Dear Climbers, Dreamers, Writers, Sojourners, Lovers: Here we are again still high from one of the best banquets ever; and thanks to Elaine Baldwin for a stellar evening. And thanks to all of you who made it a priority to join us. What a joy to see many old-timers I haven’t seen for a while (Betty McCosker and her San Diego group) plus new attractive members joining DPS and chasing the List with us. Someone remarked it was sure a loud gathering in our intimate and favorite banquet room at Taix’s; but you know Loud is good when it’s an energy-filled room with effervescent people having the time of their lives. For me, I see the Banquet as a high point and measurement for our Section being alive and well and moving forward.

Recently, DPS management met at the Bartells for a laid back and easy meeting discussing our past year’s events plus prioritizing our Goals for 2009 and 2010. Even Elaine joined us from Missouri via the computer screen. Wow, it felt like a scene from Charlie’s Angels where the girls get their directives from the taped message. Our goals for the new year are garnering new and eager members plus peak explorators, possible peak suspensions, DPS service projects, direct membership involvement in selecting Awardees, and other considerations in building a stronger and better Desert Peaks Section. The real magnet for new and strong hikers comes from leaders who connect with WTC and lead those harder peaks.

List Finisher climbs are on my mind, and the venue for the ultima thule of potluck parties. These events bring out the best in all of us including some friendly dogs. Mark your calendars for Asher Waxman’s September 27th finish on Spirit Mtn. (Join Tina and me the weekend before on Glass and Patterson.) Dan Richter finishes HPS on an easy peak near Frazier Park, San Guillermo, on October 25th. Ed Herrman, back from China, desperately seeks Big Picacho in the fall, and then he’ll have an easy amble up Pleasant for a List Finish. John and Tammy Hooper emailed from Mammoth, and he and Daryn Dodge bagged Big P., so he’s in line for a DPS Finish on Mopah in November. And Sue Holloway has three to go which means there’s gonna be a Party-Hearty for her List Finisher #2 in the near future. And Jim (Prichard) of Washington state, did you ever get your two needed Mexican peaks? Doug Mantle has 14 to go (or so said the Stick Man at the banquet). Christine and Ron are getting close for #2 and #3. Virgil Popescu whistles away even as I write.

Thanks to friends and members for your enthusiastic support of DPS management this past year, and I thank you abundantly for constant emails and snail mail letters which are daily treats in communication. I’m always raving around for more juicy morsels to include in Did You Know. Keep in touch, and I’ll see you at sunrise trailheads eager for a day’s march up one of our worthy and beautiful peaks. Until then...Happy and Safe Climbing!

Mary hosting the DPS Annual Banquet

Inside this issue:

Kino Peak
Corkscrew Peak, Pyramid Peak
March Potluck
Grand Gulch, Utah
Baboquivari Peak
New York Mtn & Clark Mtn
DPS Annual Banquet
Book Reviews

NEXT SUBMISSION DEADLINE AUGUST 8, 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.sierraclub.org/dps/

The Desert Sage 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
JULY Through NOVEMBER 2009

JULY 18 SAT DPS White Mountain Peak
JULY 18-19 SAT-SUN DPS, HPS Telescope Peak, Wildrose Peak
AUG 2 SUN LTC, WTC, DPS, HPS Mount Pinos Navigation
AUG 15-18 SAT-WED DPS Ruby Dome, Wheeler Peak, Mt Moriah
SEPT 13 SUN DPS DPS Potluck and Management Meeting
SEPT 19 SAT LTC Leadership Training Seminar Deadline
SEPT 19-20 SAT-SUN DPS, WTC Glass Mtn Ridge, Mount Patterson
SEPT 26 SAT DPS, WTC McFarland Peak
SEPT 27 SUN DPS, WTC Spirit Mountain
SEPT 27 SUN DPS, LTC, WTC, SPS Grinnell Ridge Navigation
SEPT 30 WED LTC, WTC Advanced Mountaineering Program – Basic Safety Systems
OCT 3 SAT LTC, WTC Advanced Mountaineering Program – Belaying
OCT 4 SAT DPS DPS Potluck and Management Meeting
OCT 10 SAT LTC, WTC Advanced Mountaineering Program – Rappelling
OCT 10 SAT LTC, WTC, HPS Beginning Navigation Clinic
OCT 17-18 SAT-SUN LTC, WTC Advanced Mountaineering Program – Techniques & Anchors
OCT 18 SUN LTC, WTC, DPS, HPS Indian Cove Navigation
OCT 30-NOV 1 FRI-SUN LTC, WTC, HL Wilderness First Aid Course
NOV 14-15 SAT-SUN LTC, WTC, DPS, HPS Indian Cove 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://sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms or call 415-977-5528. In the interest of facilitating the logistics of some outings, it is customary that participants make carpooling arrangements. The Sierra Club does not have insurance for carpooling arrangements and assumes no liability for them. Carpooling, ride sharing or anything similar is strictly a private arrangement among the participants. Participants assume the risks associated with this travel. CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.

♦ 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 with conditioning and recent altitude experience to Leader: Tina Bowman (tina@bowmandesigngroup.com). Co-Leader: Tom Bowman.

♦ JULY 18-19 SAT-SUN DPS, HPS
O: Telescope Peak (11,049’), Wildrose Peak (9064’): Hike the Panamints with us to the high point of Death Valley enjoying Limber and Bristlecone Pines along the way and a view of Badwater and the valley below. Wildrose Peak Trail goes through a Pinyon Pine and Juniper forest and also promises spectacular views. Several campgrounds are available, including the Mahogany Flat Campground (8133’) adjacent to the Telescope Peak trailhead. Saturday we will do Telescope Peak for a hike of 14 miles round trip, and 3000’ gain. Stay over Saturday night or meet us Sunday morning for a hike to Wildrose Peak of 8.4 miles round trip, and 2200’ gain. Seasoned hikers only please. Contact leaders for more information. Leaders: Chris Spisak (cjsarch@gmail.com), Lilly Fukui (fukui@ccmslaw.com).

♦ AUG 2 SUN LTC, WTC, DPS, HPS
I: Mt. Pinos Navigation: Navigation noodle in Los Padres 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, WTC, leader rating, rideshare, to Leader: Robert Myers (rmyersix.netcom.com). Assistant: Kim Homan.

♦ AUG 16-19 SUN-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 (amuirman@yahoo.com). Assistants: George Wysup, Michael Gosnell.

♦ SEPTEMBER 13

O: **DPS Potluck and Management Meeting:** Come to the home of Michael and Julia Gosnell. Meeting starts at 4:30, and the potluck starts at 6 pm. Bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. Please RSVP.  
 michaelgosnell@hotmail.com

♦ SEPTEMBER 19

O: **Deadline for Leadership Training Seminar:** Become a qualified Sierra Club leader. For info, see LTC section in front of Schedule. Deadline for receipt of application and payment is Sep 19. No registration after this date or at door. Next seminar: Spring 2010. See ad in back pages of this Schedule.

♦ SEPTEMBER 19-20

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.

♦ SEPTEMBER 26

O: **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.

♦ SEPTEMBER 27

O: **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.

♦ SEPTEMBER 27

O: **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 (rmyers@ix.netcom.com). Assistant: Harry Freimanis.

♦ OCTOBER 3

O: **Advanced Mountaineering Program - Basic Safety Systems:** First of 4 climbing workshops. Today’s indoor evening workshop of 4 hours reviews ropes, knots, 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.

♦ OCTOBER 4

O: **DPS Potluck and Management Meeting:** Come to the home of Tom and Tina Bowman in Long Beach. Meeting starts at 4:30, and the potluck starts at 6 pm. Bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. Please
RSVP. (tina@bowmandesigngroup.com)

♦ OCT 10 SAT LTC, WTC

M/E: Advanced Mountaineering Program – Rappelling: 3rd of 4 climbing workshops. Today, at Stoney Point in Chatsworth, focus is on rappelling. Based on Chapter 11 of the book: “Mountaineering Freedom of the Hills, 7th edition”. 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 four workshops. Send or e-mail SC#, resume, phones to Leader: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com). Assistant: Pat McKusky.

♦ OCT 10 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, but it will help you prepare. Many expert leaders 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 (dianedunbar@charter.net). Co-Leader: Richard Boardman.

♦ OCT 17-18 SAT LTC, WTC

M/E: Advanced Mountaineering Program – Rock Climbing Techniques and Anchors: 4th of 4 climbing workshops. This weekend completes the series of AMP workshops, at Joshua Tree National Park, and focuses is on climbing and anchors. Based on Chapters 12 & 13 of the book: “Mountaineering Freedom of the Hills, 7th edition”. 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 four workshops. Send or e-mail SC#, resume, phones to Leader: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com). Assistant: Pat McKusky.

♦ OCT 18 SUN LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS

I: Indian Cove Navigation: Navigation noodle at Joshua Tree National Park to satisfy the Basic (1/M) level navigation requirements. Send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare, to Leader: Robert Myers (rmmyerssix.netcom.com). Assistant: Phil Wheeler.

♦ OCT 30 – NOV 1 FRI – SUN LTC, Harwood Lodge, WTC

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#/S215 non-member (full refund through Sept 25). For application contact Leader: Steve Schuster (steve.n.wfac2@sbcglobal.net).

♦ NOV 14-15 SAT-SUN LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS

I: Indian Cove Navigation: Navigation noodle at Joshua Tree National Park to satisfy the Basic (1/M) level navigation requirements. Sat for practice, skills refresher, altimeter, homework, campfire. Sun checkout. Send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare, to Leader: Robert Myers (rmmyerssix.netcom.com). Assistant: Harry Freimanis.

Karen Leonard has a webpage that features her unpublished manuscript about the southern California Sierra Club mountain-climbing sections and their place in the exciting social history of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. If you have ideas about publishers, please contact her. (kbleonar@uci.edu)

http://www.socsci.uci.edu/~kbleonar

and http://www.anthro.uci.edu/~kbleonar

COVER PHOTO: Kino Peak. Photo by Daryn Dodge.
MEMBERSHIP CHAIR / ACTIVITY REPORT, June 9, 2009

Membership Summary

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Activity Report

New Members
- Anne Anglim
- Diana Neff Estrada
- George Estrada
- Markey Neighbors - Sheep Hole Mtns
- Robert Neighbors - Rosa Pt
- Sharon Marie Wilcox - Boundary Pk
- Doug Bear
- New Subscribers
- Rosmarie Ensart
- Nick Brogna
- Sustaining Renewals
- Bob Henderson - 1 year
- Membership Renewals
- Pat Arredondo - 1 year
- Misha Askren MD - 1 year
- Randy & Joyce Bernard - 1 year
- Gary Bowen - 2 years
- Ted Brasket - 2 years
- Lynne Buckner - 1 year
- Dave Cannon - 1 year
- Diane Dunbar - 1 year
- John Gibba - 1 year
- Bill Hauser - 1 year
- Vic Henney & Sue Wyman - 1 year
- Robert Langsdorf - 3 years
- Edward H. Lübin - 1 year
- Mike Manchester - 1 year
- Sharon L. Moore - 2 years
- Daniel B A Richter - 1 year
- Julie Rush - 1 year
- Jim Throgmorton - 1 year

OUTINGS CHAIR

Outings leaders, please note that the deadline to the Schedule editor is July 10th for the November through February Schedule, a very good time for climbing desert peaks. I’d appreciate having your trip submissions by July 6th if at all possible so that I have time for review and dealing with any little snags I might find. If you are not currently in the Schedule, please include the contact information you would like possible participants to have. Of course, if a trip is submitted too late for the Schedule, we can always publish it in the Sage and on the DPS web site. It’s always a good time to submit an outing! And summer is a great time for bagging our high peaks.

How about leading an exploratory outing? Barbara Lilley has made two great suggestions: the Ship Mountains high point, which would probably be good in early November, and Lone Mountain near Tonopah, good in fall and spring. See Andy Zdon’s great book, Desert Summits, for information on the peaks. The Ship Mountains are in the updated edition; Lone Mountain in the first and updated editions.

If your outing is a restricted trip, meaning you expect to use a rope or ice axe or want the option to do so to complete the hike, please make sure you submit an Application for Mountaineering Outing Approval along with your trip write-up. If you have any questions or comments please call, write, or e-mail me. Happy trails, Tina

CONSERVATION

OUR DESERT STATE PARKS IN TROUBLE

With the recent woes for the California budget, our state parks (including Anza Borrego) are facing serious cutbacks. In fact, many parks may have to be closed down. The following is from the California State Parks Foundation (CSPF) website:

Recently, Governor Schwarzenegger announced a proposal to eliminate state funding for our state park system – which will close more than 80% of the 279-unit state park system. His proposal to cut $143 million from our state parks is 10 times worse than last year’s proposal.

Beginning July 1, the Governor would cut the park core funding in half and then eliminate all core funding in twelve months. Without this money, there will be no choice but to close the majority of our park system. Even if you are not planning to visit a park soon, the governor’s short-sighted proposal will impact you and every California resident. It is the very definition of "penny-wise, pound foolish". Consider the facts:

FACT: The General Fund budget that state parks receive accounts for less than 1/10 of one percent of the entire state budget.

FACT: Last year alone, there were over 80 million visitors to state parks – and all indications are that this year was
going to be even higher.

FACT: For every dollar that funds the parks, $2.35 is returned to the state's General Fund through economic activities in the communities surrounding the parks.

That means eliminating all funding for state parks could actually result in the state losing over $350 million dollars in revenue.

Check out the California State Parks Foundation website at http://www.calparks.org/ for more information and ways you can help. -Michael

DID YOU KNOW?

Our deepest condolences go out to a dear friend and fellow climber, Gail Hanna, who lost her husband John Hanna, this past December. John was 99 years young, and Gail and John had many happy years as they applauded each other's hobbies and life dreams. Gail led a memorial hike to the ocean in memory of John on what would have been his 100th birthday. In her own words, she said, "He supported me whole heartedly in all my mountain hikes and climbs, and especially my quest in finishing the Desert Peaks List." John had a long and happy life and will be missed by all. Our sympathies also go out to the family of Mark Cole (DPS and SPS climber) who was a best friend of Andy Fried. Mark attended and left West Point where he was described as, "careless, reckless, and unamenable to discipline." This was the perfect profile of a man who led heroic missions flying P-47s during World War II and continued on to become a fearless mountaineer and world explorer.

DID YOU KNOW the DPS banquet was splendidorous, and if you missed it, we surely missed you. It would have been the complete family gathering if we had added Sue Holloway, Doug Mantle (was it the secretary’s wedding or a magnet of the worst kind calling Dougie to Devil’s Tower for a Close Encounter?), Ron and Leora Jones, and Delores Holladay. They all promise they’ll be present next year. Our leaders of the more hairy and scary peaks (Kathy, Tina, Ron, Larry) were off doing snow checks off and other WTC events. Gary Craig was seen in a stunning black suit and was deemed as G.O. of the night. He is back from the Boston Marathon with a time of 3:06:53. Marlen Mertz and Ellen Schumacher caught the eye of fashion maven as they were truly elegant. We all patted ourselves on the back for our various accomplishments (in our traditional Stand Up Ceremony), but the high point of the evening was Dave Sholle’s amazing and true video of our DPS friends crossing Baffin Island. Stream and river crossings kept our eyes glued to the screen, and our hearts palpitated as we (after the fact) crossed with them. Luckily, all survived these treacherous crossings, and we breathed sighs of relief when the lights came on. There were big laughs with Dave’s postscript pointing out where would we ever again see Ron Bartell so often in his underwear giving the hands of strange women as he led them to safety on far shores! I loved the scene where Barbara Sholle hiked up a grassy green ridge, and Dave’s background song was playing, “I Know I’ll Never Find Another You” by the Seekers. Thanks, Dave and Barbara, for an evening we won’t soon forget.

Thanks also to Bill Hauser for sending me his, “Night on Rainier,” poster which everyone read with great interest. And the short sale of mountaineering books went well with collector items going for next to nothing (Thanks, Walton Kaiber, Betty McRuer, and others who contributed.)

DID YOU KNOW, There’s Something About Our Bob? Yes, our editor Bob Sumner, AKA Mr. Sage, Hawthorne Bob, was awarded our prestigious DPS Service Award for the countless number of hours, aggravation, and patience in putting out our classy and beloved Sage. Bob runs a tight ship indeed; and when he’s not off on 30 or 40 mile ultramarathon day-hikes, he wears his No Fear tee shirt and hangs off 5.6 cliffs, usually solo. Astonishing but true, Bob day-hiked both summits of Big Picacho and added blue bottle. Can you imagine doing all three peaks in one day! More solo day-hikes include Mt. Hood, the V-Notch route on Polemonium, and 5th class peaks in the Cascades. I have to say that Bob is one of my favorite guys, because he’s both funny and outrageous. His creative cuss words and phrases are like none I’ve ever heard. Doug Mantle adds, “The most admirable of mountain adventurers, Bob does the 20 hour day, sure, but also leads the 5.6 crux, treks to the farthest reaches with no need of lists and doesn’t toot his own horn.” He’s been known to toot the Hot Horn and Cold Horn (Nevada), but otherwise, Bob is a low key newsletter editor and computer genius, unless you start toying with deadlines and format. I can’t think of anyone more deserving of this DPS Award. Congrats, Bob, from all of us.

DYK, you need to mark your calendar for July 11th and ramble on up to Independence for the Norman Clyde exhibit at the local museum, and that night (probably at the high school), Gnary Bill Oliver is telling all he knows about the Legend and the Man, Norman Clyde. I was pleased when Barbara Lilley gave me a copy of Don Lauria’s article in the Bishop Mountain Reporter about his personal encounter with Clyde. It’s a great story which I’ll send you or sim-
ply go online (March 14, 2009.) Don, himself, is a foremost rock climber having led Lost Arrow and other notable climbs.

DYK, there was Randy Bernard making a jolly and cheerful appearance at the banquet replete with wearing a huge scallop shell necklace. Was this Randy's version of Venus on the Half Shell? Randy is back from his 500 mile pilgrimage in Spain, the famous and wonderful El Camino de Santiago. Mark your calendars for Jan. 27th for a special slide show in Monroese (Verdugo Hills group). Did you know someone borrowed or stole Randy's traveling shoes at a youth hostel one night? Wow - miles to go and no shoes and no shoe stores. What did Randy do? Continue in bare feet or stiletto heels? He promises to tell ALL in his January performance.

Published novelists are living among us and posing as mild mannered DPSers. DYK Betty McCosker had her short autobiography, Tales of the Hollywood Auto Court and Beyond, snapped up by Amazon who will reprint it at the new cost of $39.95? We all got the bargain books at $20. It's a hilarious short story collection and is complete with Betty's own illustrations. AND further kudos to our own Edita Erpsamer who wrote a tell-all book (yes, that includes you and me): Getting High - Confessions of a Peak Bagging Junkie. You can get 'em while they're hot (AND they're sizzling) at www.Xlibris.com or call Edna for an autographed copy. In Ednas's own words, these are the exploits of a newly divorced woman who seeks adventures and companionship. We all know the tales of ahem ahem, "companionship," but won't it be fun seeing our campfire gossip in print? And photos of all of us notables, too.

Ed Herman and Edna visited John McCully in the Philippines where John has settled in nicely. Edna writes that it's a Paradise for Lotharios as scantily clad women wait at tables hoping some guy with big bucks will whisk them away to a better life. We write often about John and his food peculiarities which we've observed on many DPS trips. One of his pieces of advice was: "Another way to maximize calories with less weight is taking a pint of olive oil on climbs. You can quietly sup away, and no one will tell you're eating dinner." Thanks, John - but somehow freeze dried lasagna is much more appealing.

And our dear and wonderful Virgil Popescu is up to high jinks again on the open seas. Dave Cannon reported that as hikers (destined for two days on Santa Cruz Island) unloaded their backpacks in a bucket brigade, Virgil inadvertently dropped Dave's pack off the pier into the ocean. As it floated away, a Good Samaritan appeared in a kayak and retrieved Dave's pack before it sank to the bottom of the sea. The pack was safe but weighed 10 pounds heavier due to a good soaking.

Doug's Baboquivari write-up brings up a zany fellow from yesteryear, Phil Bruce, who led many a desert peak including Babo. Phil went up the first pitch and ostentatiously set up a belay that included a sling around a wobby boulder about the size of a microwave oven. Phil would belay people up, and as they got close to him, he'd tug on the sling, and the "belay" would wobble. Some people screamed, while others called him names. Phil was chewed out by the other leader, because after all he could have pulled the boulder free and down on somebody. Of course, he wasn't repentant at all. He made that kind of smirk pout face that he was noted for. And that was how Phil Bruce entertained himself on Babo, long ago.

That's the news of things astir in the Land of Little Rain. As summer approaches, we'll all disappear to the higher reaches. With John Muir, I must return to the muirlands, because there's heather in my soul. - Mary McManns

MARK COLE

Born New York City, Sept. 18, 1919; died Ventura, CA, April 29, 2009 as the result of a severe stroke. Survived by his wife, Liz; step-daughter, Kristen Gibson; sons, Tony (Diane), Peter, and David; grandchildren, Mark and Blake; sister, Sheila; brother, Les (Ester); and several cousins, nieces and nephews. Major, USAF Res. Ret. Attended USMA Westpoint '44; left at the request of the Academy, which deemed him "careless, reckless, and unmannerable to discipline." Subsequently, accepted in the US Army Air Corps; following pilot training, he was ordered to Europe and flew P-47s on armed reconnaissance missions (9th Air Force 36th Fighter Group). Like a knight in the Age of Chivalry, he steced an aircraft, along with thousands of others, put their honor and lives on the line to defend Western Civilization against the Nazi onslaught. During R&R in Britain, he met Eve Porter, a Brit who worked with the American Red Cross. He returned to England after the war to marry Eve. They settled in the San Francisco Bay area, while Mark worked and used the GI Bill to complete his uncer-
grad degree, B.S. Mechanical Engineering at U.C. Berkeley, Class of 49. Moving to L. A., he worked as an aerospace engineer at many defense companies over the course of his career, among them, North American, Hughes, Aerospace. He moved his family to Westchester in 1954. In the 1970’s and 80’s He was active in the Sierra Club in the Rock Climbing Section, the SPS and DPS. He retired in 1981 and moved to Ventura Marina where he lived aboard his boat Cumara. Following the death of his first wife, he and Liz were married in 1989. They had wonderful times traveling and sailing during these nearly twenty years. They moved to Ojai in 2007 where they resided happily until Mark was hospitalized. Mark donated his body to medical research. Beloved husband, father, and friend. He was dearly loved, he is sorely missed. There will be a memorial gathering on May 17th. Donations in Mark’s memory may be made to the charity of your choice. – Andy Fried

A GOOD BUT DUMB RATTLESNAKE

In the 2005 summer/autumn issues of the DPS Sage, I summarized my encounters with rattlesnakes over a 43-year period. The data was presented in x-y graphical form with the “Altitude” of the sightings plotted against the “Month of the Year”. A curve that bounded the encounters, above which one wouldn’t expect to see rattlesnakes, was depicted. A brief description of a few of those encounters was also provided in a somewhat humorous vein. The encounter I describe here surpasses all of the previous ones in ridiculousness.

Our objective on the very first day [6 Apr 08] of a two-week peakbagging trip to southwest Arizona was Peak 2945, a somewhat detached point just north of the Harcuvar Mountains [which in turn are north of Wenden]. Before heading for the peak, I felt the urge to “visit a bush”, so with trowel in hand I headed for a nearby Palo Verde tree, which had nice foliage. Because the ground was covered with 1-to-2 inch, flat, disk-shaped rocks, I had to look around a bit to find a suitable place in which to dig. While bent over with trowel in hand [considering the very best spot to dig], I noticed the head of a snake making its way on the ground between my boots. This led me to consider what kind of snake it might be. However, I quickly decided the best course of action at the moment was none -- just watch the snake proceed at its own pace -- sooner-or-later the tail will appear, and that should resolve the question. Sure enough, the issue was indeed settled -- it displayed five or six rattles. Shortly, I decided that the snake must know what it was doing, so I just watched it proceed into a nice bush three feet or so away. It is now known in my records as RS#38.

Obviously, that certainly was a “GOOD SNAKE, BUT DUMB RATTLESNAKE”. In the first place, for not molesting me, and in the second the place, for not detecting me with its many sensors -- like its eyes, or its tongue smelling device and or its heat sensing apparatus, or for not digesting any of that data in its DUMB mind! For my part, I plead innocent, except possibly for ignoring an edict of the DPS article sited above to be on alert in turf below 5000 feet. – Gordon MacLeod

PROMINENCE WEB SITES

http://peaklist.org/CAmntatlas/CAmntatlas.htm
Submitted by Mark Adrian

SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

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Include accurate address information. For your convenience, you may use the order form on page 22.
Kino Peak in Arizona was suspended from the DPS list a few years back due to a Border Patrol request to not hike in the area around Kino. From talking to a ranger at the Organ Pipe Cactus NM Visitor Center last year, the request to not hike near Kino seems to be really a “hike it at your own risk” kind of message. A large number of illegal immigrants have been passing through the Kino range on their way north as a result of greater enforcement at the California border. Several of us Nor. Cal. climbers including me, John Hooper, Larry Emerson and Steve Eckert, decided to climb Kino anyway, since we were in the area to climb Cerro Pinacate, and because Kino is quite an impressive-looking peak in the region.

From the town of Ajo where we were staying, the DPS driving instructions got us to the approximate start of Route B, which is 2 miles west of the start for Route A at Bates Well. We had a flat tire on our way to the trailhead. But with 5 motivated people wanting to hike, we got the tire changed in 20 minutes.

On our drive past Bates Well, a Border Patrol vehicle was parked at the single small building there causing mild concern among the group. Linda Emerson dropped us off at the Route B trailhead, then drove back to Ajo to get the tire fixed and go for a run (she had already climbed Kino years ago). We could not locate the abandoned 4WD track that leads south from Bates Road, as indicated in the DPS Guidebook. But that was OK, we simply started hiking south across the desert to Kino.

It was going to be a hot day for late February. The temps were forecast to reach the high 80s, or even 90s, which was going to be a record-breaker for this day in some areas of southern Arizona. We all started with about 3 quarts of water, but this turned out to leave us a little on the dry side by the time we finished the hike.

Within the first few hundred feet, the brush became a little thick around a wash, but then the terrain opened up nicely south of the wash with a great view of Kino and the wide mouth of the canyon where the route led. We hit some thicker vegetation crossing Growler Wash after a little over a mile of walking, but travel was easy again after leaving the wash. Keeping Kino Peak on the right, we entered the wide canyon and continued our gradual ascent over easy desert terrain. Steve had entered waypoints for the peak and other prominent points in his GPS, so we had no trouble finding the correct canyon. Don’t bother looking for use trails or ducks. Route B appears to see little activity as a route to Kino.

After a total of 3-3.5 miles of walking the canyon began to narrow considerably, the vegetation became thicker, and the terrain became steeper and rockier. We spied a very small keyhole on a ridgeline above, which was noted in the Guidebook. The keyhole is a landmark to help climbers avoid wandering into the wrong left fork where the canyon splits. We continued into the correct, right fork here, but it was not difficult to go wrong because we knew the summit of Kino was still to our right behind cliffs.

We next bushwhacked our way to what turned out to be the crux of the climb. A huge chockstone in the narrow canyon blocked our progress. We began to wonder if we were on the correct route because there was no mention of the chockstone in the Guidebook. After a little searching, a difficult move
directly to the left of the chockstone got most of us around this impediment. But Steve then found an easier way that went through a little hole under the left side of the chockstone. Our worries about being in the wrong canyon were allayed once over the chockstone because we could now see the obvious U notch, mentioned in the DPS Guidebook, just under Kino Peak.

The rocky terrain and heavy brush eased off after the chockstone, and we were able to reach the U notch with little trouble. At the notch, we climbed up and across the NE face of the massive summit block of Kino, following occasional ducks and ledges. After almost reaching the northern terminus of this massive summit block, we were able to climb up onto the top of the ridgeline through a break in the cliff face and head back south to the high point of Kino.

Just before reaching the summit, we disturbed over a dozen bighorn sheep grazing just below the rocky outcropping that is the high point of Kino Peak. They all ran off in a couple different directions, the last to leave were a ewe and her young lamb. Really cute!

On the summit, although there were numerous entries in the register up to 2005, only 3 small groups had signed in since then: two parties in 2006 and one party in 2008. Border Patrol discouragement and DPS suspension really put a damper on visitation.

After a 30 minute stay, we headed back down to the U notch with our minds mostly made up to take Route A back to the trailhead. The excessive bushwhacking in a few spots on Route B led us to think Route A might be better. Steve had a detailed map of Route A, which helped us make our decision to go for Route A. From the U notch, we traversed NE around the corner staying at roughly the same elevation as the notch because there was a significant cliff band below us.

Following occasional ducks and a vague use trail, this route led us eventually to a spot where the cliffs below ended and we could begin descending. We mostly stayed on or near the ridge detailed in the DPS Guidebook for Route A heading for a low spot, or saddle, in the Kino range where a use trail is said to be. With a few hundred feet left to descend to the saddle, we left the ridge dropping straight down into the small canyon to the north. A little downclimbing on class 3 rock near the saddle made the route a little more interesting.

At the saddle, we found a well-used trail and were a little dumbfounded, at first, why such a good trail existed here in the proverbial middle-of-nowhere. Hiking north on the trail, we then started to see a myriad of cast off water bottles and food cans alongside the trail. It then became clear this was a major route through the Kino range for illegal immigrants. The trail dropped into a wash after about a mile and then followed the wash north. We passed some favorite Palo Verde trees used for shade that had large piles of trash beneath them. We decided to exit the wash after awhile, perhaps to avoid a possible encounter with illegals hiding there, and began following one of several poorly defined tracks NW toward some red bumps in a low point between some hills. This put us on a direct line back to the beginning of Route B where Linda was waiting for us.

We arrived back at the car a little later than expected; Linda had been waiting for us for over 2 hours. However, she had a rather eventful wait, as Border Patrol agents came by several times to see how she was doing. At first, there seemed to a suspicion that she was waiting to pick-up border-crossers. However, the agents were incredulous when she told them she was waiting for climbers to get back from Kino Peak. It wasn’t that they didn’t believe her. It was more like why would anyone be crazy enough to go climb a peak in the desert? Linda said the Border Patrol agents were all quite friendly and never suggested to her that she should not be there. She also had a visit by a National Park ranger to check if she paid an entry fee (Linda had a NP Golden Pass).

Coincidentally, the Border Patrol came by again just after we arrived back at the car. Or was it coincidence? We certainly thought it possible they had the technology to monitor our progress for much of our hike back from Kino. Anyway, the agent was a nice-enough fellow, and reported that they caught 14 illegals in the area earlier that day, some of which were carrying drugs.

To conclude, Kino Peak is certainly a worthy climb. And no authority figure will stop you if you really insist on climbing Kino Peak. If you must leave a vehicle at the trailhead, I would suggest leaving a note on your windshield for the Border Patrol and Park Rangers if no one is staying with the vehicle while you climb. Route B is a little more challenging in terms of brush than Route A, but Route B has the lesser chance of run-ins with border-crossers than Route A. Also, Route A is partially checked and has a use trail much of the way. It’s only you and the map for Route B. The round-trip hikes was about 11 miles, and took us 8 hours and 20 minutes.

A detailed map & waypoints for our Route B to Route A loop trip can be found on climber.org under Kino Peak.

**CORKSCREW PEAK**
February 28, 2009
By Mary McMannes

Tina Bowman and I submitted Corkscrew (4th time for both of us) to the Schedule hoping to entice those WTC students plus many of our long-time friends who needed to return to Death Valley. A week or so prior to the trip, there was lots of monkey business as the trip over-filled...
with 23 or more. Then the numbers dropped to 17 and finally...13. The carpool thing got kinda muckity muckt, and we lost George Wysyp, somewhere along the way. Finally, Edna Erspamer and I took off for points north and Olancha where we gassed up, led a great lunch at the Ranch House Cafe and turned off to Highway 190 for Death Valley. Meanwhile, back at the ranch, it was pretty funny that we saw a man who looked like Bob Meador, talked like Bob Meador, and to and behold, it WAS Bob Meador. He had motored in with a nice lady whose name escapes me, but they had matching red motorcycles! Bidding farewell to Bob, we journeyed on over to the awesome and spectacular scenery of Death Valley. One forgets how beautiful it really is. Getting our permit at Furnace Creek, we turned off onto the good dirt road of Titus Canyon where we met Tina, Ed Herrman, and Anne Rolls. It was too cold to sit outside, so we went to bed very early. The next a.m. we were up and hustling around getting ready to meet our group beyond the Corkscrew Peak sign (about 25 miles) at a swell parking place. Corkscrew, that prominent and impressive peak is easily seen from the highway. There was one no-show guy, and Edna opted to go out and paint pei buy some chili makings in Beatty (although, she had left her meatballs back in Santa Monica). Twelve of us started up the wash directly for the peak until we came to the base of the mountain, about 90 minutes of hiking for the slower ones at the rear. At 3700' elevation, we veered to the left avoiding the dry waterfall and had some great and fun scrambling in the narrows. Ascending up a steep and loose scree slope, we came to a great wall of rock and edged along it to the road until we came to the saddle (5080' + ) and the good steep switchback trail to the summit cliffs (the keyhole and the arches). Ultimately, we were all on top of Corkscrew enjoying the views. Photos were taken, and it was cold enough for woolly hats, gloves, and wind breakers. We had expected much warmer weather, but for most of us, we barely drank a quart of water. I was moved by Greg Vernon’s memorial register for Cuno Ranschau which hopefully will stay unscathed on the summit.

We descended that steep and good trail to the saddle whereas two strangers told us we had taken the difficult DPS route rather than the easy variation trail which goes all the way down to the highway (and probably that Corkscrew sign). We made good time in the descent due to the trail; but I’d still recommend the standard DPS Guide Book route to the top, because it’s simply more interesting. About ten minutes from our cars, we left the excellent trail and made a bee line for OUR parked cars. There was great discussion about where we’d camp, and a few of us whined that we wanted no iffy roads especially if we didn’t have 4-wheel drive. Anne Rolls said she was returning to Mammoth where her Bob Hoeven was babysitting the new puppy. The Baldwins finally convinced all of us they had a heavenly place for camping, and it’d be well worth the drive. The turn-off was 2 miles up the road where we’d turn right onto the Chloride City Road (sign said High Clearance...grrrr!), and we’d drive for 2.2 miles to the Monarch Canyon spur road. Some of us became grumpy, because we thought the road would worsen. But all’s well that ends well. Gloria Miladin’s Rav-4 and my CRV (AWD) did just fine. Bill Gaskill was gallant in driving my Honda over a couple bad places. Elaine and Dave were right—it was a breathtakingly beautiful place to camp as we were surrounded by a rock amphitheater which was ghostly alabaster in the moonlight. Winnette Butler and Jim Fleming found a rock balcony for their tent and breakfast nook. We all apologized to the Baldwins for our grumpy demeanors which quickly changed to laughter with the opening of various fine wines (thankful we had brought our Corkscrews) Edna began making that huge black pot of chili, and Elaine was frying quesadillas. Various salads, hors d’oeuvres, and desserts found their ways to the community table. It had been a great climbing day in the Valley, and now everyone slumbered happily. The next a.m., various plans were made for sight-seeing or grabbing another peak (Gloria, Virgil Popescu, and Bill bagged Pyramid). Rich Gnagy went off-road exploring and gathered some fascinating grave inscriptions from old miners. Some of us lingered having fat berries and coffees on Jim and Winnette’s balcony. It was another exceptional DPS group, and thanks to Tina for a perfect lead, and to Elaine and Dave who assisted me in sweeping.

Ed Herrman, our new Peak Guide editor, sent us the coordinates for the route we descended: 11S 501809 4067946 and 11S 502008 406763. He writes, “If you put them on the Corkscrew map in the DPS Trail Guide, they clearly show how that route goes through the alluvial wash.”

Barbara Lilley sent me the topo and write-up for Death Valley Buttes (3,017'), a sweet little 3 miles r.t. with
1700' gain - a good one for Day #2 in Death Valley. There’s a paved road to the parking area for this peak and a faint trail to the top. She and Gordon had hiked this (a chance meeting) with peakbagger and summer Ranger Mike Johnson from Mammoth (also an employee at Kittridge's in the winter.)

AND to add to even more Corkscrew info, Bob Sumner climbed Little Corkscrew on March 7 which is basically our same route until one gets a little ways up the canyon, where you fork left and go steeply between Little Corkscrew and the main summit. Bob writes, “The summit is a knife-edge fin of limestone, with not even enough room for 2 to sit. Big air cliffs up there. A register was placed in 1968 on a DPS trip led by Arkel Erb; and in 40 years, only a few other parties signed in.” I was happy our group climbed the Regular Corkscrew and not Little (Big and Scary) Corkscrew which we’ll leave for the thrill-seekers.

**PYRAMID PEAK**
March 1, 2009
By Gloria Miladin

On Sunday, March 1st, Virgil Popescu, Bill Gaskill, and I left our camping buddies after a great DPS Saturday night potluck following a fun climb of Corkscrew, and we drove to the roadhead of Pyramid Peak, 17.5 miles east on Highway 190 from Badwater Road near Furnace Creek. Our starting point was mile post 129.00 there on the highway. Rich Gnagy had given us some shortcut directions, and we were eager to try it.

We found faint dirt tracks in the sandy wash heading north towards the mountain. Virgil drove for two miles along this road (4WD), until we were unable to drive anymore. We parked the car and started hiking towards the low spot in the distant hills close to point 3900. We had chosen to climb Route B thus starting west of 3900’ up a large gully. The climb to 5100’ to the ridge seemed to be going well, but we realized we had gone too far west and were surrounded by cliffs. Thus, we back tracked to the NE side of a big ravine. We proceeded to the next ridge at 6000’ from the west. We scrambled over a Class 3+ ledge and three false summits, until we came to the true summit of Pyramid.

It had been four long cross-country hours before we reached the summit at 1 p.m. The weather was perfect - sunny, cool and breezy. After a brief time on the summit, we made our way down to 6000’ and the jagged ridge losing the faint trail. We chose to go down a wash, and in a few hundred feet, Bill announced we were at the top of a 30 foot dry impassable waterfall. It was back up to the ridge again finding an easier descent route.

Luckily, we made it crossing many washes and ridges. Our intent had been Route B, but it appears we did ALL routes, from A to Z! On top of a long day, it was now getting dark, and we reached Virgil’s car at 6:15 p.m. The faint road across the desert was no longer visible!

No road, and it was dark. What now? Bill and I got out of the car and began running alongside Virgil’s car trying to find remnants of a road. He’d drive, and we’d run! We could see distant cars on Highway 190, but we had no access to the highway. We drove to a cliff’s edge and turned around in great frustration. We took a different direction and found faint tracks again. You know, it would have been much faster if we had simply gone on foot. Finally (yes, Finally!), we reached the highway around 9 p.m. The lesson to be learned was no driving at night in the middle of the desert trying to locate some faint road.

The good news is we had bagged the peak, but, it was a midnight arrival home and work much too early the next morning. As someone once remarked, “You either have a great trip or a great story.”

**MARCH POTLUCK**
March 14, 2009
By Mary McMannes

There’s something about Tom Sumner’s beautiful Spanish home nestled in the Sylmar mountains and Tom’s hosting skills that draw big crowds of people who simply love to hang out at his spacious kitchen counter swilling wines and eating hors d’oeuvres while waiting anxiously for his signature chili, cooking down to a thick saucy repast. There are always two or three dogs milling around, and Danny Boy Sumner watches carefully as no other canine treads on his morsel territory. Management meeting convened with Gloria M., Elaine and Dave Baldwin, and Mary Mac; we were happy to have Steve Smith, Jerry Johnson, Dan Richter, and Anne Anglim.
join us, too. Business was hurriedly conducted, so we could join the others out at the Counter and Bar. Dean Acheson called and said he was bringing a friend. Our noses were pressed up at the window, and there appeared Dean with a beautiful companion, Mary Jane Alvarez. She was not wearing Mary Jane shoes despite her name. Jim Hinkley arrived with his Maggie and another lovely newcomer, Michelle. Greg and Mirna Roach were already in the kitchen, and Mirna was dishing up her fine tamales (Mirna—MVPP...most valuable potluck participant). Ellen Grau drove all the way from Yorba Linda (Ron was home babysitting Bogie), and she delivered her recently published Chessie Bligh novel. If you're lucky, you'll win an autographed copy at the banquet (May 16). Vic Henney and Sue (Wyman) Henney arrived with peak glow on their faces after having bagged a few more lower peaks getting close to the April 4 Lower Peaks List Finish. Anne A., one of our new recruits met during the Muah trip last summer, always has fascinating stories to share (she's an infectious disease doc). And she offered to represent DPS at the WTC San Gabriel meeting taking fliers and boasting of our wonderful-ness! Thanks, Anne!

As usual, there is that special something in the air at Tom's Place that causes people to indulge in overzealous fun and celebration. And the big surprise of the evening was when Graham Breakwell arrived. Oh, it was good to see him! Thanks for hosting us on St. Paddy's Day Eve weekend. And your chili is to die for!

![Close up view of a typical pictograph. This one near the structure shown in the accompanying photo. Photos by Gene Mauk.](image)

exploration of the area. It turned out to be a very rewarding experience.

The main reason the canyon is a protected area is because it contains numerous Anasazi ruins and well preserved rock wall paintings called pictographs. Access to the canyon is limited to foot or stock travel only.

Our itinerary involved a 20 mile backpack over four days. We didn't start hiking on day one until after noon because of permit business at the local ranger station and a long car shuttle. Our entry route via Bullet Canyon was very scenic and with more water than we would see the rest of our trip.

Camping sites are pretty much dictated by water availability. We were able to find good camping near water at our first and third nights out but at our second camp we had to hike three quarters of a mile up a side canyon to find a small stagnant pool. We felt lucky to find that.

The main canyon, Grand Gulch, and several side canyons, are rich in Anasazi ruins, many with pictographs. As a newcomer I soon learned that it is easy to miss important sites unless constant attention is paid.

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**GRAND GULCH PRIMITIVE AREA, UTAH**
March 17-20, 2009
By Gene Mauk

This last March I had the opportunity to join Al Conrad and two of his friends, Larry Allison and Ken Edwards, in a hike through a portion of the Grand Gulch Primitive Area in southeastern Utah. I had not heard of the area before Al invited me to join the three of them in another
to scanning the canyon walls. Al and Larry had been here before and were a great help in pointing out numerous ruins.

After three nights and four days of exploring we exited the canyon via Government Trail, steep at times, up a canyon sidewall followed by three miles across the plateau to our waiting vehicle. It was an adventure filled with surprises around almost every canyon turn. It was more strenuous than I had anticipated but well worth the effort.

BABOQUIVARI PEAK
March 28, 2009
By Doug Mantle

I’ve been up Baboquivari 10 times now, over 40 years, and the memories linger on. The first time, the face was ice, this was a Jefe Azul New Years trip. Rocker Dave Gladstone began inching up the crux; somebody found a snowy bypass, you never saw a group desert the scene so fast, abandoning Dave in situ. Thus, we got the summit, but I didn’t lead it. A few years later, the night before found me, as Mary Mac likes to remind, up in a tree that on subsequent squints looks impregnable (there’s a Cuno joke somewhere around there), belting out choruses from “Oklahoma”, this into the wee hours. No, what are you thinking, of course I still was ready to lead the peak, but at the last moment Walton Kabler too earnestly begged me to let him do it, I acceded. Another time we again pondered that icy face, this time with McRuer and three Ivy-league aged brains looking expectantly on. I chickened out, we went back. I was Tom Bowman’s co-leader on one of his provisional leads, but he did NOT chicken out.

There it is, then, while I had soloed the peak a few times,

A different looking Baboquivari. Photos by Tina Bowman.

The group lounging atop Babo.

I’d not led a proper group up, through 2008.

That year I finally decided to check out the eastern route. It was February, not a good time; I encountered javelina hunters in all the good campsites, and snow in all the good climbing holds. After six or seven false starts at the first spot, I commenced a false retreat (remember John Wayne in some movie, to change the words, “I’ll go back; I’ll go back...like h__ I’ll go back!”), went back, lunged, desperate, over a couple of moves, and went on to an unobserved triumph.

Thus, to please Madam Chair, I had a nifty offering in hand for 2009, Babo from the East.

Not exactly brimming with confidence, I took a couple days off work and scouted the whole affair again, even leaving one pitiful little string in place over that first, once damp spot, now, in late March, blessedly dry.

Feeling proto-heroic, I prepared to meet our 8 participants for the “East Babo/Mediterranean Potluck”, one day, get it while I last, extravaganza. By that time, thanks to my internet non-savyness I had dozens of would-be participants aghast for not being included, one even opined he would show up unannounced but that now would have been contradictory.

We followed the accurate “Route B” instructions to the fourth and last gate at 6 AM Saturday. A mediocre trail gets you to a nice, wooded saddle north of the peak at 6500 ft (we are told there is even some water, a seep hole, around there, what a nice place to camp). We hoofed up to that point, 2,000 ft gain, in about 2 hours. Then comes an increasingly uphill, brushy, annoying traverse to the rope up point below the 7400 ft notch.

We scrambled up to a belay spot, I have not appreciated the squeeze-hole described in the Guide. I’ve opted to lead up from the right, 5.0, 75 ft. especially noting the appealing if pitiful little fixed string there. While Doug Owens belayed most of the group up this, noticeably shivering after a while, I suckered Ron Bartell on belay to try the squeeze hole. He did fine but did not become a convert.

We then slinked along the cliff base to the second belay.
Michael G took some wind out of my sails by wondering aloud why we didn’t just WALK up that section. Its 100 ft of steepening (hear that, Michael, STEEPENING) friction and counterforce. As with all the tough spots, Nile Sorensen, not a fish-out-of-water as you might expect for the snow guy, expertly belayed me up, followed, reset all my anchors properly, and set the next steps in motion.

A bit of brush, notable for fresh green nettles joined us to the west side, regular route and the 140 ft friction face, spotted by bolts and hardware from the long gone ladders which led to the former summit lookout. This pitch was cold as always but neither icy nor wet, and is now topped by a dandy fixed anchor and chain, thus the well worn tree, now almost bent horizontal, is a pro point no more.

Once again, Nile doing the tech work, Tina herding the, well, herd; not long after we were all scrambling to the top, 5 hours from the car shuttle.

We made three rappels down, Christine Mitchell seemed especially pleased to forsake her usual self belay for a fireman’s assist, and came down in two bounds. We were all down by 4:30 PM, it did take a heap of time to do all that, even though everyone moved well: 10+ hours.

Then came the pause in the day’s occupation, known as the Edna hour. She showed off a swell oil painting she had done of the East Face of Babo (could she have borrowed that from Betty McCosker and foisted it on us as her own?) More significantly she joined her Sicilian wine with my Portugese red (hmm...Mediterranean, the gourmets grumbled?), and although everybody contributed some foodstuffs, Edna’s Moroccan Chicken blew away the competition.

As happens then with such distant rendezvouses, and yellow stars (and movie stars!), the affair began to disintegrate. Michael G. had already hit the road, Chi Truong and Doug Owens followed, I drove off to be alone with my rental car...

Only a week later as I sat down to write this did I recognize this was my first real lead of Babo. Whoopie!

NEW YORK MTNS, CLARK MTN
April 18-19, 2009
By Dan Richter

We assembled our gaggle of eager participants at the Mad Greek’s in Baker at 9:30 am Saturday morning. Beside Asher Waxman and I they included Mary Holle, Bruce Vogt, Chi Truong, Joe Harvey, Steve Eckert, Marlen Mertz, Dan Abendschein, Anne Anglim, Daryn Dodge, Bob Hoeven, Steve Curry and Dan Baxter.

After breakfast and introductions were completed we caravanned to Clark and parked just off the freeway where we consolidated into four wheel drive vehicles. Following the standard DPS guide was confusing as much has changed since it was written. We followed a poor road along the power lines to the electrical substation which I think we could have avoided. Steve Curry had the Summitpost.org write-up which helped us find the right road that got us to the campground. From then on the trip went well. From the campground we ascended the canyon and the slopes on its left side up to the impressive cliffs. Turning to our right we moved along the base of them until the third class pitch presented itself just before you reach the skyline. With the help of Joe Harvey I put up a fixed line on the pitch which most were able to climb with out a belay. We hung a left on the ridge above the third class and climbed along it over one false summit to the top.

On return to our cars we drove over to New York Mountains via Caruthers Canyon. The dirt roads were good and all the cars were able to drive them to a lovely camping area at the end of the road in some trees. A fire and a fine happy hour capped a great day. I particularly enjoyed Steve Eckert’s cherry pie.

Sunday morning we set off for the peak following the abandoned mining road which continued on from our camp site to some old mine tailings where we began the bushwhack up toward the peak. There was a lot of boulder hopping and brush which was unavoidable. When we got to the summit area we bouldered for a bit on the south side and then went around to the west side where a third class route presented itself. I put a fixed line on the last short summit pitch with Joe Harvey’s help which most were able to climb without a belay.

Both climbs were moderate third class and made for a wonderful weekend in the Eastern Mojave. Thanks to Asher for assisting and to Joe for helping with the rope.
The 2009 annual DPS banquet was held on May 16 at the Taix French Restaurant in Los Angeles. 70 people attended this year. Mary McMannes hosted the event as the 2008 chair of DPS. Many fine door prizes were donated by DPS members. Barbara Sholle and Gary Bowen each won an Edna Ersparner serigraph. Don Weiss, Robert Neighbors, and Julia Gosnell each won an original water color painted and donated by Betty McCosker. Geiselle Weiss won a watercolor painting by Elaine Baldwin. Audrey Goodman won a copy of R.J. Secor’s guidebook “The High Sierra”, a copy of Ellen Grau’s novel “Chessie Bligh”, and an REI gift certificate. Don Weiss and Gail Hanna each won a copy of the DPS Desert Lore CD. Tom Sumner nabbed a copy of Andy Zdon’s guidebook Desert Summits and Randall Danta got a bottle of champagne.

The DPS Service Award was presented to Bob Sumner, who has been producing and editing The Desert Sage for five years.

The next Management Committee was presented:
Mary McMannes – Chair
Tina Bowman – Vice Chair/Outings
Gloria Miladin – Treasurer
Christine Mitchell – Secretary
Elaine Baldwin - Banquet

Dave Sholle presented the program “Crossing Baffin”, a multimedia program created by Dave from video and still photos that he took on a 12 day backpack across the Cumberland peninsula in the Auyuituq National Park on Baffin Island. Ten DPSers were on the trip which involved many treacherous crossings of swift, icy, glacial melt water. This area of Baffin is technically a desert as it receives less than 10 inches of rain a year but most of the trip was above the Arctic Circle so the daily views of the Penny Ice Cap glaciers and the chilly air temperatures made the trip feel quite different from our south-west deserts.
effort to atone, Ava, a recent post-graduate from UC San Diego, becomes involved in attempting to save Salton Sea pelicans, which are dying by the scores.

The story Brandeis weaves, including Helen’s tragic background, Ava’s unusual childhood and present day events, is well told, compelling, and often verges on the lyric. For example:

Re Highway III: (It is) appropriately numbered—a row of three thin digits, each one almost invisible, spare and pale as the landscape it cuts through. Scattered patches of white—salt, I guess—gleam dully from the dirt like snow. Even the sky seems white, as if the blue had been taken by gleeze flying south, or, more likely, burned bland by the relentless sun.”

On a tacqueria in Mecca: “...a tiny place—a kitchen with an outdoor ordering counter and four picnic tables, all filled, on a little patio glutted with plaster statues and tubes of cactus. Christmas lights twinkle from the wrought-iron fence. The air is rich with the smell of meat and grease and onions, tempered by the powdery scent of fresh tortilla. Music, heavy on the accordion and horns, crackles out from a small speaker mounted by the roof.”

HIGHWIRE MOON (2001), Susan Straight. To be upfront Susan Straight’s Highwire Moon, although a finalist for the National Book Award and included in Peter Wild’s Grumbling Gods: A Palm Springs Reader, isn’t the sort of novel you might think would be reviewed in Desert Books.

Nevertheless, Highwire Moon is a compelling story involving illegal immigrants, farm workers, foster homes, drugs and teen-age pregnancy, the very essence of life in so much of today’s California desert area. Similar to The Book of Dead Birds, Highwire Moon is also a coming of age, mother-daughter relationship story, featuring a child of mixed race as a main character.

Serafina, an illegal migrant from the Mexican State of Oaxaca, a woman who speaks only the Indian language, Mixtec, is the mother of Elvia, a bright 3 year old girl. Elvia’s father is Larry, a white, imperfect but oddly caring ne’er-do-well. While attempting to escape from a strained relationship with Larry, Serafina is involved in a car crash, after which, leaving Elvia behind, she is deported to Mexico.

Twelve years later, with a pair of silver barrettes her only solid link to Elvia, Serafina begins a dangerous journey across the border to find her daughter. Meanwhile, Elvia, now fifteen and pregnant, decides to track down Serafina.

With the action spread across a wide geographic area, including Oaxaca, Tijuana, Cabazon, Mecca, and the fictitious towns of Tourmaline (Desert Hot Springs?) and Rio Seco (Riverside?), Straight has crafted a moving
story populated with desperately poor migrants, drug-addicts living hand-to-mouth existences in seedy motels, and lost children in foster homes. In total, it is a redemptive tale reminding the reader of the true meaning of home and family.

As an example of the author's stylish prose, in the following passage we find Elvia, several months pregnant, as she and her friend Hector, at the onset of their search for Serafina, picking grapes in a field near Mecca. "As (Elvia) touched each woody stem, each bunch of frosty green marbles, she smelled the fermenting juices and breathed the dust. Each breath was sharpened, hot, as if the dust particles carried thorns, and her lungs burned...She was on her knees when Hector came again, pouring more water onto her head and face, whispering, 'You okay?'

'I can't breath,' she gasped.

Hector said, 'There's pesticides on the grapes. You can't gulp with your mouth. Breath through your nose...'

The sky and sand and leaves were all white, blinding her as she reached for the grapes, rubbery hot. She panted inside the bandanna. Her mother could be picking beside her. Her mother could be washing these grapes and popping them into her other children's mouths. Elvia steadied herself against a pole until she could see again."

THE WINNING OF BARBARA WORTH (1911), Harold Bell Wright. Have you ever heard of Harold Bell Wright? Well, don't be concerned if you haven't—the long-departed author of romantic novels is little read or remembered today. Had I, in their day, posed the same question to your grandparents or your great-grandparents, however, the answer might well have been in the affirmative, as Wright was one of the most popular authors in the United States during the forty-year period, 1902-1942.

In fact, Wright (1872-1944) was the first American author ever to sell over 1 million copies of a book, a feat he repeated seven times over. He was also the first American author to earn over a million dollars in royalties—truly big money at the time. At his peak he was as well known as Jack London, Zane Grey, Sinclair Lewis or Edgar Rice Burroughs, and it was estimated that one out of ten Americans had read a Wright novel.

In spite of his immense popularity, however, literary critics scorned his works as being overly sentimental and unrealistic, and the intelligentsia berated him for his lack of a formal education.

Nevertheless, The Winning of Barbara Worth is as compelling as any of the other three novels reviewed here. Indeed, I found it curiously refreshing to look at the world optimistically, to be enveloped in a tale where good hearts prevail over money-driven capitalists, and to have a story that concludes like this: "Do you like my Desert?" asked the young woman softly, coming closer to his side—so close that he felt her presence as clearly as he felt the presence of the spirit that lives in the desert itself.

'Like it,' he repeated, turning toward her. 'It is my desert now; mine as well as yours. Oh, Barbara! Barbara! I have learned the language of your land.'"

Briefly, Winning's plot begins several years prior to the onset of the massive irrigation project that turned the arid King's Basin (Imperial Valley) into the fertile agricultural area it is today. It was then that Barbara, a two-year old waif, whose mother had just died of thirst, was found wandering in the (Algodeon?) sand dunes, later to be adopted by Jefferson Worth, a no-nonsense banker from Rubio City (Yuma).

Fifteen years later, young Barbara is described thusly: "Every movement and gesture expressed perfect health. The firm flesh of her rounded cheeks and full throat was warmly browned and glowing with the abundance of red blood in her veins. (Her face) was framed in a mass of waving brown hair under a wide sombrero.

As the story unfolds, we follow Jefferson Worth as he gambles his entire fortune in a bitter battle with east coast financiers, the Colorado River flooding into the basin to form an inland sea, and Barbara being courted by two young suitors, a surveyor born and raised in the desert and an engineer from a "good" family in the east. So guess who "wins" her heart? Well, you’ll have to read the book to find that out.

Two additional bits of trivia: In 1907, Wright resigned as minister of a church in Redlands and moved to a ranch in El Centro where he wrote The Winning of Barbara Worth. Because his book brought so much national attention to the area, a street in that city was named Barbara Worth Drive.

In 1926, in his first major movie, Gary Cooper starred in a film version of The Winning of Barbara Worth.

POODLE SPRINGS (1989), Raymond Chandler and Robert D. Parker. When he died in 1959, Raymond Chandler, the author of the memorable Philip Marlowe detective novels, The Big Sleep; Farewell, My Lovely and The Long Goodbye, left behind the first four chapters of a new hard-edged mystery. Thirty years later, Robert B. Parker, author of nineteen similar books, including the Spencer thrillers, Pale Kings and Princes and Crimson Joy, used Chandler’s notes as a starting point for yet another excellent Philip Marlowe mystery.

The Poodle Springs of title is a thinly-veiled Palm Springs as it was in the late 1950s. In his Grumbling Gods, A Palm Springs Reader, Peter Wild describes the area at that time as "a huge, pink, white-fringed pillow, shaped like a heart...adored by a pretentious and
narcissistic lot with more money than is good for them but lacking any depth of taste.”

Unfortunately, there are few if any Chandleresque descriptions of the desert in Poodle Springs, and, in fact, most of the action takes place in Los Angeles. The main reason you might consider adding this volume to your summer reading list is because it tells an engrossing story in which the classic loner Marlowe, newly married to Linda, an heiress from Poodle Springs, soon finds himself up to his ears in two murders.

This is how Poodle Springs opens: “Linda stopped the Fleetwood in front of the house without turning into the driveway. She leaned back and looked at the house and then looked at me.

‘It’s a new section of the Springs, darling. I rented the house for the season. It’s a bit on the chi-chi side, but so is Poodle Springs.’

‘The pool is too small,’ I said. ‘And there is no springboard.’

‘I’ve permission from the owner to put one in. I hope you will like the house, darling...I’m paying twelve hundred dollars a month for this dive. I want you to like it.’

‘I’ll love it. Twelve hundred a month is more than I make being a detective. It’ll be the first time I’ve been kept. Can I wear a sarong and paint my little toenails?’”
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**THE DESERT SAGE**  
23  
July/August 2009
DESSERT PEAKS SECTION

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