Dear DPS members, friends, dwellers in the tents and comfy SUVS, and all who love the wild and thorny places.

It was with great joy that I reconnected with our outstandingly talented DPS management group at our Sept. kick-off meeting held at Michael and Julia Gosnell’s lovely home down the “roscoe,” from me. Christine Mitchell, Tina Bowman, Dave and Elaine Baldwin, and Michael enjoyed bragging rights and had plenty to brag about in bagging multiple Sierra and high desert peaks. Everyone was tanned, lean, refreshed, and ready to work. Edna arrived carrying some of her hot-off-the-press books for a book signing. Gloria was off somewhere and extending her summer vacation.

We all got down to business after talking about peaks and peak scoops and summer hi-jinks, and all were in agreement we want to stimulate more communication from you, either by email, telephone, or snail mail feedback on various issues. We’d like to hear from you regarding:

Additions of new peaks and deletions of illegal or unsafe peaks. McFarland, recently led by Dan Richter and Asher Waxman, has gotten some enthusiastic reviews (see write-up and proposal on page 20.) Thanks Edd for great photos, too.

2. Banquet talk. Many responded to the query and email regarding location of banquet and what needs to be improved. We try for a reasonable price, great food, and complimentary wine. There are bigger and more flashy restaurants, but do we want a flashy price? Stayed tuned for this one.

3. Awards: Let’s have some unanimous decisions about people deserving awards who might have been overlooked in the past. Send me names of those who have truly made Life in the DPS more memorable by leading us up many peaks or working long hours with paperwork and the managing of the organization. Let’s think about Angeles Chapter Awards for DPS, too.

4. A Noble Cause of service by DPS members such as volunteer work in the local forests which need rehabilitation, badly.

5. Names for DPS Management Committee, 2010. This is a hot bunch this year, and believe it or not, you’ll have a rewarding experience.

6. WTC Contacts—new members. A slide show in progress featuring DPS alongside SPS?

Congratulations again to Asher (and his good friend, Dan) who certainly provided a hot time in the old town that night, as they led peakbaggers up Spirit (100 plus temps) to laud and honor Asher as our newest DPS List Finisher. On the very same weekend, Ed Herman was down in Mexico bagging Big Picaacho, and we were holding our breath he’d come back alive and smiling with success in bagging his Nemesis, the Big Juan. Ed crossed back over the border and quickly emailed us, and now we’re smiling as his List Finish is scheduled for Nov. 21 on Pleasant with campfire activities at a lower designated campground. We folks are planning his List Finish, as he and Ednita Ersamer are off to Iran, collecting another country and probably checking out the nuclear facilities. Jeez, and he was worried about his safety in Mexico?

Hope to see you soon on a climb, a summit, or sauntering into an in-town potluck carrying a delectable dish. Be strong, be well. - Mary Mac

NEXT SUBMISSION DEADLINE DECEMBER 12, 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 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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OCT 30-NOV 1</td>
<td>FRI - SUN</td>
<td>LTC, WTC, HL</td>
<td>Wilderness First Aid Course</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCT 31</td>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>DPS</td>
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<td>17th Annual DPS Chili Cook-Off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOV 1</td>
<td>SUN</td>
<td>DPS</td>
<td></td>
<td>East Ord Mountain</td>
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<tr>
<td>NOV 7</td>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>DPS</td>
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<td>DPS Potluck and Management Meeting</td>
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<td>NOV 7-8</td>
<td>SAT-SUN</td>
<td>DPS</td>
<td></td>
<td>Charleston Peak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOV 14-15</td>
<td>SAT-SUN</td>
<td>DPS</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mount Wilson, Potosi Mountain</td>
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<td>NOV 14-15</td>
<td>SAT-SUN</td>
<td>DPS</td>
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<td>Tucki Mountain, Canyon Point</td>
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<td>NOV 21</td>
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<td>DPS</td>
<td></td>
<td>Indian Cove Navigation</td>
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<td>NOV 21</td>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>DPS</td>
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<td>Pleasant Point List Finish</td>
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<td>DPS</td>
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<td>Stony Point Rock Workout/Checkoff</td>
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<td>Mount Lowe Beginning Navigation Clinic</td>
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<td>Pyramid Peak, Smith Mountain</td>
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<td>JAN 30-31</td>
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<td>Turtle Mountain, Mopah Point</td>
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<td>Pahrump Point, Stewart Point</td>
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<td>Spectre Point</td>
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In order to participate on one of the Sierra Club's outings, you will need to sign a liability waiver. If you would like to read a copy of the waiver prior to the outing, please see http://sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms or call 415-977-5528.

In the interest of facilitating the logistics of some outings, it is customary that participants make carpooling arrangements. The Sierra Club does not have insurance for carpooling arrangements and assumes no liability for them. Carpooling, ride sharing or anything similar is strictly a private arrangement among the participants. Participants assume the risks associated with this travel.

CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.

**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/$215 non-member (full refund through Sept 25). For application contact Leader: Steve Schuster (steve.n.wfac2@sbeglobal.net).

**OCT 31**  SAT  DPS

**O: 17th Annual DPS Chili Cook-Off and Pumpkin Carving Challenge, Ord Mountains Petroglyph Tour:** Join us for a day of fun in the Ord Mountains near East Ord Mountain. Whether you like your chili traditional, Texas-style (no beans), or vegetarian, bring your favorite recipe or just stalwart taste buds to this DPS classic. Cooks prepare chili from scratch at the site; then all enjoy happy hour followed by chili tasting and judging. Prizes will be awarded by category, with special recognition for spiciest chili, best presentation, and the coveted Best Overall Chili. Cook for free or taste for $10. Pumpkin artisans bring your gourd and carve your best design at the site to be judged for a prize.
alongside the chili. Optional Petroglyph tour. Send ESASE with choice of Cook or Taster to Hosts: Dave & Elaine Baldwin (dbaldwin@aol.com) and Leaders: Larry & Barbee Tidball (ltidball@earthlink.net).

- **NOV 1**  
  **SUN**  
  DPS  
  I: East Ord Mtn (7532′): Climb East Ord (2.8 miles, 2200′). Follows DPS Chili Cook-Off on previous day. Send ESASE with experience and conditioning to Leaders: Larry & Barbee Tidball (ltidball@earthlink.net).

- **NOV 7**  
  **SAT**  
  DPS  
  O: DPS Potluck and Management Meeting: Come to the home of Elaine and David Baldwin for an Oktoberfest-themed event. Meeting starts at 4:30; potluck at 6 pm. Bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. Please RSVP to Reservationist: Elaine Baldwin (DWBaldwin@aol.com) or 310-675-4120.

- **NOV 7**  
  **SAT**  
  DPS  
  O: Charleston Peak (11,915′): Do the “Charleston,” a day hike of a DPS Emblem Peak, the highest peak in Southern Nevada, and the 8th most prominent peak in the U.S. This strenuous 17 mile, 4300′ gain/loss route will feature outstanding panoramas, groves of aspen, and bristlecone pines. Send email or sase, altitude experience, recent conditioning to leader. Leader: Anne Anglim (anne.anglim@sbcglobal.net). Co-Leader: Michael Gosnell (michaelgosnell@hotmail.com).

- **NOV 7-8**  
  **SAT-SUN**  
  DPS  
  M: Mt Wilson (7070′), Potosi Mtn (8514′): Sat an exploratory 3rd class scramble up one of the highest peaks in Red Rock Cyn Natl Cons Area (6 mi rt, 2600′ gain). No rope so only experienced climbers need apply. Mt Wilson is SW of Las Vegas with spectacular views to the desert floor far below. Sat night campfire and happy hour. Sun a leisurely climb of listed Potosi Mtn (6 mi rt, 2900′ gain). Email resume and conditioning to Leader: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com). Assistant: Asher Waxman.

- **NOV 14-15**  
  **SAT-SUN**  
  DPS  
  I: Tucki Mtn. (6726′), Canyon Pt (5890′): Ramble in the western ramparts of Death Valley. Tucki (8 mi, 2700′ gain, 6+ hrs) has scenic, friendly terrain. Car-camp, potluck Sat. Sun Canyon Pt (3100′ gain, 5 mi, 4+ hrs) has a fast, fun, scree slope descent. 4WD high-clearance vehicles. Send email (preferred) w/cond/exper/email/phone to Leader: Gary Craig (gary@usc.edu). Co-Leader: Sue Holloway.

- **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 (I/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 (rmyersix.netcom.com). Assistant: Harry Freimanis.

- **NOV 21**  
  **SAT**  
  DPS  
  I: Pleasant Point (9690′): Join Ed Herrman and hostess Edna Ersapmer for Ed’s spectacular DPS list finish, a very Pleasant outing, indeed! 3 mi, 700′ gain. Post-hike lavish celebration potluck and party will likely be at a campground near Lone Pine. Send email (preferred) or sase to Leaders: Mary McMannes (marymnn@earthlink.net), Tina Bowman (tina@bowmandesigngroup.com).

- **NOV 21**  
  **SAT**  
  LTC, SPS, DPS, WTC  
  E/M: Stoney Point Rock Workshop/Checkoff: This intermediate and advanced workshop is based on the rock requirements for M and E leadership. Checkoffs for M and E rock must be pre-arranged. It is a restricted trip; to participate you must be a member of the Sierra Club and have suitable rock climbing experience. Helmet and climbing gear required. Email or send climbing resume, completed medical form (2 copies—include SC# on form), address and phone to Leader: Ron Hudson (hudsonrf@verizon.net). Co-leader: Greg Mason.

- **NOV 21-22**  
  **SAT-SUN**  
  DPS  
  I: Mount Palmer (7938′), Grapevine Peak (8738′): Climb Palmer on Sat (3100′ gain, 11 mi). This is a long day hike on an undulating ridge with good views. On Sun climb Grapevine (2500′ gain, 6 mi). Depending on the vehicles and the condition of the road, we might be able to continue for an extra mile on a 4WD road and eliminate 2
miles and 900’ of gain from both climbs. In any case we will meet Friday night and camp near the end of the 2WD stretch. Enjoy the beauty of Death Valley and a great DPS potluck on Saturday night. Email Leader: Dave Perkins (david.perkins@csun.edu). Assistant: Ann Perkins.

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<tr>
<th>DEC 5</th>
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<th>DPS, Wilderness Adventures</th>
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<tr>
<td>I: Pinto Mtn (3983’): Join us for a nice stroll across desert flats and the ascent of Pinto in Joshua Tree NP (9 mi, 2400’ gain). Great views of other DPS peaks. Send email or sase with conditioning to Leader: Tina Bowman (<a href="mailto:tina@bowmandesigngroup.com">tina@bowmandesigngroup.com</a>). Co-Leader: George Denny (<a href="mailto:george_denny@earthlink.net">george_denny@earthlink.net</a>).</td>
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<th>DEC 5</th>
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<tr>
<td>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. Co-Leader: Richard Boardman.</td>
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<tr>
<td>O: DPS Potluck and Management Meeting: Come to the home of Ann and Dave Perkins. Meeting starts at 4:30; potluck at 6 pm. Bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. Contact Reservationist: Dave Perkins (<a href="mailto:david.perkins@csun.edu">david.perkins@csun.edu</a>).</td>
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<tr>
<td>I: Pyramid Peak (6703’), Smith Mtn (5913’): Climb 2 desert peaks in Death Valley. Pyramid first, moderately paced 9 mi RT, 4000’ gain over rocky and steep XC routes. Drive to carcamp at Smith Mt trailhead. Smith, 6 mi RT, 2500’ gain over easy XC terrain. 4WD/high clearance needed for Smith trailhead. Leader: Greg Mason (<a href="mailto:greg@nosam.org">greg@nosam.org</a>). Assistant: Paul Garry (<a href="mailto:pwgarry@earthlink.net">pwgarry@earthlink.net</a>).</td>
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<td>I: Warren Pt Navigation: Navigation noodle at Joshua Tree National Park for either checkout or practice to satisfy the Basic (I/M) or Advanced (E) level navigation requirements. To participate, send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare, to Leader: Robert Myers (<a href="mailto:rmmyers@ix.netcom.com">rmmyers@ix.netcom.com</a>). Assistant: Harry Freimanis.</td>
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<th>JAN 9</th>
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<tr>
<td>I: Stepladder Mtn (2927’): Join us for a cl 2 peak in eastern San Bernardino Co. Hike on dirt road, up a wash, and fun ledges to the summit of Stepladder (15.5 miles, 1450’ gain). Leader: Tina Bowman. Co-Leader: Tom Bowman.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I: Warren Pt (5103’): Practice navigation for Sunday’s checkoff on this 6 mile rt, 1300’ gain hike in the pinyon pine and juniper region of western Joshua Tree National Park. We will take a cross-country route to Warren Pt and practice micro-navigation skills along the way. Send email (preferred) or sase, with contact info &amp; recent conditioning to Leader: Robert Myers (<a href="mailto:rmmyers@ix.netcom.com">rmmyers@ix.netcom.com</a>). Co-Leaders: Adrienne Benedict, Ann Pedreschi, Jane Simpson.</td>
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<tr>
<td>O: DPS Potluck and Management Meeting: Come to the home of Gloria Miladin. Meeting starts at 4:30; potluck at 6 pm. Bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. Contact: Gloria Miladin (<a href="mailto:gm500@yahoo.com">gm500@yahoo.com</a>).</td>
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<tr>
<td>M/ER: Local Baldy Snow Practice: Come review snow climbing, rope travel, ice ax, and snow anchors. Practice your skills or brush up on new techniques. Especially for aspiring M &amp; E leader candidates. Restricted to SC</td>
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MEMBERSHIP CHAIR / ACTIVITY REPORT, October 5, 2009

Membership Summary

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<td>Household</td>
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Activity Report

Seventh List Finish

| #1 Doug Mantle | 7/10/09 | Glass Mtn Ridge |

List Finish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#154 Asher Waxman</th>
<th>9/27/09</th>
<th>Spirit Mtn</th>
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<tr>
<td>#6 Christine Mitchell</td>
<td>1/15/05</td>
<td>Big Maria Mtns</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Emblem

| #576 Gloria Miladin | 8/22/09 | Charleston Pk |

New Members

| Steven Eckert | Arc Dome |

Membership Renewals

| Bob Anderson | 1 year |
| George Barnes | 1 year |

Donation

| Jeff Bonds - $40 |

members with prior experience with the ice axe. Lack of snow may cancel. Email SC#, climbing resume, email address, phone # to Leader: Nile Sorenson (nsoreno@pacbell.net). Co-Leader: Tina Bowman.

♦ JAN 30-31 SAT-SUN DPS

MR: Turtle Mtn (4298') & Mopah Point (3530')

Escape to the Eastern Mojave Desert for early season climbs along with a great DPS car camp and BBQ chicken pot luck dinner. Sat hike Turtle, 13 miles, 2700' gain. Sunday climb class 3, Mopah 8 miles and 2000' gain to summit. Participants must be comfortable with class 3 rock climbing; leaders will carry rope and provide belay if needed. Send SASE with climbing experience or e-mail to Leader: Barbee Tidball (lbtidball@earthlink.net). Co-Leader: Larry Tidball.

♦ FEB 7 SUN DPS

O: DPS Potluck and Management Meeting

Come to the home of Audrey Goodman and Brian Smith in Santa Monica. Meeting starts at 4:30; potluck at 6 pm. Bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. Directions will be provided when RSVP is received. Contact Reservationist: Audrey Goodman (music2835@gmail.com, 310 433-1998).

♦ FEB 13 SAT LTC, DPS, SPS, HPS

M/ER: Local Baldy Snow Practice

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

♦ FEB 20-21 SAT-SUN DPS

I: Pahrump Pt (5740') and Stewart Pt (5265')

Climb these peaks situated in eastern part of the Death Valley area. Sat climb Pahrump (3400' gain, 8 mi). Sun climb Stewart (2600' gain, 6.5 mi). Happy hour Sat night. Send email with conditioning and experience to Leader: Virgil Popescu (gillypope@ca.rr.com) or Co-Leader: Patricia Arredondo (paarredo@verizon.net).

♦ FEB 27-28 SAT-SUN DPS

I: Granite Mtn #1 (6762'), Kelso Peak (4746')

Climb Granite Sat (6.5 mi, 2900' gain) in San Bernardino Co. Fine car camp. Sun explore unlisted Kelso Peak (6 mi, 1100' gain) and Kelso sand dunes, among the highest in the country. Send email or sase to Leader: Tina Bowman (tina@bowmandesigngroup.com). Assistant: Mary McMannes.

♦ MAR 7 SUN DPS

O: DPS Potluck and Management Meeting

Come to the home of Christine Mitchell and Ron Bartell in Manhattan Beach. Meeting starts at 4:30; potluck at 6 pm. Bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. Contact Reservationist: Christine Mitchell (christinebartell@yahoo.com).

THE DESERT SAGE 7 November/December 2009
MAR 27-28

SAT-SUN

DPS

1: Dry Mtn (8674'), Stewart Point (5265'): Sat expect a long day for Dry (5900' gain, 12 mi rt, class 2), in the northern part of Death Valley National Park near Ubehebe Crater. Good conditioning required. Sun do Stewart (2600' gain, 6 mi rt, class 2) near Shoshone and Tecopa Hot Springs, SE of the Park. Wildflower season. 2WD OK. Send sase or email, recent conditioning to Leader: Ron Hudson (hudsonrf@verizon.net). Co-Leader: Kathy Rich.

 APR 11

SUN

DPS

O: DPS Potluck and Management Meeting: Come to the home of Barbee and Larry Tidball in Long Beach. Meeting starts at 4:30; potluck at 6 pm. Bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. Contact Reservationist: Barbee Tidball (lbtidball@verizon.net).

 APR 17

SAT

DPS

1: Spectre Pt (4400'): Climb this rugged peak in the beautiful Coxcomb Mtns in Joshua Tree NP. From Hwy 62 we'll hike xc up washes and class 2 rock, 14 mi rt, 2300' gain. Expect a long day due to rugged terrain, though we should be rewarded with wildflowers. Send email (preferred) or sase with recent conditioning to Leader: Joe Speigl (jspeigl1@yahoo.com). Co-Leader: Kathy Rich.

OUTINGS CHAIR

Despite the heat, Asher Waxman had a fine turnout for his DPS list finish on Spirit Mountain, September 27th. Ed Herman was successful in bagging Big Picacho on September 27th, so please join us for his grand finale on Pleasant Point November 21st (see the outings listing—this is new). Virgil Popescu isn’t far away from finishing. Who else is closing in on the list?

We’re moving into prime desert climbing time. December 12th is the next Sage deadline, so please consider leading a trip to list in the January-February issue. If you miss that deadline, it’s possible to publish the outing at the DPS web site only, though we prefer to get outings in the Sage as well if not the Schedule. November 10th is the Schedule deadline (several days earlier to me, please), and it’s always good to list our outings there and draw in new potential members through our fine outings.

Want to do something closer to home that will make you feel self-righteous and generous? Consider helping out the Angeles Forest Restoration Project (AFRP), a subcommittee of the Angeles Chapter’s Forest Committee, which will organize and promote volunteer work parties to tackle forest recovery and restoration projects as identified and authorized by the Forest Service. Some of the activities might involve trails assessment and repair, facilities repair (campgrounds, picnic areas, signage replacement), erosion and flood damage prevention, and reforestation where appropriate. You can participate on the outings or plan to lead your own through working with AFRP. Volunteers can submit their names for electronic notification by contacting AFRP at this email address: growangelesgrow@gmail.com

Finally, I’d like to thank the members of the previous DPS Mountaineering Committee for their service: Brian Smith, Bob Michael, Jim Hinkley, Terry Flood, Gail Hanna, Mark Adrian, and Richard Carey. Brian Smith is the carry-over member (per the bylaws), and the new members are Ron Bartell and Bob Sunner. - Tina Bowman

2009 BANQUET REPORT

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THE DESERT SAGE

November/December 2009
DPS AWARDS PROCESS

The Management Committee put a lot of time and thought into awards before the 2009 Banquet last spring. It’s a difficult but very important responsibility for the group. We thought the process could use a little improvement. We came up with two ideas we hope will make the selection more informed and less subjective. First is to have a set of criteria for each award to use as guidance for candidate selection (not the final qualifiers). Second, we feel it is important to get member suggestions for candidates.

The management committee is working on these two issues this term and we would like to share our work so far and get more ideas and some feedback.

Following are draft lists of criteria for candidate selection for each of the three awards. We’ve tried to list examples of the types of service and mountaineering traits that nominees might have. If you have any comments on how to improve these lists, we would love to hear them. Phone us, email us, tweet us, Facebook us, or chat us up at the next hike, potluck or campfire.

DPS SERVICE AWARD CRITERIA (draft)

Served on management committee (either elected or appointed positions)
Leads trips for DPS
Hosts chili cook-off/old timers trip/etc.
Hosts meeting/potlucks
Does trip write-ups for Sage
Participates in Sierra club service activities; goes on service trips
Serves as webmaster; contribute to DPS website
Serves as Sage newsletter editor; contribute to Sage
Serves as Peak Guide editor; contribute to Peak Guide
Actively recruits for DPS
Goes on DPS trips
Promotes desert conservation and exploration
Would their absence be noticed?

DPS MOUNTAINEERING AWARD CRITERIA (draft)

Not necessarily a leader but it counts!
Has a passion for mountaineering and peak bagging
Completion of DPS achievements (emblem, explorer, list finish)
List finisher of other lists
Supports DPS Peak List improvement: participates in exploratory trips, scouts/writes up new routes, reviews status and conditions of existing peaks, etc.

DPS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD CRITERIA (draft)

Awardees shall have shown dedication to the DPS and Sierra Club over many years through service and/or mountaineering activities (such as those listed for the Mountaineering and Service Awards).

The second issue, to have more member suggestions for candidates, we decided has to be conducted in an informal manner. It is impractical and goes against the purpose of the awards to have an official all member election (not to mention that it would be embarrassing for the candidates!). The next banquet is in May 2010. The Management Committee will be discussing potential candidates at meetings between now and then. If you have any thoughts on deserving DPS Members (remember they must be current members), please notify any Management Committee member by your favorite communication method. Thanks. - Christine Mitchell

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD WHITCOMB

Richard was my friend, and when I received word that he died recently it sent chills up my back. There were so many memories and special times in my list-finishing quest that involved Richard.

I don’t remember the first hike I met him on, but he eternally showed up with Judy Hummerich who became a best friend. I do, however, remember some of the memorable journeys I took with him over the best years of my climbing
life, actually, probably the best years of my life.

One of the first trips was to Old Dad. I had my white 2-wheel drive Tacoma, and had never changed a tire on that car. Well, the new tire went flat (isn't that a rite of passage for DPS?) and he whipped into shape to change it for me. Whew – missed another opportunity to change a tire. At least I knew the ropes for the several times that I changed it myself after that. I remember he and Judy trying to get Old Dad the day before we were to do it, and they got stuck in the sand badly in Judy’s truck. Don’t most of these stories end well? This one did.

I finished the DPS list the first time on my 50th birthday. Of course, Richard (and 125 other people) was there for the event. Part of my quest that year was to also get my SPS emblem (no thought of the entire list – ever.) So, I enlisted several leaders for my missing emblem peaks. One of these peaks was Mt. Humphreys. Richard, Gary Craig and leader Jim Hinkley and I all headed for the peak. Judy was along also, but elected to stay in camp, so it was the boys and I. Well, I hadn’t woken up on the right side of the sleeping bag that day, and had a time of it convincing myself that I had backpacked a long way not to get the peak. Long story short, we were rappelling down the 4th class chute, and I was scared to death. The rappel was set, with Jim at the top and Richard at the bottom (Gary, of course, taking pictures). I was whining about something and Richard just yelled up, “Where are you going to go? I have the bottom of the rope!!” Made it.

Then, a small group was climbing Maturango after a strenuous day before. There was an unforeseen road closure, which added 6 miles to the 20+ miles to do the peak. Richard and Judy were off, to explore Telescope Peak instead of doing the climb. A weary group (including me) was returning in the dark when all of a sudden we saw light in the canyon. Richard and Judy had returned to ensure we were all OK and turned on their headlights in the canyon. It really lifted the spirit of the group, plus was a perfect example of the kinships formed by the climbing community. When your life depends on others in such harsh terrain, it is great to have friends you can depend on.

Then there was Richard and Judy’s list finish, with 3 other list finishers on Bridge near Las Vegas. And there was my second list finish in 2004 - that’s where this picture of Richard was taken. I’ll always remember Richard for his eternal smile, hugs and encouragement. He was a great friend and I’ll miss him a great deal. – Linda McDermott

SOME MCCOSKER MEMORIES

I first met Joe McCosker in the late 1970’s when we carpooled together to a DPS trip. I was in the spring of my climbing phase, Joe perhaps in the late autumn of his. We became immediate friends, each of us appreciative of our mutual commitment to environmentalism, to the Sierra Club and of course to the fabulous outings program in the Angeles Chapter.

I was a new teacher at North Hollywood High School, situated just a few blocks away from Joe’s and Betty’s then home. I would visit after school occasionally and sometimes stay for dinner and conversation. Joe was very interested in my teaching and often talked with me about how I went about it. (One of his grandsons was in a class of mine. I had forgotten, but was reminded by his mom, Joe’s daughter, at the memorial gathering for Joe, that he had not achieved as high a grade as they would have liked! He is a successful architect now and a charming fellow.)

Joe was the first person I knew, outside of education, to own an PC (as a Xerox machine as I recall) and he demonstrated the use of spreadsheets and how to prepare income tax returns on it (he was an accountant after all). I was amazed at the stuff he showed me because, even though I was an early Apple user in the classroom, I had not had the experience of using spreadsheets. Equally amazing was the “fullness” of his home office space—bursting with books and magazines dealing with social policy and environment issues and with lots of piles of papers which I assume were related his work.

Joe and Betty hosted many potluck parties for Sierra Club friends. They had a great venue with the huge pool in the back yard of the North Hollywood home. They welcomed my then girlfriend and future wife. They had a full guest house above their garage where Delores Holliday lived for some period. Joe and Betty were good friends to Mary
Sue Miller as well, especially during a time of major changes in her circumstances. Their kindness and generosity meant a lot to me too. They even provided a loan to me to put on a new roof on my house.

I fondly recall one of the “burro bake” trips up in Trona where they did a skit in a burro costume, sang, and recited poems. I especially remember Joe’s DPS list finisher trip to Last Chance and Sandy. It was my second time around for those two peaks but I did not want to miss the festivities. They had their unique truck with the (Alaskan?) camper that raised up. Betty made Mexican food and did a painting of the landscape and shacks at the Last Chance roadhead. (Betty subsequently presented that painting to me as a gift and it hangs prominently up in my Mammoth condo.)

When Joe and Betty decided to sell their North Hollywood home and move on down to San Diego, I would have loved to buy it, but alas that section of North Hollywood (now called Valley Village) was in the price steeps for me. After their move I saw Joe and Betty only too infrequently at banquets, parties and, sadly, at the memorial gatherings of a number of our mutual Sierra Club friends and climbing luminaries over the years. Now Joe has joined them.

Thanks for your friendship Joe. - Don Sparks

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**RON YOUNG EULOGY**

The climbing sections of DPS, SPS, and HPS bid a fond farewell to an all around good guy Ron Young. It was hard to believe that a 74 year old fellow who seemed to never age and looked so young (maybe it was his name or the fact he never bared his skin) would not be around to climb Mt. Baldy or Mt. Ron Ron one more time. In his later years, he climbed those two peaks over and over and over again. Ron passed away on Sunday dusk, Sept. 27, after losing a battle with non-smoker’s lung cancer. It wasn’t so long ago he attended our May DPS banquet and looked great and full of health making people laugh with his one-liners. “Mein English is my best language,” he’d say with that funny grin. Ron was a favorite M-rated leader who led many up desert peaks and some Sierra peaks in the 1980s. He also served as BMTC (parent of WTC) assistant leader for four years. I recall seeing him on the high trails in a floppy hat and always long sleeved shirts and long pants leading often with Jackie Van Dalsen. Ron finished the HPS List in 1982 and later shared a DPS List Finisher on Waucoba with friend, George Toby. This former accountant kept the best personal mountain records of anyone I know, and he prided himself on many yearly ascents up Mt. Baldy, and later a little peak behind Sun Lakes in Banning which he renamed as Mt. Ron Ron. Being in acceptable condition and never finding himself at the back of the line during led trips were of utmost importance to Ron.

When I hear Aaron Copeland’s Fanfare for the Common Man, I think of people like Ron who came from good and hearty Midwestern stock. His childhood was rough with the death of his mother when he was nine. Later as a teenager, he found himself cast out and homeless. It’s ironic that one of his favorite lines was, “I have to get home early, because my mother doesn’t like me to stay out late.” Ron had a penchant for being mischievous and puffed out his cheeks (to our great annoyance) when he’d see us (girls) eating desserts or a second helping at a potluck. Sue (Sue Sue) Wyman recalls on a climb up Cloud’s Rest, he sat on the summit puffing out his cheeks each time a hefty round figured girl came over the top. He wasn’t being mean, but it was one of his jokes that got a rise out of the rest of us. If anyone used an unusually big vocabulary word or turned out a phrase in French or Spanish, he’d quip, “And if you do that, you’ll clean it up.” Whenever departing from a potluck, a banquet, a hike, he’d yell over his shoulder, “And don’t forget to write.” Later as I was driving home, I wished I had said that the last time I saw him in the hospital.

There are several stories about good ole Ron Ron, but Edna Erspamer captured his one act of heroism in saving Edna and Renee Spargur after a harrowing freezing sleety
day on Mt. Goddard. They returned to a wet tent, equally wet sleeping bags, where Renee was definitely in the first stages of hypothermia. This was the one day Ron had not zipped his tent door shut. Ron managed to get himself and the women wrapped into a sleeping bag, and they cuddled all night thus saving Renee’s life. During Ron’s last two months of his terminal illness, his one bright and shining moment was seeing that story in print, p. 69 in Edna’s book, “Getting High.” Being recognized by his peers as a good mountaineer was Ron’s raison d’etre (that and painting his garage floor over and over.) He was proud of many other things that a poor boy from Beaver Falls had accomplished, but they were minor compared to being known as a climber, a peak bagger, a mountaineer. I kidded him that his annual Christmas card was always the same pose on the same peak: floppy hat, long sleeved shirt and pants, with index finger in the air for success.

Fellow climbers, Jeff Koepke and Bob Meador shared their own Ron Ron story from a Gene Olson desert trip bagging Kofa and Castle Dome (11/27/81.) Bob took a fall and scared everyone to death, but happily and luckily, he landed on a small ledge without plunging over the cliffs. Later, they remember Ron kidding around that there was no worry for he always brought huge black garbage bags on every hike. Jay Suehiro, Don Weiss, Vic and Sue Henney added to the merriment and bonding of this climbing group. This was the time Ron gave people nicknames such as Sue Sue, Vic Vic, Ron Ron.

Eivor Nilsson led many Hundred Peak hikes with Ron and some Sierra peaks, too. She writes, “Ron was a dear friend who loved to hike and backpack. I was fortunate to have led peaks with him in the ‘80s and ‘90s. He was an excellent route finder, so I always depended on him to take the lead and pick the route, especially on Sierra peaks. I miss him.”

We all have our particular memories of this oft stubborn, cautious, unabashedly moral and conservative fellow. Whether it was the time of the best surprise, a blue tuxedo and soup on wet, cold, freezing Mt. Lukens or running for our lives dodging lightning and thunder on San Jac or our continuous teasing Ron about his bringing an hors d’oeuvre to Sherry Harsh’s house, tuna and peas dip which even the cats wouldn’t eat; there was something consistently good and honorable about this man who was never guilty of being a fair weathered friend. After the tuna and peas caper, potluck hostesses got smart and told him, “Just bring vanilla ice cream, Ron Ron.”

According to his final wishes, he left his entire array of camping and hiking gear for me to dole out to DPS friends. Ron also wrote an addendum to his Will giving me the prized ivory colored upright piano, possibly for me to perfect my inimitable Ethel Merman songs and show tunes for later campfire productions. It was both a generous and delightful surprise.

One of my final images is of Ron holding a wine bottle up to his eyeball and saying, “I don’t see any ships,” as some remaining dribsbles of red wine went down the front of his shirt. He could be a very funny guy in a low key kind of way.

Sad to say, his ashes won’t be scattered on Mt. Baldy or Mt. Ron Ron, but maybe we’ll take his floppy hat and old lug soled boots up Baldy for one last hike. He’ll be interred back at the family cemetery in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, where good folks will visit him often. Ron returned year after year to his high school reunion, looking eternally young, but more proud of the fact he was a California mountaineer and had climbed some of the big ones. I hope his family will inscribe on his tombstone, “Ronald A Young, Going to the Mountains Is Going Home.” He’d like that, and I think John Muir would have surely enjoyed knowing a good man who loved the mountains like Ron Ron.

Poet John Keats wrote, “a thing of beauty is a joy forever.” But from all your friends who knew you Ron, “A funny, nice, unpretentious guy is a joy forever.” Rest in Peace, R.R., and don’t forget to write. - Mary McMannes (“Mar Mar”)

DID YOU KNOW?

When I record the comings and goings of our wonderful Desert Peaks family, there are the final earthly goodbyes of great mountain men and women which are the most difficult to share with you. August and September seemed to bring more than our share of sad news about those loyal and good friends who made DPS, HPS, and SPS peak bagging all the more memorable because they shared their lives with us in our Wilderness journeys. Richard Whitcomb, Joe McCosker, and Ron Young were all DPS and HPS List Finishers and scaled countless numbers of Sierra peaks, too. All were rated leaders in the climbing sections, and many of us are fortunate to have our own memories of long,
chatty car rides to and from trailheads, banter at campfires, and best of all, climbing our peaks with these fine fellows. Please see and read the eulogies and photos found in the previous pages of this Sage.

Thanks to Gail Hanna for sending me the obituary from the San Diego Union (Sept. 3, 2009) informing us that Sue Holloway’s beloved husband, Carl (Hoppy) Hopkins had passed away in late August. Carl was known to all of us by our association with Sue, one of our strongest and most talented mountaineers. Carl, a community college teacher and world traveler, was loved by all, “He was a kind and caring gentleman, always putting the needs of others before his own. He was happiest when teaching or helping others.” A celebration of Carl’s life will be later this year. If you want to make a contribution (according to family wishes) and send condolences to these families, please email Mary for addresses.

DID YOU KNOW, Greg Vemon is happily retired as of April Fool’s Day, 2009. He is ready, eager, and willing to accompany us up the peaks we need. Gregie Boy offered his free guide service after our jaunts up Glass and Patterson, if any wanted a Sierra peak or two on the way home. He is still backpacking long miles (hike a mule, Greg, and save those knees) and climbing AND pursuing his bridge tournaments in dark and smoky rooms. The rooms are smoking, because Greg is burning up the competitors. Currently Our Boy is a Gold Life Master which puts him in the top 3 or 4 percent of all bridge players in the U.S. (And where’s that Marble write-up, you keep promising us? Oh, I know, you’re too busy playing bridge.)

DID YOU READ the last Echo (Oct/Dec 2009) and are you reeling from Ron Hudson’s write-up of Matthew Holli-man who finished day hiking the Sierra Peaks List? His climbing buddy Bob Burd reports on his website that he has four to go. When one thinks of those incredible treks back into the interior, I (for one) immediately pictured the Big Arroyo and Black Kaweah where we climbed the peaks and slept happily and wearily in our tents. The idea of turning this kind of peak bag around in 24 hours (to and from the car) is beyond our wildest imaginations. Doug Mantle emailed me right after I was thinking of Black K that he had read an entry just last week on Black Kaweah from Matthew and Bob. “Nine hours and 45 minutes from Mineral King.” OMG, I chime in with Doug. These are not mere mortals dwelling among us. FYI, our Sage editor Bob Sumner is trying for the same thing and has 61 peaks to go.

And in the same genre of the Young and the Awesome, I congratulate Jeff Dhungana on his 22 month bicycle ride (Yes, I write, “bicycle,”) peddling from Los Angeles to Patagonia. Even Che Guevara and his buddy did a South American traverse on their often broken down motorcycle (see the Spanish movie, “Motorcycle Diaries” for this one.) Did You Know, Jeff says he kept to a rigid budget of $10 a day and depended on the kindness of strangers for lodging and food. We are all waiting on the edge of our movie seats to see Jeff’s slide show. After returning from his S.A. marathon adventure, Jeff hauled in complete racks of climbing gear for two and met Doug Mantle for the 5.6 classic climb up North Cotter. I think it’s called the Ironing Board for obvious reasons. Prior to joining Doug for Classic Cotter, Jeff easily bagged Clarence King, standard route up Cotter, and Gardner within one day. After his climb with Doug, this fine young fellow day hiked out of Sixty Lakes Basin, drove home to Fullerton, and showed his above mentioned slide show that very same night. Appropriately, Jeff’s one liner on his website is: Fortune smiles on the bold.

DID YOU KNOW, I checked in with Winnette Butler after hearing about her near-death exhaustion scare on the Spirit climb (Asher’s List Finisher). She was in the early stages of hyperthermia, and around the corner came Ron Hudson (can you hear the William Tell Overture) galloping with a big jug of water which he poured gallantly on Winnette’s head. “Was that ever wonderful! Wonderful, wonderful! I’ll never forget it!” exclaimed Winnette. It was around 1979 that I first met Ron Hudson (another Wonder Man) on my first Sierra hike with the Sierra Singles, Twenties and Thirties. I always accuse Ron that he never got older and still could pass as a card carrying member of that organization. I bet no one gives him the Senior Discount at Taco Bell!

DID YOU KNOW that long time friend and recipient of the Phil Bernay’s Highest Service Award (2009), Virgil Shields tied the knot with Ann Pedreschi, a month or so ago. Their wedding was held at the Nature Trust near the Pacific Coast Highway with 100 or more in attendance. Sadly, George Wysup and I could not attend. The ceremony was conducted by our local right and sometimes reverend Marc “Roadkill” Hertz. Marc says he’s available for additional weddings, too, when he’s not busy teaching WTC students. However, I don’t know if your relatives in the Midwest will understand your officiating minister named Reverend Roadkill. Virgil was one gnarly fearless climber in RCS (Rock Climbing Section) years ago, and now he’s hanging off the ivory towers at Cornell University (Ithaca, N.Y.) teaching and doing research. (Many thanks to Bill Oliver for the loan of “gnarly” for my column.) Congrats, Virgil and Ann!

Frightening Encounters of the Worst Kind? DID YOU KNOW, Mary Motheral was fighting off a black bear when she, Rayne, and Gene Mauk were logging in another set of miles on the PCT (Pacific Coast Trail) near the Oregon
border? The bear was having a high old time with Mary’s food bag and didn’t know her credentials as Triple List Finisher (DPS, SPS, and HPS) plus all the State High Points. Mary is one tough cookie in the wilderness, and bears know better than to mess with her cookies.

And if you are “afraid,” of swine flu, infectious doc Anne Anglim says, “Don’t worry if you were born prior to 1957. You’ve got Auto-Genic Original Sin from having been exposed to many other prior flu epidemics.” I’ve always known about original and unoriginal sins, but I never knew they could save me from a flu pandemic.

DYK that Tina Bowman not only excels in rock climbing, peak bagging, and teaching college level English, but did you know she once owned five or six classic cars stored in various local garages? There was the 1956 pink and white Cadillac coup which Tina hot-rod-ded around Long Beach. And then there was the 1954 Lincoln Capri (she owned one of the 2001 built that year) and raced it in Baja. “It was like a tank,” Dr. Tina said. Shall I mention the 1950 Ford Club coupe which she commuted back and forth to USC during grad school? Boy oh boy, the things you learn about people when riding off to desert peaks!

List Finishers are on the horizon as previously mentioned. Meet Ed Herman, Nov. 21st, on Pleasant with camping down below in a warmer campground. Email Tina and me for details. We’re waiting for news of pending L.F. celebrations from John Hooper, John Strauch, Sue Holloway, and Doug Mantle for #8 (so announced Doug on a Stick at the May DPS banquet.)

And DID YOU KNOW, Tom Bowman’s very hot rockin’ band called Lickerish has released a new CD, “Alien”. CD sales and book signings (Edna Erspamer and Bob Sumner) are on the horizon.

Just came across an autographed paperback in Ron Young’s climbing and hiking gear (soon to be dispersed to fellow DPSers). “Away From the Crowd, Adventure Travels in the West” with Adrienne Knute as your off-the-beaten-path Guide. DYK, Ron Jones is featured in a very handsome photo on the cover. Somehow, I must have been elsewhere in 1986, as I missed that one. It’s a fine little book and an easy read for Baja adventures and more.

The Station Fire has come and gone, and thanks be to God that Mt. Wilson survived. Doug Mantle was musing that if the peak had burned up, would Wilson Observatory director (and original DPS Peak Guide editor), Dave Jurasevich have stayed on the peak, ultimately going up in flames as local resident Harry Truman did on Mt. St. Helens? They never found Harry who vaporized but according to reliable sources, Mt. Wilson is alive and well, and so is Dave. Thanks to Bob Cates who was our resident Station Fire reporter on television and radio during those turbulent days.

DID YOU KNOW, my Minnesota high school friend (reconnected on Mt. Elbert) Jim Marganat of Rapid City has enjoyed his gift subscription to the Sage so much, that he has renewed it himself? He remarked that the Sierra Clubbers deep in South Dakota snow get a kick out of our desert antics. I asked if he wouldn’t mind my mentioning him in DYK. He emailed back, “There is no such thing as bad publicity.”

In closing, don’t forget Gene Mauk’s significant birthday on November 6th. Stay tuned for a desert celebration of Ted Brasket’s equally significant birthday in Jan. or Feb. Randy Bernard’s great show on the El Camino de Santiago is Jan. 27th in Montrose.

Cards will be welcomed by SPSer and now Colorado 14er buddy, Alan Conrad (bypass surgery recovery) and good friend and former DPS web master, Charlie Knapek. Congrats to Jon Inskeep who was honored by CMC in October for the many years he has contributed to So. Ca. Mountaineering. I’ll never forget Jon’s personalized license plate in days of yore when he led us up many a desert peak—“Horny,” for Horny Toads, of course. Miss you, Jon! How’d you ever get that license plate past the censors?

And that’s the news of things astir in the Land of Little Rain. Keep those stories coming my way as I sit and type in my wickiup. “I never met a scoop I didn’t like.” - Mary Mae, Roving Girl Reporter

THE DESERT SAGE

November/December 2009
Trip reports from scheduled DPS outings and private trips to any peaks or areas of interest to Sage recipients are welcomed and encouraged. Please refer to the back cover for CORRESPONDENCE submission details. Next submission deadline is DECEMBER 12, 2009.

TRIP REPORTS

WHITE MOUNTAIN PEAK
July 18, 2009
By Tom and Tina Bowman

When Tom and I pulled into Grandview Campground off White Mountain Road on Friday, July 17th, we met some of our participants for the hike the next day and shared a campsite with Annie Rolls and Lisa Buckley. In a nearby spot were Anne Anglim, Kristen Kam, Eric Rowan, and Homer Tom. Dave Cannon had elected to sleep at the trailhead, and his friend Mark Allen stopped by to say hello to the group before he headed off to meet Dave. Homer built a fine campfire, and we gorged on toasted marshmallows before heading off to settle in for the very mild night.

Saturday we left the campground about 5:30 for the 21 mile drive to the trailhead, which took about an hour. I hadn't been there since November 1995, so I was quite pleased to see that an outhouse had been put in. We left the hoods of our cars open to thwart the marmots. Apparently, they like to chew on hoses in the dark or privacy of a closed engine space. After the usual milling around and trailhead talk, we set off at a comfortable, steady pace just after 7:00. Because no one needed a clothing break, our first stop was at the Barcroft Laboratory, two miles in, where we regrouped and checked on how everyone was doing. We went on the short distance to the observatory, where Mark signed out to go back to the cars and home. Karl Fredrickson, who had missed our start by about half an hour, soon caught up to us and signed in. From the observatory we had good views of the summit. We took one more break after passing "Marmot Flats" (my name), where we saw lots of marmots waddling about, before the second and final loss of elevation and the climb up the switchbacks to the top. Towards the top we took a short use trail that cut one of the road's switchbacks, which was snow covered. The front part of the group was on the summit before 11:10. We had a strong group, passing others in front of us and keeping another group, which passed us on a break, well behind us after we passed them on a break. Way to go, Team!

The forecast was for 20% chance of thunderstorms, and we were definitely keeping our eyes on the clouds around us. Our hike in had been a sunny one, but to the east it was clearly raining. Starting down a little before noon, we met Sabine (I never did get her last name) and Douglas Thompson, two participants who were a bit late for the 7:00 a.m. start. We took our first break of the homeward trek after that first climb up on the way back, and another back at Barcroft to regroup once again. We had a few very scattered raindrops, but while we were hanging out near the lab, we saw a number of lightning bolts east of us. A chilly wind was blowing as we headed the final two miles back to the cars, getting there about 3:15. We could see smoking billowing up in the Bishop Creek drainage; lightning had started the Forks fire there about 2:30. Annie had spotted a fire off near Glass Mountain as well.

Some people headed for home and few stayed at Grandview another night. Tom and I stopped at the campground and then headed down to Independence, seeing the smoke from several lightning-caused fires a little south of Aberdeen in the Sierra.

We certainly lucked out with the weather and had an excellent group. Thanks to all for a wonderful day!

Note: The DPS guide says 15 miles and 2400' gain, round trip. The mileage seems right, but my Avocet measured 3455' gain. We lost and regained about 400' on the way in, and of course we had to regain that 400' on the way out.

Atrip White Mtn Peak—Left to right: Karl Fredrickson, Dave Cannon, Tina Bowman, Eric Rowan (behind), Tori Bowman, Homer Tom, Lisa Buckley, Kristen Kam, Anne Anglim, and Annie Rolls. Photo by Tina Bowman.
TELESCOPE PEAK
JULY 18-19, 2009
By Chris Spisak

On a past July weekend, my friend and co-leader, Lilly Fukui and I decided to venture into Desert Peaks territory for an ascent of Telescope Peak in Death Valley National Park. We are both Hundred Peaks Section leaders and rarely endeavor to attempt peaks not on our List, but considering the heat wave we were experiencing at the time, the cool heights of Telescope seemed inviting. Let me state at this point, we did not find that cooling relief. It was in the high eighties all of the way to the top. We had originally received many “going to go for sure” or “would like to go” replies to our trip plan, but most found other things to do that weekend, and we were just a group of four. Mat Kelliher and Tanya Roton were our HPS friends who made the trip with us.

Our original plan was to do Telescope on Saturday, stay in our camp at Mahogany Flat for a potluck dinner, then do Wildrose Peak on Sunday before returning to L.A. Arriving in camp early on Friday, Lilly and I hiked to the top of Rogers Peak for a warm-up. It was warm all right and temperatures were hot, as previously stated. Rogers has many communication towers on it and is part of a pair of peaks that you pass between on the way to Telescope. Mat and Tanya were in camp when we returned. We had dinner and were early to bed for an early start.

The temperatures were mild and the morning light magnificent as we made our way to the peak. We had plenty of time so we enjoyed all of the wildflowers that were still in profusion along the trail. Several others were headed for the same destination, and we enjoyed their company and interaction off and on. The air was clear and the views spectacular. Mat is a geologist, and was excited about the varieties of rocks present. On the return trip, we left the trail for a cut across Rogers, and back to the road that led back to the camp. Clouds had been forming and the weather grew unstable. From camp, we could observe storm clouds over Death Valley and see precipitation falling, though probably not reaching the valley floor. It was the crackling lightning that really concerned us. It was all around us, and seemed to get closer by the minute. Mat already had his gas barbeque going, but we decided it was getting risky to stay in the camp, and the beginning of rain drops falling made us concerned about what the rough road would be like on the drive out. We quickly packed up and made our exit, giving up our attempt at Wildrose for another day. The road to Trona was a memorable drive. Wind, rain, and lightning cracking almost continually close around us. It was an exciting ending to a great Desert Peak trip.

RUBY DOME, WHEELER PEAK
August 16-18, 2009
By Michael Gosnell

I am nearing the end of the DPS list, but my remaining peaks are far, far away. So, when Asher Waxman started discussing a trip to eastern Nevada to hike Ruby Dome and Mt Wheeler, I jumped at the chance. Asher was a mere two peaks away from his list finish. Mary Mac suggested I assist as leader, but I am not ‘I’ rated which I would need for Ruby Dome. Not to worry, we were lucky enough to have George Wysup volunteer to assist with this climb, driving down from his new home in Washington.

I carpooled with my good friend Rudy Fleck and our drive across Nevada and the basin and range country was pleasant enough with a stop at the Shoe Tree being an unusual highlight. After eight or so hours, we arrived in the dying town of Elko and met several of our large
group for dinner at Stockman’s Motel and Casino. A few had just finished a multi-day backpack of the Ruby Crest Trail (George Wysup, John Libby, Lisa Buckley, Mei Kwan and Wayne Voltaire) and now they were going to attempt the difficult climb of Ruby Dome very ambitious! They raved about the Sierra-like atmosphere of this beautiful trail and range. This confirmed what I had read from other trip reports that boasted of the Ruby’s having the best alpine environment in all of Nevada.

We met at the trailhead at 7 am and started up Hennen Canyon, staying to left side of Butterfield Creek for much of the way. The trail was good all the way to Griswold Lake and we had a cold, but gorgeous morning for our climb and Parry’s primrose added to the beauty. At this point, George was feeling a bit tired, but he pushed on up the steep use trail from the lake to a saddle at 10,200 ft. We then made our way over to a point below the summit where routes A and B split. It was here that George called it quits and Jennifer Washington stayed and hiked back down to the lake where they would wait for us. We did not pick a replacement leader, but there were several ‘I’ rated leaders on the climb, so we had lots of experience.

We chose to take route B up to the summit area as we didn’t know about the snow/ice conditions on route A. We also split up here: some of the group headed directly up to the summit ridge while others walked around and went up a more gradual route. It was at this time, a member of the group fell far behind and I and couple others waited half an hour for Asher and this slower member to reach the summit ridge. When I saw they were safe, I went up ahead to join the group who were also waiting higher up, just shy of the peak. After joining them, we walked over to the summit and waited for another half hour for the rest to arrive. After some discussions about our fragmented group and ‘miscommunication,’ Rudy scouted out route A and reported that it was clear of snow, so we went down this route which was a bit diffi-

The following day, we said good-bye to several of our group members including George and made the long drive down to Great Basin National Park. We all stayed at the highest camp, Wheeler Peak Campground at 9950 ft. I took in a tour of the Lehman Caves while others relaxed in the beautiful alpine surroundings. Jorge Estrada hiked up to one of the lakes near the ancient Bristlecone Pines. After I returned from the caves, Asher arrived at the campground and said he did not want to lead Wheeler Peak. He sent over a sign-in sheet to me and hinted that he would not do the hike. Undaunted, we got a cold, early start up the very popular trail to Wheeler Peak.

The going was slow as a member (same slow hiker from Ruby Dome) was holding up the others. Two hikers left the group early out of frustration from standing around and taking too many breaks. As we gained the ridge, the wind picked up and it was very cold. This kept us from waiting any longer for the slow member, as we could not stand around. We tried to keep her in sight as we made our way up the rocky trail to Wheeler. This situation brings up a difficult dilemma for any leader. Perhaps this member should not have been allowed to come. Should the entire group suffer for one slow hiker? We could not wait around without growing very cold, so we did what we thought was best and kept hiking. All ended well, though, as a couple members of our group met her on the way down, walked back up to Wheeler and then walked down with her. Thanks to Anne Anglim and Ute for their help! What was left of the group made the now warm hike down to the parking lot. As we got back pretty

Stella Lake and Wheeler Peak in the early morning.
early, Rudy and I said our good-byes and made the long drive home after an enjoyable trip to this seldom seen, but beautifully rugged country.

The participants on this trip were George Wysup, Asher Waxman, Rudy Fleck, Diane Dunbar, Jennifer Washington, Mary Jo Dungfelder, Gary Schenk, Wayne Vollaire, Mei Kwan, John Libby, Lisa Buckley, Ute Dietrich, Jorge Estrada, Anne Anglim, Bruno Geiger, Gary Bowen, and Michael Gosnell.

**MOUNT PATTERSON, GLASS MOUNTAIN**
**September 19-20, 2009**
**By Mary McMannes**

Tina was back from bagging lots (and I mean lots) of Sierra peaks with the big guys, and I had returned from five weeks in Colorado doing the best I could with my peaks. We were happy to have a cool day in the high country before Asher and Dan fried everyone to a crisp on AMuirMan’s DPS List Finisher on Spirit the next weekend. It has now become Tina’s and my annual September hike, or should I say, “Hunting Season Is Open and Here Come the Girls.” The area going to Patterson is so gorgeous and breath taking, one can barely keep hands on the steering wheel and eyes on the road. “I feel the wave coming on.” I met Tina at Mary Austin’s in Independence (Mary was no where to be seen), and off we went in Tina’s Toyota now boasting 300,000 miles. By the way, the Toyota trucks on P. and G. were so well represented, we should get a kick back from Toyota. It was a pleasant drive up from Bridgeport, and beyond there, we turned at the 14.8 mile mark to the signed Burrough Flat Road. All went well to Lobdell Lake, and thus far the road was good enough that Tina didn’t use 4WD. However, the last two miles were steep, and we used the 4WD only the last hundred yards or so. In this little pre-hike scouting trip, we knew everyone would get up there, and there’d be ample parking for all. Satisfied with the lay of the land, we went back to have a fine evening of camping near our meeting point. Hunters were in abundance, and they all waved at us as we went by.

It was a bright and early morning, and we were awakened with the sun and boom boom of the hunters. The climbers were ready for an adventure, and they were ready for their own choice of excitement. There were hopes the twain would not meet. A mile from Highway 395 the group had gathered, some 19 of them. Seventeen would bag Patterson, and fourteen stayed for Day #2 and Glass. Many friends were scurrying around their cars, and Danny Boy (who owns Tom Sumner) and Maui (owner of Jim Fleming) were chasing each other with great joy of newfound friendship. Past DPS List Finishers, Edna Ersipamer and Rheta Schoeneman guarded our cars for both days. Old friends were hugged: Ed Herrman, Tom Sumner, Winnette Butler, Jim Fleming, Anne Rolls, Diane Dunbar, and Gary Bowen. Some new faces of soon-to-be-friends were Witold Martynowicz, Margy Marshall, Wayne Martin, Canyon Explorers Bruce Trotter and Gary James, Jim Scott, Elena Tseulek. Anne Anglim came roaring up the road just in time. Well, she wasn’t roaring as one of her car tires was now a donut. We signed in, and then much to our aghast, there was a huge herd of cows running up the road (behind us) with three cowboys in mad pursuit. We huddled in our cars, as they stomped and snorted by. As Tom remarked, “A perfect day with just us, AND 2,000 cows and 2,000 hunters.” Ah, hyperbole! We managed to crawl past those bovines with Tina in the lead, and off we went for Patterson. Three or four people jumped into 4WD Toyotas at that final steep two mile stretch. It was one windy (hurricane force) hike up that wonderful jeep road to the summit. The lead group huddled as the tail enders arrived. Summit shots were taken, and down we went, chattering like magpies. Jim Scott was new to me,
but he shared his claim to fame was once being an item with Mary Motheral. They had an amiable parting, as each person shared simultaneously with the other that he and she were marrying someone else. No one got jilted, and Mary waltzed off with Rayne, and Jim walked down the aisle with Gail. We like happy endings.

On the drive out, all were bemused by the Basque shepherd carvings on the trees, particularly multiple carving of Oscar Leon of Peru and Trevor Red Robe from the 1950s. I had flashbacks to a Gene Olson Nevada trip, where we saw even older Basque carvings from the 1930s and 40s. Approaching our original a.m. meeting point and making plans for the evening, we were amazed that an airplane was sitting on the road, preparing to take off. First the hunters, then the cattle drive, and now an airplane? What next? We didn’t know quite what to make of this, but Witold grabbed his camera and got photos. After going through his checks, the pilot revved up the plane’s engine, and managed to take off in a jerky lurchy fashion. We all breathed a sigh of relief when it actually cleared the hills and was skybound. We never did figure out what that was all about.

After recovering from the airplane incident, we continued our plans to stop at Whoa Nelly Mobile station where Anne hoped to find a tire and a world famous fish taco. The rest of us gassed up, had a snack, and away we went for evening camping. Our plan was to turn on Highway 120 heading for Mono Mills, SE of Mono Lake. Around 7 miles or so, we stopped at Doug Man tle’s favorite List Finisher spot and corralled the others.

Tina sat patiently as the sentinel by the highway, so Anne and Diane would see us. The rest broke out in happy hour partying, while Tina was the conscientious leader. The night was windy, but we managed to huddle closely and eat Tom’s award winning chili (see Chili Fest, 2008), Edna’s black beans and sausage, meatballs, and lots of other goodies. The winds were howling enough to blow over my tent, so we didn’t have a campfire but went to bed far too early.

Sunday a.m., there was Danny Boy staring in my tent door, and a couple minutes later Best Friend Tomas appeared with a steaming cup of coffee complete with milk. Was I ever delighted, and that made for a good mood the rest of the day. Danny and Tom opted to go on to Tahoe; Jim Scott and friend Elena had signed out the night before. We jumped into our cars and on to peak #2. The route was pretty easy as we careened another 25 miles and turned right on the signed Sawmill Road where we turned again on an excellent dirt road. A few people jumped into trucks again, and we went the final stretch of 11 miles until we reached the Glass campground. Tina turned into the little jeep road, which is there by the two marked posts. Four cars parked at the true roadhead, and the others parked below close to the campground.

Glass is one terrific peak and easy pickings just like Patterson, but we had a steeper and calmer day on a peak where we could sit and enjoy the view and the sunshine. We sauntered up the canyon to a small saddle at 9880’ and continued up through a forested ridge and slopes to a broad saddle where the peak was .2 miles WSW above us. It’s a swell trail! Some people think the yonder peak with the radio relay “house” is the peak, but it’s not. As I said, we had one of those crisp perfect September days on peaks over 11,000’. Winnette made it even better by passing around truffles.

Was she truffling with our emotions? She and Jim and Maui decided it was so good up there, they signed out and stayed for more R and R (rest and reflection). It was an easy climb down, and Diane Dunbar never got an answer about the difference between brown and black obsidian. If you love shiny black obsidian in door stop sized chunks, this is the place for you.

When I was up there, I couldn’t help but remember the first DPS lead of Glass (and later Coso) by first DPS chairman, Bob Henderson, who led 200 eager people up this very peak. Tina and I drove over to Benton and on to Independence after fueling up on bean burritos at Taco Bell in Bishop. The clerk gave me my senior discount without asking, and Tina laughed when I made a face. A good time was had by all, and thanks Tina for being the brains and brawn behind the operation. And Witold who was generous with photographs withholding none. Thanks to the participants and those well behaved canines, Danny and Maui. Two glorious days on two spectacular DPS peaks.
Many in the group, which totaled 16, met and/or camped at the trailhead (Upper Bristlecone Trail, elevation 8700') on Friday night. Sleeping there was quite pleasant. We convened at the trailhead at 6:00 a.m. (Yawn!) Saturday morning and got the medical forms and sign-in done. We left about 6:35 a.m. on an excellent trail with enough light to see without headlamps. Great fall colors in the canyon-peachy yellows to orange on the aspen trees. It was a steady climb along the ridge, much up and down hovering around 10,000', to reach the turn-off point for the peak (9620'). From the time we reached 10,000' up to the summit we were in a healthy forest of bristlecone, young and old. Here, the group dug out hard hats and a 100 foot climbing rope. We ascended the steep, well-ducked use trail, and at one point leader Dan Richter and Ron Hudson set up a fixed line with loops to facilitate going over some exposed (albeit minor) third class rock.

We reached the summit (10,742') about 11:40 a.m. and enjoyed the wonderful views of the Spring Mountain Range, including a great view of the north side of Charleston Peak and ridge over to Mummy Mountain. Edd Ruskowitz captured the group with his digital camera (and the DPS flag). Most in the group agreed that this would be a worthy addition to the DPS list. The descent scramble down the loose scree in the chute was carefully made, the fixed line again being ably placed over the third class rock by Ron and Dan. Hiking back along the trail, we realized quite a bit of uphill, making a tired bunch of desert rats a bit more tired! The setting sun played wonderful color splashes on the greens, browns, rusts, yellows, and oranges of the forest. All were back to the vehicles by 6:00 p.m. Tina Bowman’s Avocet altimeter determined our total elevation gain for the day to be about 3,850 feet, and I think our mileage total was about 14. We had about 900 to 1,000 feet of elevation gain on the return. Great hike and great day! We headed south on US Highway 95, stopping (some of us, anyway) for a Mexican dinner at a trendy spot in North Las Vegas. Then it was on south towards the “sprawling metropolis” of Searchlight, and points south to the excellent dirt road and up to Christmas Tree Pass. A group of us camped there overnight, in eager anticipation of the impending party to follow the next day.

Members of the Mountaineering Committee,

Pursuant to Section 1, Article XI of the Desert Peaks Section’s bylaws I am notifying you that I am proposing that McFarland Peak (10,742') be added to the DPS list. McFarland Peak is a beautiful, rugged and imposing limestone peak hidden deep within the Northern portion of the Spring Mountains of Southern Nevada. Lying to the north of Charleston Peak, its nearest neighbor is Bonanza Peak. Along with Bridge Mountain, Muddy Peak, and Moapa Peak, McFarland Peak is considered one of the Vegas-area classics. On Saturday September 26, 2009 I led McFarland as a scheduled DPS trip with an MR rating. Tina Bowman's Avocet altimeter determined our total elevation gain for the day to be about 3,850 feet and best estimates are that we covered about 14 miles. We had about 900 to 1,000 feet of elevation gain on the return. We travelled to the peak along the beautiful Bristlecone and Bonanza Trails along a ridge coved in bristlecone pines. The actual climb was by the McFarland’s southwest chute with a short 3rd class pitch at approximately the 10,000’ point where we used a fixed line. The views from the summit were spectacular. Aside from Charleston and Mummy we could see Stirling, Hayford, and Bonanza. McFarland will be a wonderful addition to our list; we need more of the good ones.

I was assisted by Asher Waxman and we were accompanied by Edd Ruskowitz, Terry Flood, Tina Bowman, Christine Mitchell, Ron Bartell, Ron Hudson, Kathy Rich, Steve Eckert, Daryn Dodge, Joe Speigl, Anne Anglim, Jim Fleming, Brian S. Smith, and Virgil Popescu. The trip has been written up by Jim Fleming (see trip report immediately preceding this proposal).

Sincerely, Dan Richter, Past Chair

The DPS Mountaineering Committee has approved the proposal to add McFarland Peak to the list and has forwarded it to the DPS Management Committee for consideration, per the bylaws.
SPIRIT MOUNTAIN LIST FINISH
September 27, 2009
By Jim Fleming

Asher Waxman, esquire, and a group totaling 19 (plus Maui the Excellent Mountain Doggie) met at lovely Christmas Tree Pass in the coolness (relative) at 7:00 a.m. on Sunday morning. Many in the group had done the exploratory climb of McFarland Peak in the Spring Mountains the previous day. We drove down over the pass to parking on the road (noting that one can no longer drive the final 0.4 mile into the canyon, due to the Wilderness boundary at the edge of the road). After getting all together, we started out hiking about 7:40 a.m. Proceeding up the road, we were thankful to still be in the shade of the mountain. Our group made good time under these conditions, stopping several times to rest and take in the ever-expanding views of the Colorado basin below.

Soon, we scrambled over the low third class rocks of the summit mesa and Asher climbed the last knob of summit rocks, arriving before noon (I think it was about 11:30 a.m.). CONGRATULATIONS, OLD BEAN! Great goodies were passed around, including a nice platter (of bleu cheese and black olives on endive leaves) by Gloria Miladin, cookies, grapes, almonds, red wine, champagne, and on and on. Wayne Voltaire read a poem composed by Poetess Marlen Mertz (in absentia, unfortunately) and we all had a great laugh at that one. The traditional photo of the group of DPS list finishers with flag unfurled (I commented about the fact that ‘there must be 500 years of climbing experience’ amongst that august group!) followed and the entire group photo as well. Thanks, Edd Ruskowitz, for your directorial (or, was it dictatorial?) efforts on this! By now, the sun was high in the sky (as was our group).

The descent was quite a bit hotter than our ascent had been, with temperatures approaching 100 degrees. Some in the group were having difficulties with this, but our great climbing comrades (including Ron Hudson, Kathy Rich, Tina Bowman, Asher, Dan, Anne Anglim, and others) brought up water, ice, and Sunny Delight (yum, did that taste GOOD) to us pokey folks, which considerably aided our finishing the climb. I cannot thank all of you enough for that help! Back at the vehicles, we partied again, and cooled off. What a great group of people we have in our Section! THANKS TO Y’ALL!
DPS Potluck
October 4, 2009
By Tina Bowman

On Sunday, October 4th, the DPS Management Committee meeting and following potluck were held at the home of Tom and Tina Bowman in Long Beach. Present at the meeting were Christine Mitchell, secretary, delegated by the absent chair and present vice chair to lead the meeting; Gloria Miladin, treasurer; Elaine Baldwin, banquet chair; Tina Bowman, outings chair; Barbara Reber, archivist; Ron Bartell, membership chair; and Dan Richter. Joining us for the potluck were Dave Baldwin (who rode his bike and the train to get to the meeting), Tom Bowman, Kevin Gray, Josephine Lam, Pat and Gerry Holleman, Barbee and Larry Tidball. We had wonderful food—gazpacho made from heirloom tomatoes that day from the Tidballs’ garden, Gloria’s leek soup with tofu, a variety of salads and other dishes and appetizers, followed by cake for dessert. Yum!

ADVERTISEMENTS

For sale: SMC hinged adjustable 12 pt. Medium crampons, Beck harness straps (many), and crampon protectors. (owner wore size 8 1/2 Raichle boots.) Premana Italian ice ax with protector and spike cover. (Owner was 5’9”). Previously owned by Ron Young. Make an offer. Proceeds will go to DPS general fund. Email offers to: marymuir@earthlink.net

SAGES and ECHOS bound in notebooks—1950s to present day. Erick Schumacher, owner. Donation to DPS fund is acceptable. These need a good home. Contact: marymuir@earthlink.net

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Contact: 
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Cost: 
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Registration Required?
Yes

COVER PHOTO: White Mountain Peak. Photo by Tina Bowman.
The Cerro Pinacate region of Northwestern Sonora is both a geological wonderland and the stage for many fascinating historic events. The crater-pocked volcanic area, originally home to a small number of half-starved Indians, was first seen by Europeans during a 1540 expedition led by Melchior Diaz, who had been sent by the explorer Francisco Diaz de Coronado, then in what is now New Mexico, to rendezvous with supply ships that had been sent up the Gulf of California. Following the Camino del Diablo, an ancient native trail leading from the present-day Sonoita, Sonora area and passing just north of the Pinacates, Diaz made it all the way to the Colorado River and beyond. Unfortunately, he did not meet the supply ships, and, sadder still, somewhere near the base of Cerro Pescadores, he accidentally gored himself with his own lance. His men attempted to get him back to civilization as rapidly as possible, however Diaz died during the trip, probably in the Pinacate area.

The next European to appear on the scene was the energetic Jesuit missionary, Fray Eusebio Kino, operating out of Mission Dolores, Sonora, who, between 1698 and 1702, conducted six forays directly into the forbidding Pinacate lavas. Indeed, it was Kino and his companions who, on October 9, 1698, first climbed Pinacate Peak. By the way, Kino named the peak Cerro de Santa Clara. The name Pinacate comes from a beetle commonly found in the area.

No known European then visited the area again until 1750, when the Jesuit successor to Kino, Fray Sedelmayr, crossed and, following a deadly skirmish with Indians on the Colorado River, re-crossed the Camino del Diablo.

In 1771 and again in 1774, the route was visited by yet another missionary, Father Francisco Garcés, a Franciscan assigned to the frontier mission at San Xavier del Bac, just south of present day Tucson. Captain Juan Bautista De Anza, who led two large expeditions from Sonora to California to establish a Spanish colony at San Francisco—and for whom Anza-Borrego State Park is partially named—accompanied Father Garcés on his second trip.

In 1848, two significant events affected the region—that part of Mexico north of the Gila River was annexed by the United States and gold was discovered in California. Although the Gila River offered a shorter route from the east coast to the Mother Lode, the area was also subject to attacks by the Apaches. Another land route was the Camino del Diablo, and although many opted for it, contending with the Apaches may have been a better choice. Indeed, between 1849 and 1860, plagued by high temperatures and lack of water, an estimated 400 would-be Argonauts died of thirst while crossing Camino del Diablo.

In 1907, a team from the Carnegie Desert Institute, including Institute Director, Dr. Daniel MacDougal; Dr. William T. Hornaday, a widely known zoologist, conservationist and travel writer; Godfrey Sykes, a local explorer, and Jeff Milton, a local lawman and agent of the Immigration Service, explored the west side of the Cerro Pinacate. Later that same year, Hornaday published his book Camp-fires on Desert and Lava (see review in March/April 2002 Sage) which became a best-seller. Hornaday and his three companions, striding together arm in arm, made what they thought was the first ascent of Pinacate Peak. Nope. If they had read their histories, they would have known the first ascent was made 209 years earlier by Padre Kino.

The Norwegian naturalist Carl Lumholtz traveled through the region between 1909 and 1910, and his ensuing book New Trails in Mexico (see Jan./Feb 2003 Sage) still offers one of the best descriptions of the Pinacate and the adjoining Gran Desierto sand dunes.

LAND OF LAVA, ASH, AND SAND (1989), Ronald L. Ives

During his lifetime Ronald L. Ives (1910-1982) became a walking encyclopedia in regard to the Cerro Pinacate area. In 1928, after reaching Hornaday’s Camp-Fires on Desert and Lava, the then eighteen-year-old traveled from his home in New Jersey west, where he hitchhiked and hiked his way through Bryce, Zion and Grand Canyon N.P.s. His final goal was the Cerro Pinacate region, where, walking alone on the Devil’s Highway,
carrying only rice, dried beef and a two-quart canteen, he made it through the Lechuguilla Desert, past the Tinajas Atlas (natural water tanks) and within ten miles of the next water source, the Papago Tanks, before he was forced to turn back.

Not content, two years later Ives returned to the Pinacate area and climbed Pinacate Peak. He published his first article on the area in 1934, and during his remaining 46 years, even while earning a PhD in geography at Indiana University and teaching geography at the Northern Arizona University, his fascination with the Pinacate region continued. A very private man, Ives was content to conduct most of his research alone, eventually producing an astonishing 130 articles on the geography, geology, weather, climate, history and folklore of that extreme northwestern corner of Sonora.

Sixteen of Ives articles, originally published between 1935 and 1966, compiled by James W. Byrkit, edited by Karen J. Dahood and published by the Arizona Historical Society, make up the content of this excellent volume, which, in addition to offering a comprehensive review of the area, is also a tribute to the accomplished and compassionate man who wrote it.

Land of Lava, Ash, and Sand is divided in three parts: The Environment, The Inhabitants, and The Explorers. In Part One, although logically it seems like it should be in Part Three, we follow the travels of Fray Eusebio Kino, who, in November 1706, along with two other Frays, made the first non-native ascent of Cerro Pinacate. Other features considered in this first section are “Recurrent Mirages at Puerto Penasco” and “The Pestiferous Winds of the Upper Gulf of California.”

Part Two focuses primarily on the founding and growth of the Mexican border town of Sonora, and of Puerto Penasco’s development from a tiny fishing village to a popular seaside resort for Arizonians. In Part Three we again meet Fray Kino as he realizes that the blue shells coveted by the local natives must have come from the Pacific Ocean, and that, therefore, California No Es Ysla--was not an island, as most people at the time believed.

The last article, “Retracing the Route of the Fages Expedition of 1781,” summarizes Ives’ study of the journal and travels of Lieutenant Colonel Pedro Fages, an officer who, after a murderously Indian uprising along the lower Colorado River in July 1781, was sent out from central Sonora to rescue the women and children being held for ransom. Unfortunately, during that same revolt the Yuma Indians massacred every non-native man in the area, including Father Garcés and another priest. In September, Fages and his men, headed for the Colorado River, where, after successfully rescuing the captives, they returned to Sonora by way of the Camino del Diablo. Ives considered this historical reconstruction to be his best work.

DESSERT HEART: Chronicles of the Sonoran Desert (1989), William K. Hartman

The multi-talented William K. Hartman (1939- ) is an internationally known astronomer—co-author of the most widely accepted theory on the moon’s origin and he has an asteroid named after him; writer—three of his books on astronomy and space exploration have been translated and published in several languages, painter—mostly of astronomical scenes, and currently a member of NASA’s Mars Global Surveyor imaging team.

Another of his interests is the Cerro Pinacate area, or, as he describes it, “Desert Heart.” In 1989, he published a slick coffee-table style volume with the same name, based on three decades of his treks into the area and brimming with his own excellent color and black and white photographs.

Laid out in historical order, Desert Heart opens with an introduction describing the area as only an astronomer might, i.e., using an orbital photo from NASA. “(T)he Pinacates are a mountain mass of dark lavas spreading over an oval patch roughly 35 by 25 miles. On the northern edge is Mexico 2 and the border, across which the northernmost lava tongues spill onto the dry sands of the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge in the United States. To the east of the lavas, Mexico 8 runs south to the coast and the Sonora River struggles in the same direction, getting lost in the desert before it can reach the sea.” To the south, “the sands run down all the way to Puerto Penasco;” to the west there is only “a trackless sea of dunes called the Gran Desierto.”

Hartmann’s history of Europeans in the area begins with Cabeza de Vaca. Because his research was done prior to 1989, however, he has that beleaguered Spanish trudging through west Texas and New Mexico, rather than northern Mexico as now commonly accepted, during his six-year journey back to civilization.

One of the best aspects of Desert Heart can be found at the end of each chapter as Hartmann telescopic the area or event just described. For instance at the end of Chapter 5, “Tales from the Old, Real West,” which describes the area’s history during the 1800s, including tales of the ‘49ers who used the Camino del Diablo, Hartmann writes, “If you have never been to the lava country, you can understand its somber beauty if you listen to English composer Ralph Vaughn Williams’ Symphony No. 7, Sinfonia Antarctica.” He then points out the similarity between the two regions by quoting lines from Coleridge describing ice flows, but which also could apply to lava: “Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice, and stopped at once amidst their maddest plunge! Motionless torrents! Silent cataracts!”
Desert Heart is an excellent book. Because of space limitations I can’t possibly do it the justice it deserves.

THE SIERRA PINACATE (1998), Julian D. Hayden, Photographs by Jack Dykinga

Julian D. Hayden (1911-1987) was a field archaeologist only by avocation. His pioneering work on the Pinacates, innovative theories, lively curiosity, and distinctive gruff personality, however, made him legendary among southwestern scholars and desert rats. Ives, Hartmann and Broyles, plus other desert luminaries such as Chuck Bowden, Bernard Fontana and Gary Paul Nabhan all knew and admired him.

The Sierra Pinacate, published in 1998 by the University of Arizona Press, is a coffee-table style book only 87 pages in length, half of which are devoted to a Spanish translation of the text. The handsome volume is replete with many excellent photographs, including black & whites by the author and striking color shots by Jack Dykinga.

In his introduction, Hayden waxes lyrical on the early people of the area, imagining that their dreamed songs “must have expressed the brooding massif of the volcano, the ever-blowing winds, the furnace blasts of summer nights, the freezing northern gales of winter from which all living things take shelter, the always moving yet always stationary dunes between the lavas and the sea…” Regarding the make up of the Cerro Pinacate, the author describes the region as being the result of “an accumulation of more than two million years of flow upon flow of lava which issued from perhaps a single, or at most a few, magma chambers below, forming thus what is called a ‘shield volcano.’”

Hayden proceeds to ruffle most archaeologists’ feathers by contending that the earliest inhabitants of the area may have arrived as long as 40,000 years ago— rather than 10,000-12,000 years ago, after the ice age, as commonly advocated by most professionals. He bases his conclusion on the thickness of desert varnish on several stone tools found in the area.

This, too, is an excellent volume that belongs in your library.

SUNSHOT: Peril and Wonder in the Gran Desierto (2006), Bill Broyles, Photographs by Michael P. Berman

Of the four books considered in this review, Sunshot by Bill Broyles, is in my opinion the most readable and most satisfying. Consisting of 17 essays, along with 100 black and white photographs by Michael Berman, Broyles’ text compares to the best of Bowden, sans the boozie and women, and Abbey, less the anger and anarchy.

Most of pieces recount Broyles’ hiking trips through the Pinacate/Gran Desierto area, during which, sometimes with a friend, usually alone, he crisscrossed the wasteland in almost every direction.

Because of space limitations, I’ll include only one excerpt, a description which must sound familiar to many DPSers: “(Kino Peak) is big, stark, unfinished. A castle of rock carved by rain and wind from the neck of an ancient volcano… I went to the summit by a circuitous route that looks impossible but proves easy once the small cairns marking the way are found… Someone had told me how to find the trail’s start, but they also warned me that straying off the route led to numerous dead ends at the tops of tall cliffs. After climbing up a steep slope, around a cliff, up a false summit, and dropping down a chute, I hiked a series of switchback ledges to the summit. It isn’t a place for the faint hearts or careless steps. It all makes sense when standing on top, but the first person who surmounted the summit must have made a number of false starts in trying to string together a route.”

Sunshot is a must read. Trust me.
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26

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