Churchill was correct in saying there is nothing more jubilant than being shot at and dodging a bullet. The poster was displayed at the DPS banquet. Thanks, Bill. It was great hearing from you.

DYK, DPS leader Tom Bowman's passion (in addition to peak bagging) is leading his company and our nation into a greener existence. He is described as having "bowmanoscope and great vision for a safer and more healthy future." Visit his fascinating website at: www.bowmanglobalchange.com.

DYK, Bob Meador was seen having breakfast at the Ranch House Café in Olanca (Bob was recently honored at the Nixon Library, by President Nixon's brother, Ed, for Bob's great contributions to the Presidential Library.) Doug Bear and family joined us for an Easter weekend in Joshua Tree. Doug, now residing in that area, says he keeps in condition climbing Ryan 344x, Warren Point 320x, and Quail 103x. Mars Benfire and Peter Doggett, how 'bout those numbers?

Also seen on the high rock walls of Joshua Tree (Easter weekend) was Marcelo Altamirano (hailing from Chile) who has now bagged 13 of the Classic Climbs of North America. Several of us are planning a 2010 adventure to Chile where Marcelo and Julietta will accommodate our many interests whether it be volcano climbing, wild water rafting, and anything else your heart desires.

George Wysup, we'll be seeing you in all the old familiar places – DYK George leaves us for a permanent move to Washington. I can't think of any one leader who gave more of his time and efforts to the three climbing sections and probably is one of the nicest men you'll ever meet in your lifetime. Bon voyage, George, but do you really gotta go?

Thanks to my Sierra mentor, Walton Kabler who donated many fine mountaineering books for our Short Sale at the banquet; if anyone else wishes to put such books into re-circulation or pass them on to younger climbers, email Mary Mac. (marymuir@earthlink.net)

As you drive up Highway 395 this summer, be sure to stop at the Norman Clyde exhibit at the Eastern California Museum, in Independence (through Fall 2009). You won't be disappointed in celebrating this High Sierra hero of heroes! Until we meet again - keep the scoops and stories coming my way. - Mary Mac

Map of Independence, CA
Cerro Pinacate, also known as Pinacate Peak—and for that matter, the whole Pinacate region—has interested me for years as a place I'd like to visit and, of course, hike to the peak's summit. The mountain itself—Volcan Santa Clara—is unique to this part of North America: a sprawling shield volcano featuring many lava flows, numerous conical vents and fumaroles, and many maar craters that lie on the flats north of the volcano. It is truly a unique, beautiful environment.

Information on this peak is often sketchy and out of date: I had the DPS description, and also a friend's trip report from 2006 that mentions the DPS report being inaccurate in some regards. Anecdotal information seemed to stress the remoteness and the difficulty in following the desert tracks to the base of the peak. The hike itself, all seemed to agree, was fairly straightforward.

Along with my semi-regular hiking partner from Tucson, Scott Casterlin, we headed off from my home in Phoenix to the border crossing at Lukeville/Sonoita, traveling on Mexican Route 8 southwest toward Puerto Penasco, a beach town popular with us Arizonans. The impressive size of the volcano dominates the western skyline for most of the drive. The peak isn't necessarily high—not even 4,000 feet—but it's big and broad, and quite impressive. We entered through the Pinacate Biosphere entrance station (KM 51 on the highway, very well signed), paid a reasonable fee of 40 Pesos (about $8) per person, and went on our way.

My fears of bad roads were quickly dispelled. The road from the station runs north 2.5 miles, then a well-signed junction instructs one to turn left toward Cono Rojo (Red Cone), the campground and trailhead for Pinacate Peak. I drove generally west through broad desert plains, some arroyos, and toward the end, fields of lava. The road was well marked the entire way—at no time was there any confusion as to where to go. Based on earlier reports, this may be new. Perhaps the increased entrance fee is helping cover the costs of improving the infrastructure in the Biosphere. If so, then I heartily agree and commend the Biosphere people for their fine work. We arrived at Cono Rojo around 3:30 in the afternoon, 13.8 miles from the entrance station. We were the only ones there, although later a group from Mexico City rolled in. The campground is basic: two large camping areas and a handful of pullouts, and not much else. It sits at the base of Cono Rojo itself, an impressive rocky hill oxidized into a strong red color.

We started our hike early the next morning after a very brief chat with the group from Mexico City. The trailhead is at a sign that prohibits further vehicular travel up the road, which itself worms up about 20 feet to gain onto a broad lava flow. Immediately the beautiful mass of Volcan Santa Clara comes into view, so enticingly close. Technically, the big summit is nearby Carnegie Peak, which obscures Pinacate Peak summit for the time being.

The road actually does work its way high up into the heart of the peak, ending about a half-mile short of Pinacate Peak itself, but it takes such a long, meandering detour (mainly to avoid the thickest of the lava flows) that most people will probably opt to cut cross country across the lava slopes to cut off significant time and distance. This is exactly what we did. After hiking up the road for about a quarter-mile to where it trended...
seen way off to the south and southwest. The endless dunes of the Altar Desert were due west, while off on the western horizon was the high bulwark of Picacho del Diablo, visible through the hazy air. To the north we could see many of the fascinating maar craters formed by magma meeting underground water pockets, creating large explosions that leave nearly symmetrical circular craters as a result. The most impressive of them all – Crater Elegante – was easily visible. Seemingly hundreds of little craters, cones, vents and fumaroles pocked the hillsides and flats surrounding the summit. A truly enjoyable summit vista!

For our hike out we followed the road the entire way, mainly out of curiosity. A big mistake, as it takes forever to get back to the trailhead. We added about 4 extra miles to our effort as a result. In retrospect we should have simply went cross country across the lava flows as we had coming up. Cono Rojo is visible on the descent and serves as a good visual navigation item for the cross-country portion across the lava. The drive out to the highway and back up into Arizona went without any delays. Given the recent reports of violence along the border, we never once felt like we were in harm’s way. I suspect that Pinacate is simply too remote and not strategically placed for those nefarious activities. Also, Mexican Route 8 is well patrolled since about half the travelers on it are from Arizona, and you are allowed to drive your vehicle to this point without having to register it with Mexican authorities (although Mexican auto insurance is strongly recommended).

In retrospect, our hike up Pinacate Peak went very well with no logistical problems, and the dirt roads themselves – the variable I had most feared – proved to be very easy to follow. Just in case, I did have a shovel, jack, boards and other traction devices in case I got stuck. The road still does require a four-wheel drive vehicle with good tires.

We hiked up the road to its end, perhaps a bit over a mile for us. It gains a saddle northwest of Carnegie Peak then drops into a small basin ringed by Carnegie and Pinacate Peaks. The road finally petered out, but a good use-path continues from the road’s end and aims for a prominent gully north of Pinacate Peak, keeping to the left (south) of a large set of rocks and cliffs. This path gains steeply toward the main north ridge of Pinacate Peak. The rubbly nature of the rock means the path is heavily eroded, and we found ourselves in a “two steps up, one step backslide” mode. We were able to bypass some of these slippery sections via some rockier detours. Finally, the slope moderates and the final 300 feet to the summit is directly along the north ridge, up gentle slopes. The summit itself is simple bare hump of rock, with the log inside a strong box bolted to some nearby rocks, and a simple antenna apparatus on the peak’s south slopes.

The views from up here are amazing: the Gulf of California and the buildings of Puerto Penasco can be north and away from the peak, we opted to start the cross country leg of the hike. A nice symmetrical cone located on the north slopes of Pinacate Peak serves as a good visual navigational device, and we aimed generally for this cone, figuring that at the very least we would be well-placed for the remaining scramble to the top.

Hiking through the lava fields was somewhat tedious but easy. The broken nature of the lava forced us to watch each step carefully. In places the plant growth was heavy with cactus and creosote, and in other places it was completely barren. We ended up crossing many arroyos along the way but kept a good bearing. In about an hour we’d covered maybe a mile across the lava and had gained about 600 vertical feet. We were high enough to have re-entered onto the more rubbly higher slopes of the peak, directly below big Carnegie Peak. And not too long afterward we came upon the road again, which was nice.

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\caption{Scott atop Cerro Pinacate.}
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JANUARY POTLUCK
January 10, 2009
By Audrey Goodman

DPS members are nothing if not loyal. So even at the post "too much holiday partying" time of the year, a lovely group attended the January meeting and potluck, hosted at the Santa Monica condo of Audrey Goodman and Brian Smith. A small but hungry crowd enjoyed the ever amazing DPS potluck fare while exchanging stories of holiday parties and hikes extraordinaire.

In attendance were Board members Elaine Baldwin, Gloria Miladin and Michael Gosnell. Also gathering for the apres party were members Kathy Rich and Ron Hudson, Jack Wickel, Janet Damen, Dave Baldwin and the hosts, Brian and Audrey.

FEBRUARY POTLUCK
February 7, 2009
By Mary McMannes

A hearty group journeyed to the beautiful and spacious home of Michael and Julia Gosnell in Woodland Hills, and many drove there in the downpour of a much needed rain. The description of COZY is being inside a warm house with wonderful friends, lots of wine, and comfort foods such as pasta, casseroles, stews, cookies and pies. And that's the way it was. Management convened at 4:30 p.m., and business was conducted in a mannerly fashion with Secretary Christine Mitchell holding us to the Robert's Rules of Order when we got out of hand, Elaine Baldwin filling us in about our pending May 16th banquet (and great flyer she designed), and Mary Mac and Michael Gosnell laughing and cutting up.

We were joined by Edna Erspamer, Asher Waxman, and Dan Richter who all contributed advice morsels when we needed them. Dave Baldwin presented a slate of worthy candidates for the 2009 Election, and we were pleased to see such a good response from all well qualified persons. Gloria, our treasurer, was skiing in Colorado, but she assured us we still are solvent. Business matters evolved into conversations with various topics such as peaks planned for Schedule #311 (July 5 - Oct. 31), Christine and Ron Bartell newly back from Egypt, legendary climber Cuno Ranschau's death and funeral the prior week, and catch up scoops of this n' that. As Cuno always said, "If you have nothing to say that's good about a person, then pull up your chair next to me!" Due to the rains, we all left our shoes at the door; but then people laughed at Mary Mac's newly purchased socks which had an extra toe.

After the meeting was done and tucked away, more people trickled in. Ron Hudson and Kathy Rich had been teaching rock at Stoney Point, and later, Pamela Rowe...
joined us, too. Dave Boyle traveled the farthest; he’s a DPSer who lives in Maine. Despite our cold rain and snow at lower elevations, Dave told us we didn’t know what cold weather was until we live in Maine.

I asked Michael to write up this potluck gala, but he said, basically we ate, we drank, we talked, we went home. Alas, as always, there were additional events and definitely unplanned! Rebecca Owens, who went home with Brother Asher, left her keys on Julia’s counter, and no one could figure who owned the unclaimed keys. Another favorite couple (un-named here, but they are List Finishers) prepared their dish for the potluck and proceeded to drive far down the freeway to Glendora after seeing Michael’s old address on page 3 of the Sage (oops!). That was sad especially since they live 20 minutes from Michael. Sounds like the time Mary Mac showed up for a potluck one night early. But we won’t go into that.

Thanks to Julia and Michael (and daughters) for a lovely evening. A good time was had by all. We’ll look forward to the wearin’ of the green at Tommy O’Sunner’s (and big dog, Danny Boy), on March 14 in Sylmar. You can feast at a DPS potluck on Saturday and join Asher, Mary Mac, and Frank Dobos on Sunday for an HPS peak experience.

Returning to the Providence Mountains for the first time in many years, I pretty much had forgotten how really rugged they are, but I was quickly brought up to speed by the end of the weekend. With the assistance of Karla Westphal and Shane Smith (the son of CMC member Steve Smith), both of whom I had done desert peaks with previously, we took off on the trail to Crystal Spring behind the Mitchell Caverns Park Visitor Center around 8 AM. After the trail ended we fought our way up the canyon and adjoining ridgelines strictly cross-country, which included hand-to-hand combat with cholla, agave, yucca, etc., and also lots of very steep and unstable terrain until we finally reached a saddle on the main ridge-line, south of the summit. From there it was painstaking power-contouring around several false summits with some tough navigation just to keep it to class 3. After attaining the summit and taking some pictures, checking the register etc. (maybe two people a year signed in), we went for the best way down the canyon, and eventually it started getting dark as the days are still fairly short, and we ended up doing some bush-whacking until we recovered the trail at Crystal Spring. A very full day but thanks to Karla we all enjoyed a Fat Tire beer very well earned at the Hole-in-the-Wall campground.

The next day Shane went off on his own to go after Tortoise Shell Mtn., while Karla and I did a nice moderate ridgeline up to the highpoint of the Woods Mtns. (5,589’) and returned via an adjoining one back to the car. I will return to Hole-in-the-Wall soon as several other prominences are calling my name out there in the Mojave, including Providence Benchmark, Columbia Mtn., Table Top, and more.
I needed Martinez - for my 10th DPS List. Or should I try finishing my first list first? I hear that it's also on the Hundred Peaks List. Anyway, it's always a fine hike. I was happy that Gary Craig and Sue Holloway let me go on their trip.

The day before, Laura Joseph and I bagged my HPS orphan, Pine Mtn #2, on the desert divide. We stayed at Pinyon Flats campground. It turns out that nearly everyone else stayed there too, but we didn't know it at the time. We tried for a Friday dinner at the Sugarloaf Cafe, very near the campground. Alas, the Sugarloaf Cafe is now a real estate office, and it was closed or I would have asked them for dinner.

We met at Sawmill parking lot, the Cactus Spring trailhead, at the appointed hour of 6:30 am (aka Oh-dark-thirty). The icy crusts in my water bottles promised that the day wouldn't be too warm. "We" consisted of the 2 leaders, myself and Laura, Christine Mitchell, and Cliff Jones. I hear you wondering, "Christine and not Ron?"

Ron Bartell had a better idea. He wanted a 100% pure desert exploler on Martinez, so he attacked it from La Quinta, starting Friday afternoon at the trailhead for the Boo Hoff and Guadalupe trails (400' elevation). The idea was to light pack in to a dry site below the peak, then bag it via the north ridge the next morning, then hike out with us. Did he pull this off? Stay tuned.

The other 6 of us went via the standard route, following the Cactus Spring trail way down to Horsethief Creek, then way up to Cactus Spring (looked pretty dry for a spring in winter), then following the usual wash, then tramping up the steep (but stable) gully and on to the summit. Gary and Sue led us up there without a hitch.

Yes, there was Ron Bartell, who had been sitting on the summit for a couple of hours.

Ron apparently didn't try to follow any trails; just a bee-line, more or less, to the summit. He said he did encounter some rock, some unpleasant brush, and a few steep areas en route, but he seemed happy. Maybe he was happy because he was not eaten by a giant kitty while he was snoozing.

I am compelled at this point to remark about co-leader Sue. Somehow she tripped in the darkness at the campground Friday night and did a heroic face-plant. The result was 2 black eyes and notable contusions about the face. A rather worrisome complication was blurry vision.

She did the trip anyhow, including climbing the summit block. What a gal! I was happy to hear that she will recover quite nicely.

There was absolutely no problem with route finding, what with several dozens of red mylar ribbons along much of the route and rock cairns at a 5 foot spacing in the gully. My opinion is that we can thank HPS' famous Prince of Darkness for placing these. Anyhow, the flags have magically disappeared and the cairns are rather less obtrusive. I'm sure this is only temporary.

The HPS peak guide appears to have the correct stats: about 16 miles round trip, 4300' gain. But it states a par time of 8-9 hours, and we took almost 12 hours. Those HPS folks must be a speedy lot.

A hike to an HPS destination was mentioned for Sunday in the trip plan, so we had a potluck at Pinyon Flats. But Laura and I headed for home after gulping down the delicious quesadillas, deviled eggs, meatballs, etc. Ron and Christine were heading for wildflowers in Borrego Springs, and Sue and Cliff were going to get medical attention at their local Kaiser. What might Gary have done by himself?

The group met at the Cottonwood Campground, near the south entrance to Joshua Tree NP on Friday, March 13th. Dave and I got there early, so we took the Mastodon Mine Loop trail out of the campground, and were surprised at the variety of flowers this early, among them Canterbury bells, desert poppies, and lupine. The rest of the group – Dave Cannon, Anne Rolls, Ed Herrman, Edna Erspamer, and Delores Holladay – were all there by early evening and we enjoyed a campfire (welcome because of cold temperatures and a slight breeze). We decided on a 7:30 start the next morning, and everyone was ready to go, but Edna stayed in the campground to pursue her new artistic endeavor of watercolor.

We arrived at the pullout off the paved road 20 minutes later, and headed off across the desert at about 8:00. Pinto, and the ridge route to the top, can be seen from the starting point, but there is a 2.5 mile walk across the desert before beginning the climb! This is discouraging to some, but we enjoyed the cool temperatures, the sunshine, and the carpet of desert dandelions that were just beginning to open. When we arrived at the foot of the ridge (which is steep and rocky), Delores decided not to continue, so we made arrangements for meeting her on the way down. We started up the ridge at about 10:00...
and proceeded at a slow and steady pace. There is a use trail for most of the way and several ducks, which made route finding easy. After about 30 minutes Anne and I, who were at the rear, heard a loud exclamation from Dave Cannon ahead of us, and saw him leap sideways and use his pole to fling a large rattlesnake to one side. Evidently Dave Perkins and Ed had passed the snake but by the time Dave Cannon came along it was wide awake and Dave almost stepped on him! After this we were very careful to see where we were placing our hands and feet. The rest of the climb proceeded without incident, ascending a series of bumps and ridges to the top, but was enlivened by beautiful flowers. There were many beavertail cacti in bloom, mallows were abundant, brittlebush painted the hillsides yellow, and we saw several ghost flowers, small white lily like clusters with dark streaks in the middle, a first for many of us. The weather was good and we spent about 30 minutes on the summit, having lunch and identifying the surrounding peaks.

On the way down we were happy for the use trail, and also glad to reach the desert floor. Dave Cannon remarked that this was very different from the HPS list, which he has completed, but he is enthusiastic about the desert and ready to tackle desert peaks. At the bottom of the ridge we searched and called for Delores, but finally concluded that she had gotten tired of waiting and returned across the desert at her own pace to the cars. I have to admit that I was a bit apprehensive, but everyone else assured me that she would be at the cars, as indeed she was. On the 2.5 mile hike back across the desert (it seemed longer this time!), we spotted a quite large desert tortoise who kindly allowed us to take his picture from many angles. We arrived at the cars about 4:30, and back at camp about 5:00, where we admired Edna's watercolors and sat down to a feast of appetizers. By the time spaghetti and meatballs arrived, we were somewhat full but managed to eat them anyway.

The next morning we decided to climb Ryan Mountain – most of the group had already climbed Queen, and Delores expressed interest in something with a trail, so the rest of us were agreeable. The only disappointment was that there were no flowers, which we realized is logical because of the higher altitude. Anyone planning a trip to Joshua Tree should find abundant flowers by early April, however. We returned to the cars at about 12:00 and went our separate ways. Thanks to everyone for a good trip, and we hope to see Dave Cannon on more of the DPS outings. Dave and I ended up eating lunch at the Crossroads Café in Joshua Tree – we can highly recommend it for good sandwiches and salads.

![Desert Tortoise near Pinto Mtn. Photos by Ann Perkins.](image1)

![View of Pinto Mountain.](image2)

MOUNT MELLENTHIN (12,645')
LA SAL MOUNTAINS, UTAH
November 2008
By Bob Michael

Coming off my repeat of my first Desolation Canyon raft trip of 30 years ago, I found myself in Moab with a little time on my hands and looking up at the grand peaks of the La Sals where I had such a good time 3 years ago after Cataract Canyon (SAGE #302, Mar/Apr 2006). What a shame to drive all that distance and not come home with a peak! So, next day I drove to 10,538' Geyser Pass – leaving my truck at the exact same place I had parked in 2005. (I was even met by the great-grandchildren of the same mosquitoes.) I headed cross-country south through the forest towards Mellenthin, one of the central highest triumvirate of La Sal peaks. I remembered looking over at it and thinking it could be steep and loose....

Soon I picked up a quirky, faint trail that had a human rather than animal vibe and that led more or less south-southwest in the right direction. Sure enough, it ended at 11,000 feet at a cairn at the abrupt edge of the enormous rock glacier that oozes off the north face of Mellenthin like molasses in a Wyoming January. One second you're
in thick Hudsonian spruce-fir forest, and then a couple steps puts you on the rock glacier.

Now the fun began. The rock glacier was loose enough, but you have to expect that. I could cover some ground in patches of stunted trees and tundra where bedrock poked through through enroute to the base of the NW ridge at about 11,300'. Only about half a mile and 1300' of gain to the top – piece of cake, right? WRONG. Looking back on all my mountain experiences, this was the most sustained miserable terrain I've ever crossed. The low-grade igneous rock that comprises the La Sals is just about the other end of the spectrum from sweet Sierra granite – it decomposes in place to a pile of sliding loose plates at close to the angle of

(continued on page 21)

Childs met his wife, Regan Choi, while employed as a river guide, and she, like him, can be classified as “hard core outdoor.” Indeed, the first of their two sons was born at their home in Crawford, CO before they had indoor plumbing. That was all right with Choi. “I had such a hard time finding a guy who would go camping with me the way I wanted to go,” she says. “They all wussed out.”

Okay, ‘nuff said. You get the picture.


Recounting his two-year quest for desert water—“water that is actually out there, that has been out there for thousands of years,” Childs’s *The Secret Knowledge of Water* is a must read for any desert aficionado.

Tracking down little known sources of water from “obscure research papers, my own recollections, stories told to me by old men, (and) a 300-year old desert map prepared by a Jesuit missionary,” Childs first takes us to the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge, AZ—“some of the driest land in the Western Hemisphere,” and then to the Thousand Wells area, on the AZ/UT border, west of *Navajo Mt.* Further exploits include donning a wet suit and entering a cave gushing water into the Grand Canyon; exploring creeks draining the Pajarito and Atascosa Mts, between the Sonoran and Chihuahuan Deserts along the AZ/Mexican border; and, after several other stops, visiting a site on the Tohono O’odham Reservation, west of *Baboquivari,* where legend has it that four children were sacrificed in order to stop a flood pouring out of an opening in the desert floor.

**The Desert Cries (2002)**

Small (140 pgs.) but powerful, *The Desert Cries*, published by *Arizona Highways* and illustrated by Childs’s wife, is a treatise on the desert flash flood, that awesome phenomenon which, while releasing an onslaught of mud and water, reshapes the landscape and often causes fatal consequences.

Set in Arizona during the summer of 1997 when rampaging waters claimed the lives of 22 people, Childs first describes the plight of a group of illegal Mexican immigrants, eight of whom drowned in storm drains under the streets of Douglas, AZ. Next comes the story of a Burlington Santa Fé passenger train swept off its track by a flash flood in the Hualapai Valley, south of Kingman; of a flood in Havasu Canyon that submerged the Supai Village, and routed hundreds of hikers, and of still another flood in Antelope Canyon, on the Navajo Reservation, that killed nine hikers. “Each body is...
naked...One person clearly has a broken neck and broken arm. One searcher comments that they look as if they had been through a blender.” The final chapter relates an ill-fated hiking trip in Grand Canyon National Park’s Phantom Canyon during which the sister and brother-in-law of the man who arranged the hike, a person who knew of the danger of a flash flood but took no precautions, were swept to their deaths.

Soul of Nowhere (2002)

“For seven years now I have been traveling the southwestern wilderness, coming out to places that open my life like a knife slipping the seam of an envelope. I have walked bladed peaks rising out of dunes in northwest Mexico; scribbles of red canyons in Southern Utah; a sand and gravel wash in the Sonoran Desert as dry as a basket of beans, where coyotes and feral burros come to dig for water; chasms in the border country of Mexico, where the only place to travel is through dark, crooked causeways between boulders.” With this prologue (partial), Childs introduces readers to a volume describing nine of his wilderness adventures, including a trek deep into a canyon in the Sierra Madre Occidental, looking for ancient cliff dwellings; the exploration of several isolated canyons dropping off Arizona’s Mogollon Rim seeking still more ancient cliff-side ruins; the discovery of an Anasazi trail crossing the Grand Canyon from rim to rim; hiking through a maze of canyons in Southern Utah; finding an Anasazi pot—and re-burying it—in southeastern Utah; exploring a deserted island in the Sea of Cortez once inhabited by the Seri Indians; a multi-day hike through the Cabeza Prieta area, and lastly, an exploration through the lava beds and sand dunes in the Cerro Pinacate area of northwestern Sonora.


Subtitle “a true story of ruin and survival,” The Way Out is an account of Childs’ and his good friend Dirk Vaughn’s mid-winter crossing of a convoluted wilderness area along the Arizona - Utah border. During their sixteen day adventure the two men face not only the challenges of the broken terrain, but also their own inner demons—Childs’ anger over the psychological damage inflicted by his late alcoholic father and Dirk’s memories of the persons he harmed (including one man he accidentally killed) during his career as a policeman.

If highly detailed descriptions of a multi-day exploration through a maze of canyons carved out of Navajo sandstone, including flashbacks to earlier traumatic experiences, is your bag, this is the book for you.

I, however, was almost as tired of the duo’s adventure as they were by the end of the book. There may be such a thing as too much description.

House of Rain (2007)

Whatever happened to the Anasazi? Well, if you have any interest whatsoever in this vanished civilization, then House of Rain is a must read. Employing his own brand of rich, detailed description, Childs explores, by foot, the history of that ancient society starting in Chaco Canyon, NM, where a large community of great houses, kivas and blocky residential compounds arose more than a thousand years ago. By the mid-eleventh century, however, for reasons not yet completely understood, the Anasazi began to drift north, where they built remote and barely accessible cliff dwellings in the Mesa Verde, CO area. After that region became more densely populated than it is today, the people began moving west toward the Comb Ridge area of Southeast Utah. And then by the late thirteenth century, as if a plug were pulled, “waves of people drained off the Colorado Plateau...By the fourteenth century, nearly everyone in the Southwest was moving, the whole culture upended. Something big had happened: drought. But more than drought. A call had gone out. It was time to go.”

The Anasazi then migrated south, via Kayenta and Antelope Mesa, to Arizona’s Mogollon Rim, an area where their nomadic culture met and merged with the stable agricultural people of the fertile lowlands. As the
people mixed architectural and artistic styles, a new cultural convergence was formed, the Salado. Childs ends his travels in the Paquimé region of the Mexican State of Chihuahua, where the main thrust of the Anasazi civilization seemingly disappeared entirely.

Childs reminds us, however, that remnants of the Anasazi still exist in the desert Southwest, i.e., the Hopi, the Zuni and the pueblo people of New Mexico. He also notes that most archaeologists and even the Pueblo people agree that the term Ancestral Puebloan is a better choice than Anasazi, a combination of two Navajo words, when describing the vanished culture.

As mentioned, Childs describes his actions and surroundings meticulously—sometimes to the point of tedium on one hand, while admitting that he often has difficulty finding his campsite after a day of wandering on the other. And that begs the question: if he can’t find his own camp, how does he remember the small details of his adventures? Well, in his own words, “I fill journals in the field with tiny, antlike handwriting. It is almost a bad habit, like smoking, tapping a journal out of my pocket and folding my body over it. These journals go home and I read them to spark memories...memory ignited by these chicken-scratch journals.”

Another problem I have with Childs is that he seems to experience more epiphanies and/or think more transcendental thoughts than seem natural. For example in The Secret Knowledge of Water he states out across the Cabeza Prieta desert at night and observes: “We would become nothing without deep and pressing country, places we can never name or possess. Our insides would weaken if we did not have such things. Our minds would become bitter and self-absorbed...We need these anchors in the land. We might someday cut ourselves loose and find that there are no longer veins feeding us blood, no longer a throat to take in air. We might find that we are weak-limbed creatures unable to stand on our own.”

And again in The Way Out: “What do I know of myself? I know that wind comes through, that it pulls me apart, that it threads this landscape and carries me off. All night I will wonder what part of me has blown away. Will I wake to find even my soul gone? I have too many loose ends, I think. All of me could be snatched by the wind overnight, every small part whisked in the sky until I have been scattered like a dead man's ashes?”

Or maybe I’m just jealous because profound thoughts rarely occur to me.

(Continued from page 18)

repose. It’s like climbing up shattered roof tiles. There was virtually no solid bedrock and no thank-God tundra until I topped off on the summit ridge at about 12,400'. A very likely place to break an ankle, blow out a knee, or worse. (Manns Peak is made of the same crudrock, but it had gentler slopes and plenty of tundra.) Because of the risky terrain, if I’d had any sense I would have turned back. As it was, I proceeded with excruciating caution, testing every step to be sure I wouldn’t go “rockboarding”. After what seemed an eternity, I topped off on the solid, gently rising, quite airy ridge which led straight to the broad summit.

The summit had expansive views north over the Spanish Valley (Moab) and Arches over 8,000 feet below; west towards Canyonlands; and south towards the great cirques on the north faces of Mts. Peale and Tukuhnikivatz. At least the weather cooperated; I was on top at prime lightning time, but the daily thunderstorm factory was shut down for the day. I couldn’t fully enjoy the summit, dreading the ordeal that lay between me and the forest - I expected it to be even worse going down, and it was. Quite an all-day ordeal. I’m glad I did it and got back in one piece -- but I won't be going up there again.

THE DESERT SAGE

May/June 2009
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<tr>
<td>Donation</td>
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</table>

W0451 Total: [Blank]

Make Check Payable to Desert Peaks Section
Send to:
Ron Bartell, DPS Membership Chair
1556 21st Street
Manhattan Beach, CA, 90266
(310) 546-1977 (h)
ronbartell@yahoo.com

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THE DESERT SAGE 22 May/June 2009
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUANTITY</th>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>PRICE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPS Peaks List</td>
<td>$1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Road and Peaks Guide (5th Ed) printed version (price includes shipping)</td>
<td>$9.99</td>
<td>(SALE PRICE)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Road and Peaks Guide (5th Edition) CD ROM version</td>
<td>$30</td>
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<td>1 Year SAGE subscription</td>
<td>$10 reg. / $20 sustaining</td>
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<td></td>
<td>DPS Complete History and Lore CD ROM</td>
<td>$15</td>
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Mall order form for above and payment to: Gloria Miladin, DPS Treasurer 11946 Downey Ave Downey, CA, 90242
(Make check payable to the Desert Peaks Section)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUANTITY</th>
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<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPS Patch</td>
<td>$3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emblem Pin</td>
<td>$12</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>List Finisher Pin</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Desert Explorer Award Pin</td>
<td>$12</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPS T-shirt (see item below) (Tan w/black and gray print (M, L, XL only))</td>
<td>$12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For T-shirt orders, add $3.50/1, $4/2 or more, per order for handling $3.50 / $4

Mail (T-shirt / patch / pin) order from and payment to: Gloria Miladin, DPS Treasurer 11946 Downey Ave Downey, CA, 90242
(Make check payable to the Desert Peaks Section)
(Questions?: (562) 861-2550 (H) Grand Total: ________

THE DESERT SAGE 23 May/June 2009
DEsert Peaks Section

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 JUNE 13, 2009.

Subscription/membership - It costs ten dollars a year to subscribe to the SAGE. Anyone can subscribe to the SAGE, even if not a member of the DPS or the Sierra Club, by sending $10 to Membership Records. To become a member of the DPS you must (1) belong to the Sierra Club (2) have climbed 6 of the 99 peaks on the DPS peaks list and (3) send $10 to Membership Records for a SAGE subscription. Non-members who subscribe to the SAGE are not allowed to vote in our elections. Renewals, subscriptions, and address changes should be sent to Membership Records, Ron Bartell, 1556 21st Street, Manhattan Beach, CA, 90266. The subscription/membership year is for six issues, regardless of when payment is received.

Emblem status and guides - To receive DPS emblem status you must climb 15 peaks on the list, five of which must be from the list of seven emblem peaks, and have belonged to the section of one year. To work on the list you will probably want to buy from the Treasurer (Gloria Miladin, 11946 Downey Ave, Downey, CA, 90242) the Desert Peaks Road and Peak Guide 5th Edition - $28 + $2 postage. If you like to explore without much direction just purchase the DPS Peaks List - $1 (enclose a self-addressed envelope). Send completed peak and emblem lists to Membership Records, Ron Bartell, 1556 21st Street, Manhattan Beach, CA, 90266.

Correspondence - We welcome all articles and letters pertaining to outdoor activities of interest to DPS members. Some submittals tend to be too long and space limitations and other considerations are factors in the decision to publish an article/map. The editor may modify submittals in a perhaps, misguided attempt to increase clarity or decrease length but will hopefully not modify your meaning. If you are a participant and know that the leaders are not going to submit a trip report then feel free to submit a report. We welcome reports of private trips to unlisted peaks and private trips using non standard routes to listed peaks. Please DATE all submissions. Please indicate topo map names, dates, and contour intervals. Digital (.doc or .txt) content is essential and will help ensure that there are no typographical errors. Send copy to the Editor (see below) by the published deadline. Please include a SASE if you would like to have your material (maps/pictures) returned. If possible, print on the back of a picture when and where it was taken, what it is of, who is in it, and who took it. Email usually works best for simple text-based submissions and minimizes editing complexity. Email editor for details on submitting attachments and/or digital photo scans.

Advertisements - You can advertise in the SAGE to sell items. The cost is $3 per line with a maximum of 5 lines per ad.

Editor - Bob Sumner, PO Box 2354, Hawthorne, NV, 89415-2354
Email: bobsumner@att.net

THE DESERT SAGE
SIERRA CLUB, ANGELES CHAPTER
3435 WILSHIRE BLVD, SUITE 320
LOS ANGELES, CA 90010-1904

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Thru 12/31/10
Larry Hoak
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