Dear DPS members, friends, purveyors of primitive campgrounds and nameless trailheads, and all who roam the wild and thorny places: As I sit writing for the Sage’s April deadline, much akin to the wild flowers bursting forth in their full regalia, so is the DPS bursting with excitement and anticipation of transitions, additions, and our usual merry-making in the months ahead. We’re not just a bunch of pretty faces, but we are busy making inroads which will improve life for all DPSers.

I’m truly excited about our ballot measures and thanks to Elaine Baldwin for tons of work on the ballot. The daily mail brings a load of those wonderful green fliers, and I predict we’ll get a turnout of 50-70% of our entire membership in voting. A recent study of Happiness in America noted, “People who vote are happier than those who don’t.” It looks like there’s no felicific stagnation in this robust group. As you read this current Sage and are aware the ballots have been tallied, our DPS membership will soon receive the official announcement regarding the status of long-time cherished peaks, Argus and Maturango. And what about Kino, held hostage by drug cartels and runners? Did McFarland make the cut? The new management committee promises to be the strongest and the best with all candidates bringing wisdom, expertise, and new blood to the DPS table. Tina Bowman, Outings Maven Extraordinaire, has recruited new DPS leaders, plus she’s gotten some of the ones “older in the tooth” leading peaks again. Two great List Finisher parties are on the horizon with more to come in the fall. It’s time to unfurl the great DPS flag and wrap it around these worthy contenders.

The banquet has a new venue, lots of parking, and accessibility to those coming from the south (Proud Bird, L.A. to Patagonia. Doug Mantle will keep us laughing, entertained, and even blushing as only our favorite emcee can do. Overdue awards will be given, and nothing makes us feel more joyful than seeing our campesinos honored for being….simply the best! Our Mystery Man from the northern climes, Sage editor Bob Sumner, makes a rare appearance and will sign his Hiking Nevada’s County High Points book. Copies of Edna Erspamer’s tell-all book will be available, and members can purchase the easy cruisin’ music of Tom Bowman’s Lickerish band CDs.

Funny presentations and good natured roasting plus a huge collage of DPS photos will be on display. Get your tickets, ASAP, and get there early to reserve the table of choice. As I mentioned in a previous column, being your DPS chairperson for two years was the E-ticket ride for me. I never knew all the rewards this job would bring in working with a DPS management team who took on every challenge without complaining. I value the friendships forged with the appointed members (Ron, Ed, Barbara) including Sage editor, and webmaster, which made it all so easy for me. Your potluck hosts and hostesses are the cayenne of the social scene. And DPS leaders, I truly love you for not saying “No” to one more trip. I hate to go, but I really must. Be strong, be well, and always full of courage. Mary Mac, your grateful chair-lady, 2008-2010

May 16.) I, personally, am stoked and thrilled by Jeff (Japhy) Dhungana who did the impossible in biking from L.A. to Patagonia. Doug Mantle will keep us laughing, entertained, and even blushing as only our favorite emcee can do. Overdue awards will be given, and nothing makes us feel more joyful than seeing our campesinos honored for being….simply the best! Our Mystery Man from the northern climes, Sage editor Bob Sumner, makes a rare appearance and will sign his Hiking Nevada’s County High Points book. Copies of Edna Erspamer’s tell-all book will be available, and members can purchase the easy cruisin’ music of Tom Bowman’s Lickerish band CDs.

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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.

Next Submission Deadline June 13, 2010
### MAY 1-2 SAT-SUN DPS, WTC

**MR: Bridge Mtn (6995’):** Saturday climb Bridge Mtn near Las Vegas, 6.5 mile total rt, 2700’ gain. Saturday night happy hour and Sunday drive back. Must be comfortable on exposed 3rd class rock. Helmet, climbing harness, and medical form required. Restricted to Sierra Club members with appropriate experience. Send email or sase with Sierra Club #, climbing resume, experience with 3rd class rock, conditioning, and contact information to Leader: Rod Kieffer (rocketteck@yahoo.com). Co Leader: Mike Adams.

### MAY 8 SAT DPS, LTC, WTC, SPS

**MR/E/C: Sierra Snow Training:** Sierra Snow Training: Come train for a day with an AMGA-certified guide in the

## May/June 2010

### TRIPS / EVENTS

**MAY Through NOVEMBER 2010**

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<th>MAY 1-2</th>
<th>SAT-SUN</th>
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Sierra near Bishop. Most of your fee will be subsidized by the Sierra Club. Training includes techniques of snow mountaineering and leading groups on snow climbs. Open to SC members who are M- or E-rated OR aspiring mountaineering leaders with appropriate experience. Space is limited; Send sase or e-mail with SC#, resume, check for $25 made out to SMI (non-refundable deposit if a replacement for your spot isn’t found), contact info to Reservationist: Nile Sorenson. Assistant: Tina Bowman.

**MAY 8**

- **SAT**
  - **LTC, WTC, HPS**
  - **I: Beginning Navigation Clinic:** Spend the day one-on-one with an instructor, learning/practicing map and compass in our local mountains. Beginners to rusty old-timers welcome, and practice is available at all skill levels. Not a checkout, but it will help you prepare. Many expert leaders will attend; many I-rated leaders started here in the past. 4 mi, 500' gain. Send sase, phones, $25 deposit (Sierra Club, refunded at trailhead) to Leader: Diane Dunbar (dianedunbar@charter.net). Co-Leader: Richard Boardman.

**MAY 16**

- **SUN**
  - **DPS**
  - **O: DPS Annual Banquet:** Join us at the Proud Bird near LAX for this year’s banquet. Socializing 5:30-7:00, dinner at 7:00, followed by a awards and a program by Jeff Dhungana, "Cycling to Patagonia: A Million Dollar Trip on $10 a Day." For reservations, mail check for $30 member and $35 non-member ASAP to Treasurer Gloria Miladin, 11946 Downey Ave., Downey, CA 90242. Please specify dinner selection: Steak/Salmon/Vegetarian and number of raffle tickets: 5 for $3. Tickets will be held at the door. Questions, contact DPS Banquet Chair: Elaine Baldwin (DWBaldwin@aol.com) or DPS Chair Mary McMannes (marymuir@earthlink.net).

**MAY 21 - 23**

- **FRI-SUN**
  - **LTC, WTC, Harwood Lodge**
  - **C: Wilderness First Aid Course:** Runs from 8 am Fri to 5:30 pm Sun. Fee includes lodging, meals and practice first aid kit. Proof of CPR within previous 4 years required to enroll. Fee $205 with SC#/$215 non-member (full refund through April 16). For application contact Leader: Steve Schuster (steve.n.wfac2@sbcglobal.net).

**MAY 22-23**

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

**MAY 29-30**

- **SAT-SUN**
  - **DPS**
  - **MR: Mt Dubois (13,559’), Boundary Pk (13,140’), Montgomery Pk (13,441’): Sat climb Dubois x-c 9 mi, 5300’ gain. Car camp Sat night. Sun climb Boundary, high point of Nevada, and Montgomery (8 mi, 4200’ gain rt). We might see wild horses and will climb on snow. Some poor dirt road driving. Open to Sierra Club members only with appropriate snow experience. Send e-mail or sase with SC#, snow exp, conditioning, rideshare info to Leader: Tina Bowman (tina@bowmandesigngroup.com). Co-Leader: Kathy Rich.

**JUNE 5**

- **SAT**
  - **DPS, LTC, WTC, HPS, SPS**
  - **I: Heart Bar Peak (8332’): Practice navigation for Sunday’s checkoff on this 7 mile rt, 1400’ gain hike. We will take a cross-country route to Heart Bar Peak and practice micro-navigation skills along the way. Send email (preferred) or sase, with contact info & recent conditioning to Leader: Robert Myers (rmmyers@ix.netcom.com). Co-Leaders: Jane Simpson, Adrienne Benedict, Ann Pedreschi Shields.

**JUNE 6**

- **SUN**
  - **DPS, LTC, WTC, HPS, SPS**
  - **I: Grinnell Ridge Navigation:** Navigation Noodle in San Bernardino National Forest for either checkout or practice to satisfy Basic (I/M) or Advanced (E) level navigation requirements. Send email/sase, contact info, navigation...
THE DESERT SAGE 6 May/June 2010

experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare, to Leader: Robert Myers (rmmyers@ix.netcom.com).
Assistant: Harry Freimanis.

♦ JULY 10-11 SAT-SUN DPS

I: Mt. Patterson (11,673') Triple/Double List Finish: Ron Bartell and Christine Mitchell are finishing the DPS Peaks List, AGAIN. We won't let them do it without some company. Join us for this comfortable early summer walk in Great Basin sage country north of Bridgeport, CA. Saturday's hike should be 1600' gain, 5 mi rt, 3 hours or so, plus summit photo-op time. Fabulous views of the Bridgeport region of the Sierra are virtually guaranteed. A high-clearance vehicle is desirable for the last few miles to the trailhead. We'll have a celebration and pot-luck dinner that evening in true DPS style. Both Sierra and desert hiking options exist for Sunday. Email (preferred) Leader: Gary Craig w/qualifications (gary.a.craig@att.net). Co-Leader: Mary McMannes.

♦ AUG 1 SUN DPS, LTC, WTC, HPS, SPS

I: Mt. Pinos Navigation: Navigation noodle in Los Padres National Forest for either checkout or practice to satisfy Basic (L/M) or Advanced (E) level navigation requirements. Send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare, to Leader: Robert Myers (rmmyers@ix.netcom.com). Assistant: Kim Homan.

♦ SEP 17 FRI DPS, WTC

I: White Mountain Peak (14,256'): Join us on this hike to the third highest peak in California and highest desert peak in the United States. We will start at the locked gate to the Barcroft Station and our hike will entail 15 mi rt, 2,600' elevation gain. Reaching the trailhead requires a long dirt road drive through the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest. If time permits, we may climb Mount Barcroft (13,040') on the way back to the trailhead. Send email (preferred) or sase, with contact info & recent conditioning to Leader: Robert Myers (rmmyers@ix.netcom.com). Co-Leader: Regge Bulman.

♦ SEP 18 SAT LTC

Deadline for Leadership Training Seminar: Last day for receipt of application and payment by LTC. Register for Oct 2 seminar. Next seminar: Spring 2011.

♦ SEP 18-19 SAT-SUN DPS

I: Mt. Jefferson (11,941'), Arc Dome (11,773'): Join us for two day hikes of these Nevada peaks and lots of dirt road driving (2WD probably ok). Saturday Jefferson 8 mi, 3200' gain from 2WD parking spot. We may stop at the Berlin Ichthyosaur State Park on our way in to Columbine campground for Sat night. Sun Arc Dome 12 mi, 4600' gain. Send e-mail or sase with conditioning to Leader: Tina Bowman (tina@bowmanadvisor.com). Co-Leader: Mary McMannes.

♦ SEP 24-25 FRI-SAT DPS

ER: North Guardian Angel (7395'), South Guardian Angel (7140'): Two challenging dayhikes in Zion Nat Park. Fri climb North G. Angel 6 mi rt, 800' gain. Sat climb South G. Angel via cross canyon route 9-10 mi rt just under 4000' total gain. Participants must be experienced on 4th class rock climbing and comfortable rappelling; harnesses and helmets needed. Send SASE or e-mail with climbing experience and SC# to Leader: Larry Tidball (lbtidball@verizon.net). Co-Leader: Barbee Tidball.

♦ SEP 26 SUN DPS, LTC, WTC, HPS, SPS

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

♦ SEP 29 WED DPS, LTC, WTC, SPS

M/E: Workshop: Advanced Mountaineering Program (AMP2) – Basic Safety System: First of 4 climbing workshops open to SC members with prior roped climbing experience. Today's indoor evening workshop of 4 hours reviewing ropes, knots, harnesses, helmets, and basic climbing gear will take place in Pasadena. Based on Chapter 9 of Mountaineering: Freedom of the Hills, 7th edition. As space is limited priority will be given to participants who commit to all four workshops. Send sase or e-mail with SC#, resume, phones to Leader: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com). Assistant: Pat McKusky.
Membership Summary

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Totals: 236 24

Activity Report

Emblem #578 Kathryn Rich 12/28/09 Signal Peak

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<tr>
<td>John Bregar</td>
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<td>Shelley Rogers</td>
<td>Rabbit Peak</td>
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<tr>
<th>New Subscriber</th>
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<tr>
<td>Richard Bullock</td>
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<th>Sustaining Renewals</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Jo Dungfelder</td>
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<td>Thomas R. Hill</td>
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<td>Vicky Hoover</td>
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<td>Misha Askren MD</td>
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<td>Elaine &amp; David Baldwin</td>
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<td>Ute Dietrich</td>
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<td>Michael Dillenback</td>
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<td>Diane Dunbar</td>
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| Donations | $10.00 from Audrey Goodman |

Leadership Training Seminar: Become a qualified Sierra Club leader. For info, LTC website (angeles.sierraclub.org/ltc). Deadline for receipt of application and payment is Sept 18. No registration after this date or at door. Next seminar: Spring 2011.

- OCT 2 SAT LTC
  Leadership Training Seminar: Become a qualified Sierra Club leader. For info, LTC website (angeles.sierraclub.org/ltc). Deadline for receipt of application and payment is Sept 18. No registration after this date or at door. Next seminar: Spring 2011.

- OCT 2 SAT DPS, LTC, WTC, SPS
  M/E: Advanced Mountaineering Program (AMP2) – Belaying: 2nd of 4 climbing workshops open to SC members with prior roped climbing experience. Today at Stoney Point in Chatsworth, focus is on belaying and principles of anchor building. Based on Ch. 10 of Mountaineering: Freedom of the Hills, 7th ed. As space is limited priority will be given to participants who commit to all four workshops. Send sase or e-mail with SC#, resume, phones to Leader: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com). Assistant: Pat McKusky.

- OCT 3 SUN DPS
  O: DPS Potluck and Management Meeting: Come to the home of Tina and Tom Bowman. Meeting starts at 4:30; potluck at 6 pm. Bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. Contact Reserv: Tina Bowman (tina@bowmandesigngroup.com).

- OCT 9 SAT DPS, LTC, WTC, SPS
  M/E: Advanced Mountaineering Program (AMP2) – Rappelling: 3rd of 4 climbing workshops open to SC members with prior roped climbing experience. Today at Stoney Point in Chatsworth, focus is on rappelling. Based on Chapter 11 of Mountaineering: Freedom of the Hills, 7th edition. As space is limited priority will be given to participants who commit to all four workshops. Send sase or e-mail with SC#, resume, phones to Leader: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com). Assistant: Pat McKusky.

- OCT 9 SAT LTC, WTC, HPS
  I: Beginning Navigation Clinic: Spend the day one-on-one with an instructor, learning/practicing map and compass in our local mountains. Beginners to rusty old-timers welcome, and practice is available at all skill levels. Not a checkout, but it will help you prepare. Many expert leaders will attend; many I-rated leaders started here in the past. 4 mi, 500' gain. Send sase, phones, $25 deposit (Sierra Club, refunded at trailhead) to Leader: Diane Dunbar (dianedunbar@charter.net). Co-Leader: Richard Boardman.

- OCT 16-17 SAT-SUN DPS, LTC, WTC, SPS
  M/E: Advanced Mountaineering Program (AMP2) – Rock Climbing Techniques and Anchors: 4th of 4 climbing workshops open to SC members with prior roped climbing experience. This weekend completes the series of AMP workshops at Joshua Tree National Park and focuses on climbing and anchors. Based on Chapters 12 & 13 of Mountaineering: Freedom of the Hills, 7th edition. As space is limited priority will be given to participants who commit to all four workshops. Send sase or e-mail with SC#, resume, phones to Leader: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com). Assistant: Pat McKusky.
♦ OCT 17  SUN  DPS, LTC, WTC, HPS, SPS

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

♦ OCT 23-24  SAT-SUN  DPS

MR: 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 SC#, climbing resume by email or sase to Leader: Tina Bowman (tina@bowmandesigngroup.com). Assistants: Mary McMannes, Asher Waxman.

♦ OCT 29-31  FRI-SUN  LTC, WTC, Harwood Lodge

C: Wilderness First Aid Course: Runs from 8 am Fri to 5:30 pm Sun. Fee includes lodging, meals and practice first aid kit. Proof of CPR within previous 4 years required to enroll. Fee $205 with SC#/$215 non-member (full refund through Sept 24). For application contact Leader: Steve Schuster (steve.n.wfac2@sbcglobal.net).

♦ OCT 30-31  SAT-SUN  DPS

I: Annual Chilifest and Peak Climb: Save the date for the annual DPS chili cook-off and nearby peak climb. Details will follow in the Sage and on the DPS web site or contact Tina Bowman for more information (tina@bowmandesigngroup.com).

♦ NOV 6  SAT  DPS

O: DPS Potluck and Management Meeting: Come to the home of Elaine and Dave Baldwin for Oktoberfest. Meeting starts at 4:30; potluck at 6 pm. Bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. Contact Reserv: Elaine Baldwin (DWBaldwin@aol.com).

♦ NOV 12-13  FRI-SAT  DPS

I: Mt Ajo (4808'), Superstition Mtn (5057'): Join us for one or both class 2 peaks. Fri hike up Ajo in Organ Pipe Natl Mon (7.5 mi, 2600' gain); Sat climb Superstition and see petroglyphs, maybe bighorn sheep (6.5 mi, 3000' gain). Send e-sasc or sase with conditioning to Leader: Tina Bowman (tina@bowmandesigngroup.com). Co-Leader: Mary McMannes.

♦ NOV 13-14  SAT-SUN  DPS, LTC, WTC, HPS, SPS

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

♦ NOV 20-21  SAT-SUN  DPS

I: Needle Peak (5803'), Manly Peak (7196'): We'll try again for these two peaks – rain in February closed access roads to the eastern approach which we had planned, so we had to cancel the previously scheduled trip. Needle is 2900 feet of gain and 7 miles; Manly is 2800' of gain and 6 miles. We still plan to take the eastern approach rather than going in over Goler Wash, but 4WD will still be necessary in some spots. Saturday night enjoy a DPS potluck. Leader: Dave Perkins. Send email or SASE to Ann Perkins, Assistant (aperkins@csun.edu).

PEAK GUIDE UPDATES

I am reporting on some existing routes to peaks that we climb that may not be widely known and a mileage difference. -Ed Herrman

CORKSCREW

On a February 2009 trip lead by Tina Bowman to Corkscrew Peak, we found an existing trail coming up from the east. We ascended the peak by the route noted in the Road and Peak Guide. On our descent, we followed this trail east and south down to California Highway 190 along the east side of the main wash. The trail emerges on to the highway near a point where the NPS sign points out the peak. This trail leaves the main wash at waypoint S11-0502008 4067563 via a small canyon on the west side. The trail follows this side canyon northwest 0.32 miles to
waypoint S11-0501809 4067546 where it exits the canyon and goes up the ridge northwest to the summit. This trail is a little longer but it avoids the steep class 2 scrambles on the usual route.

SPIRIT

The usual faint half mile dirt road to the trailhead for Spirit Mountain is now in a Wilderness Area and is blocked at the dirt road coming over Christmas Tree Pass. There is sufficient space for four cars and camping for a comfortable night by the side of the dirt road. There are other camping spaces a short distance east and west of this spot. On a climb of Spirit led by Dave and Anne Perkins on February 13-14, we found a steep class 2 ducked trail that joins up with a trail going to the summit of the peak. This steep trail begins just over the saddle listed in the Road and Peak Guide and is downhill of waypoint 11S 706168 3904410. The route I used to climb Spirit earlier is in the prominent wash to the east of the trail. One can enter this wash by climbing the easier slope that avoids the large rocks, northeast of the waypoint and contouring around a point on level ground to the east and side hilling into the wash. This wash leads to a saddle and the summit trail mentioned above. This route is a little longer but it avoids the steep scramble on the ducked trail.

WHITE

Our Road and Peak Guide lists the elevation gain on White Mountain as 2400 feet. If one subtracts the parking elevation at the trailhead from the summit elevation there is a 2566 foot difference. This is not particularly significant. Tina and Tom Bowman led a trip up White Mountain and reported the actual elevation gain to be significantly higher. She used her Avocet GPS instrument and found the elevation gain to be 3455 feet and the fifteen mile distance seemed to be right. She commented, “Perhaps the old guide simply looked at the difference between the trailhead and the summit, but there are two significant drops on the way in.”

OUTINGS CHAIR

For all our fabulous DPS leaders, please note that July 10th is the deadline to send outings in to the Schedule for November through February, high season for many of our desert peaks. Please be thinking of trips you’d like to lead and send me the announcements at least several days prior to the deadline. Thanks! Of course, outings don’t have to be listed in the Schedule; we can also publish outings in the Sage and on the DPS web site.

We have two DPS list finishes coming up. First is Steve Eckert’s on Orocopia on May 30th, followed on July 10th with a 2x finish for Christine Mitchell and 3x finish for Ron Bartell on Mount Patterson. Both parties should be spectacular in true DPS fashion!

We already have some outings for September and into the fall, including the last weekend in October for the chili cook-off. So mark your calendars! We always need more leaders, so please consider taking the next Leadership Training Seminar on Saturday, October 2nd in Costa Mesa. Or if you are a leader, please consider moving up a rating. The list of outings includes various trainings offered by the Leadership Training Committee, so please look these over.

Happy trails, Tina

STALKED BY A MOUNTAIN LION?

In May 2007, Barbara Lilley and I were climbing lower peaks in Arizona’s Kaibab and Coconino National Forests north and south of Williams. [This area lies a short distance to the west of Humphreys Peak, the highest point of Arizona and a DSP Emblem Peak.] On the occasion of this mountain lion episode [May 13th], we had climbed a nearby peak in the morning and had driven into position for a climb of what is called Squaw Coxcombs “North” [7341'] on the next day. [We had climbed Squaw Coxcombs “South” the year before.]

We temporarily selected an area just short of the pass at about 6900’ between the “North” and “South” Coxcombs, where we planned to park for the start of the climb. While sitting in our Suburban, I chance to look up to see a large animal [longer than a coyote but not as tall as a bear] walking on the other side of a long-ago fallen Ponderosa tree with just the top of the creature’s back showing above the log. I thought the best candidate for the culprit was a

COVER PHOTO: Telescope Peak from Point 6100’ on Colville Ridge. Photo by Bob Sumner.

THE DESERT SAGE 9 May/June 2010
javelina, but I didn’t think that those creatures had yet migrated that far north. I watched for the critter to come into view at the end of the log, but it never appeared. After about a half hour, curiosity got the better of me and I got out of the car to investigate. The log was in the pass just where we planned to camp that night, so it was also a chance to access the spot for parking that night. Thinking perhaps the creature had stopped to feed on a carcass before leaving when I wasn’t looking, I was somewhat surprised to see no carcass. Upon looking up, I caught a glimpse out of the corner of my eye of an animal running away from me. It was a tawny-colored mountain lion running at full throttle up the hill to the ridge descending from Squaw Coxcomb “South” !!!

Later toward near sunset, we moved the car to the parking place by the fallen log. While admiring a Bass Ale, I noticed the mountain lion slinking back down alongside a clump of bushes about 30 yards away and then duck into them just at the border of the bushes closest to us. I could distinguish that mountain lion through the brush, where it was standing and looking towards the car. That called for some investigation, so I got out of the car and headed toward the lion, thinking it would depart once again. Sure enough, it dashed out of the brush on the opposite side from where it had entered [and away from me], then turned sharply to run uphill a short distance, where it sprang back into the brush.

OH! OH! Did those maneuvers suggest reluctance to give up a good position from which it might stalk us that evening? This time, it was we who assessed the situation and “chickened out”– driving off in the fading light for safer arenas.

In retrospect, another explanation of the mountain lion’s behavior could be that she had a litter of kittens hidden in those bushes and was just taking a defensive position. After all, wasn’t April/May the time period of the year at that altitude for mountain lions to bear their kittens? However, that idea hadn’t crossed our minds at that time, but I don’t think that thought would have made any difference – we would have had just another reason, and perhaps an even a better one, to gracefully fade away!

DPS 2010 ANNUAL BANQUET

LAST MINUTE REMINDER – BANQUET MAY 16

Where: The Proud Bird 11022 Aviation Blvd, Los Angeles (near junction 405 & 105)

Banquet tickets: $30 DPS members  $35 non DPS members. Please Reserve ASAP!

Time: 5:30 pm - Social Hour/No Host Bar  7:00 pm – Dinner (Includes complimentary wine at each table)
MC’s: Doug Mantle and Mary McMannes

Program: Jeff Dhungana presents: “Cycling from LA to Patagonia”  A million dollar trip on $10 a day.
More details see: http://angeles.sierraclub.org/dps/ or www.transformundo.com

Raffle: We continue our tradition of providing you a chance to win fabulous prizes. This year’s offerings include: a beautiful serigraph by Edna Erspamer, a painting by Betty McCosker, a framed watercolor print by Elaine Baldwin, REI gift Certificates, a copy of Bob Sumner’s new book “Hiking Nevada’s County High Points”, and a copy of “Desert Summits” by Andy Zdon. Tickets are available 5 for $3 if purchased in advance before May 5 or $1 each on the day of the Banquet. Tickets will be held at the door.

For reservations: Please indicate number of banquet tickets: $30 for DPS members or $35 non-members. Include your dinner selection/s: Sirloin Steak, Fresh Salmon or Vegetarian Wellington. Also, please specify number of raffle tickets. Tickets will be held at the door. Mail check payable to DPS to Treasurer: Gloria Miladin, 11946 Downey Ave., Downey, CA 90242. For questions e-mail: Elaine Baldwin: dwbaldwin@aol.com or Gloria: gm500@yahoo.com
HELP WANTED: CONSERVATION

Part of the DPS charter is to help protect the desert and raise awareness of conservation issues. One of the main responsibilities of the DPS Conservation Chair is to write a column for the Sage on a conservation topic of your choice. The Sage is read by a lot of people including people at the National level of Sierra Club, the National Park Service, the National Forest Service, and of course the Angeles Chapter. Writing the column would take roughly 30-60 minutes every 2 months. It’s your chance to be heard. If you are interested, please contact Mary McMannes.

DID YOU KNOW?

Welcome back to the Meanderings and Murmurings of the DPS family, and what’s astir in the land of little rain and the thousand miles of Sage. March madness has come and gone, and belated birthday greetings go out to those with milestone birthdays. Doug Mantle, John McCully, and our now departed Cuno Ranschau all shared birthdays within a day of each other. We sent email greetings to John down in the Philippines, mused about Cuno who would have been 80, and a few old timers and new-timers feted Doug. Bob Hicks showed up carrying a bottle of champagne from Doug’s original DPS List Finisher, 1980s. Not sure how much bubbly was left, but a great surprise. Former DPS chair and List Finisher, Mike Manchester presented Doug with an expensive bottle of pinot noir intriguing onlookers with the story that a new hybrid grape had been grown that acts as a diuretic for aging Baby Boomers. Mike explained, “There are many pinot wines on the market: pinot noir, pinot blanc, pinot grigio, but this new grape will provide a wine where upon retiring to bed, one will not have to use the bathroom so often.” When asked the name of the wine, Mike answered, “They’ll be marketing this wine as Pinot More.” Heavy groans and sighs, as we were snookered by Mike, one more time.

Congrats goes to DPSer Gary Bowen who finished the HPS List, March 2, on Black Mountain #4. Also DYK, Shane Smith (of the famous lineage of the Desert Peaks’ Smith family) finished the San Diego County High Points List, March 21, on Red Hill, with many DPSers in attendance. Speaking of Steve Smith (Shane’s father), Doug Mantle relates he took a route up Mount Inyo on one of Steve’s amazing Inyo trails, “The Grindstone Trail.” Doug writes, “It’s about as good as it sounds, a route to climb Inyo, after the okay trail gives out at 7600’. Anyway, I climbed the peak and found a cool open space where I’d longed to camp since 1971. Steve has done a ton of work to visit the many miner trails, not minor, and I’m always amazed at what he’s uncovered.”

Potluck Madness and Gladness sure was fun at the Bartell’s Manhattan Beach house watching the Oscars and renewing old friendships and making some new ones. I was surprised to see Jake Holshuh and wife Sue Leverton after so many years. Sue Holloway is always a welcome surprise from San Diego, and she was accompanied by a large attractive former show dog who wiled the evening away with lapping from accessible wine glasses and snatching meatballs when she could. A typical Hollywood star, I’d say.

DYK, it was fun hearing from Oregonian DPSer, Geoff Godfrey, who zeroed in on my E-ticket reference in last month’s Chair Column. Geoff reminds me the term, “E-Ticket,” (referring to Disneyland’s packet of tickets, circa 1950s and ‘60s) will die out with our generation. Geoff climbed with notables such as Mark Goebel and others in pursuing the DPS and SPS Lists. One person recalls Geoff waking up early in the a.m. prior to an ascent of North Palisade and singing a rock and roll song at the top of his lungs. Most people are dead silent in the a.m. when viewing the U-Notch and the climb ahead. (Or for me, pulling a match book out of my pocket from Oswald Mortuary didn’t make me sing.) We’re glad Geoff survived his 60’ foot fall into a crevasse on Mt. Hood, 2004, and despite a slow three year recovery, he returned to bag Oregon’s high point. Yes, Geoff, I still have my original Disneyland ticket packet minus the bigger ride tickets.

THE DESERT SAGE

Jim Margadant, Black Hills Sierra Club Director and DPSer in Rapid City, shares his story with daughter Jana and grandson Lucas Lee. “It’s never too soon to recruit future DPSers,” says Jim, who provided this photo.
DYK, it was a morning surprise to open up the Daily News (S.F. Valley) and see an article on Winnette Butler and Jim Fleming? They were lauded for their work with picks and shovels in restoring damaged trails left by the devastation of last year’s Service Fire. Thanks, Jim and Winnette, for taking time out from bagging your own DPS peaks in order to restore our scarred and battered lands.

DYK, There’s something about Bob? As we all know, Sage editor Bob Sumner is busy promoting his new guidebook, Hiking Nevada’s County High Points, and we learned recently that he took a break from solo peak bagging and joined the Celebrity Charity Poker Tournament in Reno. There was Bob sitting with World Series of Poker champions, a Playmate of the Year, TV personalities and actresses, plus Oscar nominee Jennifer Tilly. This is sure a new venue for our esteemed editor. I would have liked to have been the roving reporter taking some paparazzi photos of Bob sitting next to Playmates and other Hollywood types while the ESPN cameras filmed. Oh, Bob, how could you run off and have so much fun when you should be home working on the Sage?

Kudos go to Barbara Reber who dropped us a line on the current status of the DPS Archives which are housed at UCLA, Charles Young Research Library Special Collections Section. Barbara hopes the SPS and DPS will name these files “The Bill T. Russell Mountaineering Special Collection.” She notes there is still a decade of secretarial files missing, so if anyone has info, please let Barbara know. Thanks Barbara and Dan Richter for insuring our history is permanently protected for future generations.

Edna Erspamer and DPS guidebook editor, Eddie 2-Man Herrman are on their way to the Grand Canyon, driving a 60 mile washboard and cliffy shelf road, where signs admonish: “Don’t fall off the road.” Edna says this adventure begins in the town of TuWeep, and there is no question about the origins of that name!

Did You Know, I enjoy being on the mailing list of the South Dakota Sierra Club newsletter, Pines and Prairies, generated out of the Black Hills. Local Sierra Club director, Jim Margadant, is our DPS contact in Rapid City. (See the photo of Jim indoctrinating his daughter and grandson on the glories of the DPS.) One of their locals took our Angeles Chapter’s Wilderness Training course at Harwood Lodge. Susan Campo writes about the intense training of learning many things such as compressing a gushing wound with 80 lbs. of pressure or taking a ring off a swollen hand with dental floss (another reason to not wear rings in the backcountry). In four days, Susan got the Cadillac of leadership training (far beyond the scopes of first aid), and I’d highly recommend all serious leaders to take this course. Go to the website: www.wildernessfirstaid.org. It’s a fine line we leaders are walking in even performing wilderness first aid, because if we dare cross a line to save a life and perform a procedure not “okayed” by the Sierra Club, heavy lawsuits are pending. Sad to say, we can’t even offer a dying person an Epi-pen saving him from a bee sting. See the new television series, Monday night’s “Trauma,” to see similarities between trained medics and Sierra Club leaders administering first aid. Heads roll, people go on suspensions, and hospitals are sued when a medic performs one too many acts of mercy. Sad to say, our society has evolved to where the threat of law suits and observing protocol overrules the decision to save a life (especially if one goes beyond the boundaries of his prescribed training). And imagine years ago in Wilderness First Aid, we performed tracheotomies on oranges. Oh, how the times are changing.

And on a lighter note, one roving reporter hanging out with DPSers at Pasadena’s El Cholo heard Jan Mauk remark, “This had to be one expensive evening-drinking three pitchers of mariachis.” Jan, you are so right, and how they get all those little round guys and instruments squeezed into pitchers is beyond me!

Hope you’ll all take a moment and pop a caret letter, or email to our good friends and fellow climbers, Charlie Knapke, Bob Hicks, and George Wysup. I think they’d like hearing from you. Email me if you need addresses.

And that’s what’s astir in the Land of Little Rain. See you at the Big and Fantastic Banquet, May 16, and many peak adventures this summer and fall. Keep those scoops and stories coming my way, because I never met a scoop I didn’t like. Mary McMannes, Roving Reporter, May-June, 2010
As usual, Richard Stover and I headed for the desert over the Christmas holidays. This year we decided to warm up with a climb of Sleeping Beauty, east of Barstow. Well, on December 22, 2009 Sleeping Beauty was not sleeping but she was beautiful. The attractive rock was appropriately green and red for the season. She was awake and blustery. The wind was fierce. We had difficulty standing up. At one point a gust started to push us over the ridge. We estimated 50 mph winds with gusts up to 65 mph.

As Andy Zdon notes in *Desert Summits*, at times the surface of Sleeping Beauty is like walking on ball bearings. I fell over a couple of times. The rock is rotten besides. Once Richard touched a 3-foot high boulder, and it tumbled over and broke into three pieces.

To avoid the wind on the ridge we descended on an eastward-heading wash which added several miles to the hike. At one point when I stepped on what appeared to be solid ground, my leg punched through up to my knee.

When we had finished the hike, we spent about an hour looking for our truck among the many gulleys and small hills. Perhaps we’ll invest in a GPS after all. That evening as we slept in the back of our truck, we were buffeted constantly by winds the ranger later confirmed were 65 mph.

The next morning we met up with Debbie Benham and David Kossack and relaxed by touring Mitchell Caverns. I have driven by Mitchell Caverns for about 30 years and finally got around to taking the tour. It is not to be missed. Why did I wait so long? We all shared a campsite at Hole in the Wall.

Up early the next morning to climb Fountain, we encountered snow before we came to the end of the Crystal Springs Trail. There was some unstable scree, steep in places. We hit the ridge a bit too far to the south and ended up backtracking a bit to gain the saddle. We climbed a tower we thought was the summit, but of course, it was not, and we descended.

Debbie and David decided to wait at the saddle, and Richard and I continued, promising to be back by 2:30 p.m. We scurried. The peak is solid Class 3, and Richard decided to wait while I summited. No register, but a great view including the Kelso Dunes to the west. I took an easier way down with only one difficult move for which I removed my pack. Richard had come around to the gulley where I was descending. We had 10 more minutes til 2:30. Enough time to round the corner and achieve visual contact with Debbie and David.

We made a rapid descent on the slippery snow. All of a sudden, I took a dramatic cartwheel, headfirst. Luckily I sustained only a tear in my pants and a bloody bump on my shin, almost matching the bigger one Richard got on Sleeping Beauty. We got back just after dark and stopped by the ranger’s house to let him know we were safely out.

The next two days were spent hiking, birdwatching, and sightseeing. Highlights included the Kelso Dunes, a startled bobcat, a Crissal Thrasher, climbing the Rings Trail, and a Christmas campfire.

On December 27, David and Debbie left for home, and Richard and I climbed Columbia Peak. We were fooled by the gate across the Macedonia Canyon Road and the missing road sign. The newly-installed gate was not locked, but we drove by the first time. We were back to...
the truck by noon and drove to the Kelso Depot for lunch at the newly-restored cafe, where we had a delightful time talking to the business owner.

The evening was made perfect by a visit to Tecopa Hot Springs for a shower and soak. Heaven.

The next day we played tourist. Breakfast at the Crowbar in Shoshone, scouting trailheads for future climbs, experiencing Artists Drive, and walking up Natural Bridge Canyon. We camped at Texas Springs at Furnace Creek.

Our best view of the trip was from Chloride Cliff. We drove the “easy” road to the mining site of Chloride City and left the truck below the town site to hike the two miles up to Chloride Cliff. It’s a special view. Death Valley is spread out 5000 feet below. Snow-capped mountains stretch from north to south. One can see Telescope Peak, Mount Whitney, and beyond. We startled a Blacktail Jackrabbit who had taken up residence in one of the mine tunnels near the summit.

On the way home we stopped by the Merced National Wildlife Refuge and saw thousands of Ross Geese, some Sandhill Cranes, and several Loggerhead Shrikes. Another great Christmas trip.

LITTLE CHUCKWALLA MOUNTAINS WILDERNESS AREA HIGH POINT, 2,155' by Vic Henney and Sue Wyman-Henney December 27, 2009

Little Chuckwalla Mountains Wilderness Area encompassing the Little Chuckwalla Mountains is located to the east of the DPS-listed Chuckwalla Mountains and can be accessed from either the Graham Pass Road or the Bradshaw Trail. There appear to be two access roads from the west, both north of Graham Pass. We took the more southern one which is clearly signed and goes in 1.2 miles to the wilderness boundary. We walked along the old road that continues beyond the wilderness boundary. This road works its way south and east and eventually turns off to the south and into another drainage. We then walked across the basin with a fair number of ups and downs to the south side of the peak and up a long canyon going around the back of the peak and ending up on a ridge to the east of the peak. From there it is a short scramble to the peak. On the return trip, once we reached the "flats", we took a wash that ended up directly north of our vehicle, a much more direct route. One of the more interesting features of the area are some of the rocks that one finds, interesting crystalline formations and rocks that appear to have been embedded in frozen mud. The round trip took us about 4 hours, but we did some exploring on the way to and from the peak. This is another beautiful California wilderness area and a rarely climbed peak that could easily be done in connection with a climb of Chuckwalla.

STEPLADDER MOUNTAIN by Tina Bowman January 10, 2010

So what’s the deal with the wilderness boundary for Stepladder? The DPS Guide says it’s 4.7 miles to the boundary marker from the pipeline road. When I was last there in 2004, I drove only 1.4 miles to the marker, a very unpleasant surprise that added over six miles to my day. In contrast, this time we had a very pleasant surprise—we drove 5.6 milers to the marker! Yes, I scouted it the evening before, and no, I did not move the marker.

Tom stayed home with a cold, but both Pat Arredondo and Virgil Popescu agreed to assist. The mileage to the pipeline road off highway 95 seems off, but the road has a reflective BLM marker just off the highway, designating the road as NS203. There’s also a stop sign for the dirt road where it meets the highway, and it takes off right at a curve, as is marked on my San Bernardino County Auto Club map (I’m not sure it shows on the newer maps). I slept (not much) right by that junction in the hope others might find the road and me. Trucks roared around the curve all night long.

The plan was to meet, signed-in, ready to go at 6:00 a.m. for the drive to the boundary. I moved my truck to the highway and read for a while. Eventually Virgil and Pat found me; then they went back to get Maria Yocum and Brian Smith, whom they had left where they camped at
another dirt road. Dan Clark I’d seen the evening before, came about a mile in from the highway, and we agreed we’d pick him up for the caravan as we passed his fine spot. So off we went at 6:40, though one participant hadn’t shown up. I wasn’t in a tizzy since our hike had dropped from eighteen miles to about ten, even though the dirt road drive took about an hour.

I measured the distance from 95 to the powerline road at 8.8 miles rather than 7.8. For the turn to the road south there are two options. Either follow the DPS guide, which takes you right around a berm and onto the road south or go just slightly farther to another BLM road marker, this one called NS254. This way takes you left onto the road south. The unmarked way is sandier, but 2WD was fine. (The pipeline road had some nasty ruts across it that we tip-toed over.)

We started our hike just after 8:00, following the road beyond the marker south for a few minutes, then angling off across the desert to the mouth of the canyon to Stepladder. After a little more than an hour, we took a relaxing twenty-minute break, then continued on up the wash, over the low hills mentioned in the guide, and toward the base of Stepladder. Rather than going to the saddle, we took a shortcut to the base of the cliffs, which got us into some high class 2 climbing. In between spots of climbing, there was a lot of loose rock to walk on that we took care with. Once we got past this little section, we took another short break and headed up to the cleft in the cliffs. We’d been admiring the rungs on the Stepladder as we approached; now we had the fun of climbing them. After a few feet in the cleft, we exited onto a ledge and zig-zagged our way up to the notch, then scrambled a bit more to find ourselves on the summit by 11:10.

Congratulations were in order for Maria, who had just climbed her first DPS peak. We had grand views on this splendid day. It was sunny, mild, with a bit of breeze, a perfect desert day. After less than half an hour we started on our way down, minding the loose rock. Brian sat on a large conglomerate boulder at the notch only to have a big rock in it break off under him! He caught it and lowered it to the ground. Rather than go down the shortcut, we followed the guide, going to the saddle and back after a bit to our footprints in the wash. Regrouping several times, we took another break near where we had the long one on the way in, then headed off for the cars. Brian took the most direct line; the rest of us hit the road a short distance from the cars. We were back before 3:00, all agreeing that it had been a fine day, especially without all of those extra miles.

Dan camped there at the boundary to do some exploring the next day, and the rest of us started for home a little after 3:30. Rather than taking the pipeline road back to 95, we tried the powerline road that heads southeast to 95. It was longer but much, much faster with none of those nasty ruts. If you want to take it on the way it, this road is the western extension of the road described in the guide for Chemehuevi, about .1 mile north of the junction with the road to Havasu City. Virgil’s carful headed to Twentynine Palms for dinner at Ed Chada’s. I followed them till highway 177, which I took to Desert Center and highway 10 and home by 8:30. Thanks again to Pat and Virgil for assisting.
Most of the participants drove in during the night before the Turtle Mtn climb, camping in a big flat area just beyond the aqueduct about 0.2 miles off of Highway 62 following the DPS Guide drive route. After introductions the next morning at 7 am, we caravaned to the wilderness boundary trailhead. The drive went well, following the DPS Guidebook directions, and the road conditions were not too difficult. Although many of us had 4WD vehicles, I don't think anyone actually put their vehicle in 4WD. At least I didn't have to. However, high clearance is needed for this drive route.

From the trailhead we walked NW on the old dirt road a little over 3 miles to its end, and then dropped into a wash and continued in a NW direction. The wash eventually petered out at a saddle, and with Larry's able guidance, we continued NW crossing a few moderately large washes. We then deviated from the route shown in the DPS Guidebook map and headed east up a slope to a prominent saddle that is 0.6 mile SE from the summit. We then followed the class 2 ridge NW over a false summit, and then on to the high point of the Turtle Mtns. This ridgeline scramble to the summit went well with only a few small rocky outcroppings to work around.

I have to say the Turtle Mountains are one of the most scenic places in the Mohave Desert; wide open, beautiful vistas with nice-looking peaks and ridges. The views were excellent even from the dirt road, making this part of the hike much more pleasant than expected. Castle Peak, Mopah and Umpah Point were all exceptional features during the hike up Turtle Mtn. The terrain was relatively easy with only occasional brush and cacti to detour around. A few of us even wore shorts! This is a place I would definitely explore again.

We returned from the summit the same way we went up, and arrived back at the cars at sunset. The trip took about 8 hrs with 2700 ft of climbing and was somewhere around 12 miles long. Participants for the Turtle climb included Larry and Barbee Tidball (leaders), Greg Gerlach, Chris Wu, Bob Wyka, John Bregar, Virgil Popescu, David Baldwin, Elaine Baldwin, Dave Perkins, Dan Baxter, Ron Eckelmann, Daniel Bleiberg, Dan Clark, Ron Bartell, Christine Mitchell, John Hamann, Scott Casterlin, and Daryn Dodge.

For those of us planning to climb Mopah Point the following day, we drove back on the dirt road to a flat camping spot about 3 miles short of Highway 62. Brian Smith drove in during the evening to climb Mopah Point with us the next day. Everyone participated in Happy Hour, making for a nice selection of snacks and hors-d'oeuvres. Hummus and chips appeared to be a favorite dish to bring; with three kinds to choose from (I was one of the guilty hummus contributors and consumers).

The group drove over to the Mopah Point trailhead around 8 am the next morning. We parked in a large parking spot just short of the 4WD wash. Passenger cars can get this far. Since it was only 0.2 miles to the actual trailhead from here, it wasn't worth transferring people and gear from the 2WD vehicles to the 4WD vehicles for the additional driving.

We followed the DPS Guide route as it first led us up the dirt road, and then SW in a wash. As we approached the formidable-looking monolith, the look of Mopah Point reminded me of Little Picacho Peak. With Larry leading us up towards the first ramparts of Mopah Point, we passed several well-worn animal trails that ran perpendicular to our uphill traverse. These trails led to Mopah Spring, only a mile away. Three climbers split off here to go climb Umpah Point.

The Mopah group continued up and skirted below a short ridge with a notch described in the Guidebook, and went straight for the notch in the second ridge, scrambling up high class 2 terrain. Once through the second notch, ducks pointed the way up the main gully, which contained a zigzagging use trail (this one made by humans). We all donned helmets here and had no problem finding the beginning of the class 3 section. The next 150 feet of climbing had about three spots of class 3 with some significant exposure; the last 10 feet of class 3 being the most difficult part. Some would probably classify this last section as class 4, although the exposure here was not huge. Nevertheless, our entire group of 12 got up this part without need for a rope. On the way down, however, Larry gave most of us a belay for this one 10 foot section of class 3-4.

The top was less than a 10 minute scramble above the
class 3 section. We spent nearly an hour enjoying the views from Mopah Point. We were also treated to an aerial dogfight between a prairie falcon and a peregrine falcon, probably a result of territorial issues. The peregrine falcon took numerous high-speed dives at the prairie falcon, with the prairie falcon taking evasive action only at the last moment before impact. Otherwise, the prairie falcon just slowly glided around Mopah Point seemingly ignoring the peregrine falcon.

Also prominent from Mopah Point was Mopah Spring down below us. This small spring contains the northernmost natural stand of Fan Palms. We could see animal trails coming from all directions leading to the spring. However, we never saw any mountain sheep. Soon after arriving on the summit we could see the three Umpah climbers reaching the summit of their respective peak, followed by a brief spate of excited whoops and hand-waving between our two groups.

On the way back the Umpah group caught up to us. They reported a reasonable class 2-3 ascent on the NE side of Umpah. We reached the cars just after sunset, making for about a 7.5-hour dayhike. The hike was 8 miles round trip with 2000 feet of gain. Thanks to Larry and Barbee Tidball for a wonderful lead on two desert peaks in near-perfect winter desert weather.

Participants for the Mopah Point climb included, Larry and Barbee Tidball (leaders), Greg Gerlach, Chris Wu, Bob Wyka, John Bregar, Brian Smith, Dave Baldwin, Elaine Baldwin, Ron Eckelmann, Dan Clark, and Daryn Dodge. The Umpah Point gang-of-three consisted of Ron Bartell, Christine Mitchell, and Dave Perkins.
goes rather well with a few easy class 3 moves and otherwise class two scrambling. The summit views are quite rewarding with good views of Charleston and Potosi to the east, Clark to the southwest, Mesquite Dry Lake to the north and Ivanpah Dry Lake (not dry this year) to the south.

We did not find a register or any other evidence of recent ascent, nor did we locate a benchmark on the summit. We placed a register. The stats for the climb are a little over 2 miles (one way) and about 1700 feet of gain.

We really enjoyed the climb and would recommend it as a good way to explore and enjoy this interesting and seldom visited wilderness area.

**DPS MARCH MEETING & POTLUCK**

*March 7, 2010*

*By Christine Mitchell*

The monthly DPS Management Committee meeting and potluck was held on March 7 at the home of Ron Bartell and Christine Mitchell in Manhattan Beach. This happened to coincide with the Oscar Awards program. No problem. The red carpet went from the front door to the big screen TV room for award viewing with the alternate ducked trail going to the back of the house for eating, drinking and gossiping with climbing friends. Over 30 people attended with more than half checking in on the Oscar happenings. Who knew that so many of our hiker buddies were into the Hollywood scene? The pot luck offerings were certainly backstage worthy but there were no reported celebrity viewings at the table. A good time was had by all.
BOOK REVIEWS

SECRETS, MYSTERIES AND A BOOK FOR BURNING

AREA 51 (1997), David Darlington

MYSTERIES AND LEGENDS OF NEVADA (2010), Richard Moreno

GOLDEN CHECKERBOARD (1965), Ed Ainsworth

AREA 51: The Dreamland Chronicles (1997), David Darlington

I admit to be disappointed in Area 51 by David Darlington, the author of an excellent 1996 desert volume, The Mojave. What I had hoped for was a description and history of Area 51—located near several DPS peaks, including Charleston Peak, Mummy Mtn, Mt Stirling and Hayford Peak—plus at least a good guess as to what might be going on at perhaps the most secret of all of the U.S. Government’s installations.

What I found mostly was a detailed discussion of ufologists, i.e., those who are interested in unidentified flying objects—some believing that UFOs are alien in origin; others considering themselves to be amateur detectives with eccentric interests. But more about that later.

Area 51 is located 75 air miles northwest of Las Vegas, adjacent to a huge desert area encompassing the Nevada Test Site, where the government began experimenting with nuclear bombs in 1951, and the Nellis Air Force Range. The base itself “was built in the mid-fifties alongside Groom Lake, a remote playa ringed by parched mountains, for the U-2 spy plane. (And even) after Francis Gary Powers was shot down over the Soviet Union in 1960, the place continued to serve as the test site for...secretly funded intelligence and defense projects, including the A-12 and SR 71 Blackbirds, the F-117 Stealth fighter, and a rumored hypersonic spy plane known as the Aurora.”

More recently, interest in Area 51 has been piqued by its role in the government’s multi-billion “Black Budget”—a secret fund for military and intelligence spending cobbled together by “thousands of deletions and false line items in the budgets for such activities, identified through acronyms or code names...(about which) the only informed authorities are individual members of House and Senate committees who have a ‘need to know.’” And, of course, there are those who continue to believe that captured aliens and their spacecraft are being held at Area 51.

Indeed, Darlington has subtitled his book “The Dreamland Chronicles,” based on a portion of Edgar Allan Poe’s poem “Dreamland.”

“But the traveler, traveling through it, May not—not openly view it; Never its mysteries are exposed To the weak human eye unclosed.”

Much of Darlington’s research was done in the small town of Rachel, NV, located on Hwy 375, north of Area 51. It was there in trailer with a sign reading AREA 51 RESEARCH CENTER, he met Glenn Campbell (not to be confused with the singer, who spells his name with only one N), a man on the “just curious” side of the UFO issue. Campbell is the author of Area 51 Viewer’s Guide, erstwhile publisher of The Groom Lake Desert Rat, a journal dedicated to “The Naked Truth from Open Sources,” and a man who generously supplied Darlington with much of the information for his book.

Another character looming large on the UFO scene is Bob Lazar, who, thanks to a detailed description of his job at Area 51, during which he supposedly researched the propulsion systems of recovered alien spacecraft, touched off a frenzy in the “pro-alien” UFO subculture.

Although Darlington attempts to be a neutral observer between the “pro-alien” camp versus the “just curious” group, by the end of the book it becomes clear that he sides with the latter’s views. One of the big problems with those holding the former view—notably Bob Lazar—is that in many instances their imaginations run as wild in regard to their UFO beliefs as to their own purported educational and work backgrounds. Veracity, it seems, is often lacking on the “pro-alien” side.

No matter what you believe, it’s interesting to note that Darlington, while camping one night with other UFOers in the desert near Area 51, “waiting for things to appear in the dark,” ruminates, “It seemed like a very particular activity for (this) time and place in history... How different were we from pre-Christian desert nomads sitting beneath the same stars, organizing them into meaningful shapes and investing them with power and influence over our lives?”
Much has changed in the 14 years since Darlington published *Area 51*. The book remains a worthwhile read, however, not only for its history of the UFO story up to the middle 1990s, but also for a glimpse into a culture where absolutes no longer seem relevant. Perhaps UFO buffs, conspiracy theorists and even religious fanatics have something in common after all—seeking explanations for the unexplainable.

**MYSTERIES AND LEGENDS OF NEVADA: True Stories of the Unsolved and Unexplained** (2010), Richard Moreno

Richard Moreno is the author of several Nevada-related books, a long-time publisher of *Nevada Magazine*, and the 2007 recipient of the Nevada Writers Hall of Fame Silver Pen Award. Explaining the rich diggings for mysteries and legends to be found in Nevada, he concludes “(One) reason it’s so easy to believe some of the strange tales about Nevada is that is can be such a mysterious place. Let’s face it, when you drive deep into Nevada’s outback—which is just about any place in the state that isn’t named Las Vegas, Lake Tahoe, or Reno—it can be lonely. And empty. And scary. Out there, it’s easy to let the imagination run screaming to and from the dark places. All those stories about people falling into old, abandoned mine shafts (true every couple of years), armies of large, hairy tarantulas crawling across the roads near the town of Gabbs (true during the mating season), and killers like Charles Manson hanging out in Nevada ghost towns (also once true—although he’s still in prison) certainly give one pause.”

In this 200-page volume, Moreno, in an easy, reader-friendly style, explores seventeen examples of the Silver State’s mysteries and legends, ranging from ancient Indian beliefs up to and including the mysterious disappearance of Steve Fossett and his plane in September of 2007. And while several of Moreno’s pieces concern metropolitan Reno, Carson City and Las Vegas, there are enough non-urban mysteries recounted to make it of interest to DPS members.

Several Native American legends are explored, including “Pyramid Lake’s Water Babies and Other Spirits,” in which Moreno explains that even today Paiutes won’t build homes on the lake—which is part of their reservation—because they believe that “water spirits of evil disposition (venture forth) at night to steal children that are left unguarded by their parents.” Yet another Paiute legend concerns Walker Lake, the 18-mile long, 7-mile wide terminus of the Walker River, located 75 southeast of Reno, in which a purported giant serpent lives (think Loch Ness Monster). So many sightings have been made over the years that local promoters now float a motorized version of the apparition, Cecil the Sea Serpent, on the lake during various special events.

And then there is “The Garden of Eden in Nevada.” That intriguing notion was born in 1923, when a geologist and engineer named Captain Alan Le Baron, while on a hill overlooking the East Walker River, about 30 miles south of Yerington, discovered thousands of “unusual writings and drawings, which he was convinced were identical to Egyptian and Babylonian characters.” Making drawings and taking photographs of the material, which “he shared with Arabian scholars in Egypt,” Le Baron soon averred, “I am prepared to say positively that this is not the work of Indians.”

Returning to the site with the Sunday editor of the *San Francisco Examiner* and a professor of classical literature from Stanford, the editor soon reported that, “We have found what appears to be the evidence of the oldest civilization in the world—the oldest writing, the oldest art, the oldest sacrifice, the oldest worship, and the oldest burial.” As naïve and incredible as it may seem today, for a period of time Le Baron’s theories were eagerly accepted.

Over the years, however, other experts revisited the site, studied the rock writing, the tombs and the bones, and “determined that the...hieroglyphics were actually prehistoric petroglyphs...while the bones were nothing more than the remains of indigenous species such as sheep, deer, and rabbits.”

In still another chapter “The Mystery of the Lost City,” Moreno discusses a settlement that once contained hundreds of dwellings and cultivated fields, located near the confluence of the Virgin and Muddy Rivers (near Muddy Peak and Virgin Peak), about 60 miles northeast of Las Vegas. First inhabited about 300 B.C., we now call the people who lived there the Anasazi. Similar to other previously inhabited areas in the Southwest, this community, too, suddenly disappeared, possibly due to drought, eventually replaced by Southern Paiutes and Shoshones, whose descendents still live in Moapa Valley of Southern Nevada. In 1938, the filling of Lake Mead, created by the construction of Hoover Dam, covered the site with water. Some of the ruins were moved and restored and may be observed at a museum in Lake Mead National Recreational Area. Thousands of other recovered artifacts may be seen at the Lost City Museum in Overton, NV.

**GOLDEN CHECKERBOARD (1965), Ed Ainsworth**

Born and raised in Waco, TX, Edward (Ed) Maddin Ainsworth (1916-1967) followed his father into the local newspaper business. Gaining additional journalistic experience in San Pedro and Bakersfield, CA, Ainsworth then settled in for a long career with the *Los Angeles Times*, where he held various positions including city editor, state editor and editor of the editorial section. From 1959 until his retirement in 1967, he wrote a daily column for the *Times* titled “On the Move.”

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*THE DESERT SAGE*
Ainsworth also became interested in the Southern California deserts and authored several books and novels on the subject, including *Painters of the Desert* (1960) and *Beckoning Desert* (1962). In 1965, he published *Golden Checkerboard*, an exposition regarding the land ownership problems of the Agua Caliente Band of the Cahuilla Indians of Palm Springs and of a Superior Court Judge who purportedly helped the Indians gain control of their rightful inheritance. Unfortunately, it was a volume that was to cast a pall over Ainsworth’s reputation.

The land ownership problems of the Cahuilla Indians are complicated and can not be fully explained here. Suffice to say that rather than being granted one contiguous reservation, the Cahuillas, including the Morongo, Cabazon, Torres-Martinez and Agua Caliente Bands, in 1876, received alternating, mile-square sections of land, while the Southern Pacific Railroad—as an incentive to build their line through the area—was granted the alternate sections.

In an attempt to protect the Indians from unscrupulous persons, the U.S. Congress decreed that, in order to own and manage their land, the Cahuillas needed to become more “advanced in civilization,” and until that time the Government would hold their land in trust. In spite of many attempts over many years to break this log-jam, the Agua Caliente Band became owners in name only of property that, because of the fame Palm Springs had gained as a winter getaway for Hollywood stars, had become exceedingly valuable. Band members continued to live in squalor on property directly adjacent to the up-scale resort.

In 1959, a decision by the Secretary of the Interior at last allowed for development of Agua Caliente lands. Once again, however, legislation was passed to “protect” the Indians and their estates from “artful and designing persons.” Declaring the Indians to be “incompetent,” a program of court-appointed conservators and guardians, administered by Superior Court Judge Hilton H. McCabe of Indio, took control of a majority of the band’s estates.

Unfortunately, the so-called “protection” program fostered corruption among the conservators. Among the conservators.

The upshot was, as Wikipedia notes: “Under scrutinious circumstances so potentially damaging to McCabe’s career, as administrator of the program and as a conservator himself, it is not surprising that the arguably propagandist *Golden Checkerboard* should emerge in 1965 as a defense tool.” Indeed, almost slavish in his praise for McCabe, Ainsworth—and some speculate he was paid by McCabe to write the book—refers to the judge as “The Little White Father of the Indians” and goes to great length to describe his “efforts and untold hours of work (on the Indians’ behalf) over and above his Court duties.”

In addition, as Wikipedia continues: “*Golden Checkerboard’s* disparaging, paternalist tone so offended Agua Caliente tribal members that all available copies are rumored to have been collected and burned.” A favorite book dealer of mine adds: “*Golden Checkerboard* sparked a 13 million dollar lawsuit and an active effort to destroy every copy possible.”

Although *Golden Checkerboard* no doubt blemished Ainsworth’s reputation, it did increase the value of all the copies that remained intact. Indeed, I coughed up $90 for my copy, while another book dealer I know is asking $150 for his.
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