Pahrump & Stewart

April Potluck

Death Valley Peaks

http://angeles.sierracub.org/dps/
CHAIR’S CORNER
by Christine Mitchell

Let me start with a huge round of applause for Elaine Baldwin for organizing one of the most successful banquets ever. The venue was great; the food was delicious; the program was interesting and inspiring (and the right length); the wine was free! What more could you ask for?! And all our best climbing buddies were there to share it with!

One of the decisions the management committee made last season was to subsidize part of the banquet ticket cost for our loyal and deserving DPS members. That’s why the tickets had a $5 discount for members and the fine wine was provided.

The new Management Committee was so eager to get started that we already had our first meeting. The first order of business was to flex our muscles by implementing the new Suspension capability (sounds like a superhero power). We discussed the status of Kino, Maturango and Argus and unanimously voted to suspend all three. The situation with Maturango and Argus has changed before and most likely will again. We’ll keep an eye on the status and revisit the suspension when appropriate. While it is ‘legal’ to climb Kino now (according to some Border Patrol officers), it is highly discouraged. Some officials have told various DPSers that it is off limits. Hopefully the situation here will improve in the future and we can happily reinstate it. Many people have fond memories of fun climbs and parties on these fine desert peaks.

Another topic that generated a lot of discussion was the new Leader Emblem. After a lot of discussion, we have decided to implement the following plan to get this very worthy award started.

We will have a grace period for two Sage cycles from the implementation of the Leader Award to ensure all qualified DPS leaders learn about this new emblem, get their list together, and submit it through the proper channels (DPS secretary). This will make the deadline for the first honorees September 30, 2010. At the end of this grace period, the secretary will order the list of submitters by the date that they qualified for this emblem (i.e.: the date they led/co-led their 50th DPS peak). After this initial grace period is over, the same rules apply as is used for List Finishes, Emblems, and Explorer Awards, i.e. the date you submit your led peak list to the secretary is the date you qualify and get the next available number.

This helps with a couple of issues:

1. There are leaders who qualify who may not have heard about the new emblem yet. If they didn’t go to the banquet, they won’t know through official channels until they get this Sage.

2. The application procedure is to submit the list to the secretary. The secretary position changed but people didn’t know who the new secretary was because it wasn’t announced at the banquet (we hadn’t blessed the final lineup when the banquet program was printed).

So all you leaders, get your lists together and turn them in. Those of you that aren’t at 50 leads yet, there’s plenty of time to get a trip or two in the schedule for the next year. Tina is standing by, waiting for your call. We LOVE our leaders and we want to have a huge celebration at the next banquet giving out all these leader awards! - Christine
JULY 10-11 SAT-SUN DPS  Mount Patterson Triple/Double List Finish
JULY 18 SUN DPS, HPS, SPS, LPC Wysup Peak Rendezvous Double List Finish
JULY 24 SAT GBPS Virginia Peak, Pah Rah Mountain
AUG 1 SUN DPS, LTC, WTC, SPS Mount Pinos Navigation
SEP 17 FRI DPS, WTC White Mountain Peak
SEP 18 SAT LTC Deadline for Leadership Training Seminar
SEP 18-19 SAT-SUN DPS, WTC Mt Jefferson, Arc Dome
SEP 18-19 SAT-SUN DPS, WTC Glass Mountain Ridge
SEP 24-25 FRI-SAT DPS North Guardian Angel, South Guardian Angel
SEP 26 SUN DPS, LTC, WTC, SPS Grinnell Ridge Navigation
SEP 29 WED DPS, LTC, WTC, SPS Advanced Mountaineering Program – Basic Safety System
OCT 1-3 FRI-SUN DPS, HPS, SPS Fall Festival in the Southern Sierra
OCT 2 SAT LTC Leadership Training Seminar
OCT 2 SAT DPS, LTC, WTC, SPS Advanced Mountaineering Program – Belaying
OCT 3 SUN DPS DPS Potluck and Management Meeting
OCT 9 SAT DPS, LTC, WTC, SPS Advanced Mountaineering Program – Rappelling
OCT 9 SAT LTC, WTC, HPS Beginning Navigation Clinic
OCT 10 SUN DPS, WTC Porter Peak, Sentinel Peak
OCT 16-17 SAT-SUN DPS, LTC, WTC, SPS Advanced Mountaineering Program – Rock Climbing
OCT 17 SUN DPS, LTC, WTC, SPS Indian Cove Navigation
OCT 29-31 SAT-SUN DPS Granitel Mtn #1, Kelso Peak
OCT 30-31 SAT-SUN LTC, WTC, HL Annual Chilifest and Peak Climb
NOV 6 SAT DPS DPS Potluck and Management Meeting
NOV 10-12 SAT-SUN DPS Mt Ajo, Superstition Mtn
NOV 13-14 SAT-SUN DPS, LTC, WTC, SPS Indian Cove Navigation
DEC 4-5 SAT-SUN DPS Needle Peak, Manly Peak
DEC 12 SUN DPS DPS Potluck and Holiday Party

In order to participate on one of the Sierra Club’s outings, you will need to sign a liability waiver. If you would like to read a copy of the waiver prior to the outing, please see http://sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms or call 415-977-5528.

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

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

**JULY 10-11**

SAT-SUN DPS

1: 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.

**JULY 18**

SUN DPS, HPS, SPS, LPC

1: Wysup Peak (8990') Rendezvous Hikes: Join us as we celebrate the life of George Wysup with three HPS exploratory trips to Peak 8990' in the San Bernardino Mountains. Choose among three routes, two on the PCT and one cross country. Bring 4 quarts water, 10 essentials, food item to share on the summit and stories of George.
Possible potluck afterwards. For info/sase to Coordinator: Gary Schenk (gwschenk@socal.rr.com).

Via Heart Bar Ridge: Moderately strenuous 8 miles round trip, 2300' gain, fire road and cross country via a beautiful ridge. Leaders: Greg De Hoogh, Sandy Sperling, Mei Kwan, Asher Waxman, Dan Richter, Wayne Vollaire, 'oe Young, Marlen Mertz, Bill Simpson, Ted Lubeshkoff.


Via PCT from Coon Creek Jumpoff: Moderate 4 miles round trip, 1200' gain on PCT with some cross country. Leaders: Gary Schenk, Mary McMannes, Pamela Rowe, Melody Anderson, Markey Neighbors, Robert Neighbors, Tina Bowman.

JULY 24


AUG 1

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

SEP 17

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 18-19

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@bowmandesigngroup.com). Co-Leader: Mary McMannes.

SEP 24-25

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.

THE DESERT SAGE 5 July/August 2010
I: Grinnell Ridge Navigation: Navigation Noodle in San Bernardino National Forest for either checkout or practice to satisfy Basic (I/M) or Advanced (E) level navigation requirements. Send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare, to Leader: Robert Myers (rmyers@ix.netcom.com). Assistant: Phil Wheeler.

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.

I: Fall Festival in the Southern Sierra: Lots of hiking and climbing, lots of evening partying. Bag scenic peaks from all three climbing section Lists. Hikes range from moderate on-trail hikes to xc climbs. Saturday night happy hour, potluck and campfire at Powers Well. Camp in Walker Pass, or primitive camping in Powers Wells or stay at motels in Ridgecrest or Lake Isabella. More activities, hikes, and climbs will be added closer to the event. Contact HPS Program Chair: Dave Comerzan.

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.

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.

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.

I: Porter Peak (9,101'), Sentinel Peak (9,634'): Meet Saturday late afternoon in Ballarat to consolidate in 4WD vehicles for drive up Pleasant Valley Canyon to camp near base of Porter. Early Sunday climb Porter, continue following ridge to Sentinel, and then retrace route back to camp for drive home, 11 miles, 5500' gain round trip. Be prepared for a rather long day and lots of gain. Send e-mail (preferred) or sase with contact information and recent conditioning to Leader: Daryn Dodge (ddodge@oehha.ca.gov). Co-Leader: Kathy Rich.
MEMBERSHIP CHAIR / ACTIVITY REPORT, June 11, 2010

Membership Summary

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Activity Report

Achievements

New Members
- Rudy Fleck (Picacho Pk)
- Bill Gaskill (Charleston Pk)
- Gary Hughes (Sombrero Pk)
- Jack Kieffer (Bridge Mtn)

New Subscriber
- Robert M. Myers

Membership Renewals
- Jim Adler 1 year
- Anne Anglim 2 years
- Pat Arredondo 1 year
- Randy & Joyce Bernard 1 year
- Lynne Buckner 1 year
- Winnette Butler 2 years
- Peter Dascalos 1 year
- Brian & Janice Elliott 1 year
- Beth Epstein 2 years
- John Gibba 2 years
- Kevin & Lisa Heapy 1 year
- Sue Wyman & Vic Henney 1 year
- Ken Limvile 1 year
- Laurie Loshack 1 year
- Edward H. Lubin 1 year
- J. Owen Maloy 1 year
- Mike Manchester 1 year
- Penelope May 1 year
- Ret Moore 1 year
- Terry Morse 1 year
- Julie Rush 2 years
- Scott Surgent 1 year
- Bruce Trotter 1 year
- Judy Ware 6 months
- Sharon Marie Wilcox 1 year

Donations
- $10.00 from Bob Wyka

- 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 big horn sheep (6.5 mi, 3000’ gain). Send e-sase or sase with conditioning to Leader: Tina Bowman. Co-Leader: Mary McMannes.
**November 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.

**November 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 Assistant, Ann Perkins (aperkins@csun.edu).

**December 4-5**

**SAT-SUN**

**DPS**

**I:** Pahrump Point (5740'), Stewart Point (5265'): Join us for one or both of these fine DPS-listed limestone peaks just east of Death Valley NP. Saturday climb Pahrump Point (3400' gain, 8 mi.). Happy hour Saturday night. Sunday climb Stewart Point (2600' gain, 6.5 mi.). Send e-mail with conditioning and experience to Leader: Daryn Dodge (ddodge@oehha.ca.gov) or Co-Leader: Kathy Rich (kathrynarich@gmail.com).

**December 12**

**SUN**

**DPS**

**O:** DPS Potluck, Holiday Party, and Management Meeting: Come to the home of Ann and Dave Perkins for the holiday potluck and management committee meeting. Meeting starts at 4:30; potluck at 6 pm. Bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. Contact Reserv: Ann Perkins.

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**OUTINGS CHAIR**

Having seen the spring out with Steve Eckert's list finish on Oroopia, we will be ushering in the summer with Ron Bartell’s 3x and Christine Mitchell’s 2x list finish on Mt. Patterson July 10th. Party time! We'll be looking forward to Sue Holloway’s 2x list finish also in December. Virgil Popescu is closing in on the list as well. Who else?

The Mountaineering Committee of the DPS has recommended to the management committee that Argus, Maturango, and Kino all be suspended from the list. The new management committee met on June 8th and voted to suspend Argus, Maturango, and Kino from the list until further notice.

Please note that the deadline for the November-February Schedule of Activities is July 10th. I would appreciate having your trip announcements several days before the deadline if possible. This is prime time for our lower DPS peaks. As always, if you miss the Schedule deadline, we can publish outings in the Sage and on the DPS web site. Thanks, as always, to all of you leaders helping us to offer a good schedule of DPS climbs. Way to go! - Tina

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**CONSERVATION**

**Solar Energy Project Revision Suggested**

The Sierra Club has suggested an alternative for the large-scale solar project being planned in San Bernardino County by BrightSource Energy Co. to cover about 5.7 square miles of public land in the Ivanpah Valley near Primm, Nevada. The alternative would put about one-third of the project closer to I-15, and would avoid disturbing high-quality habitat for desert tortoises and rare plants near the foothills of the Clark Mountains. According to a BLM study, surveys have found very few tortoises living within a half-mile of freeways. Biologists call such areas “dead zones,” where tortoises are more likely to fall prey to coyotes and ravens which are attracted to highways to feed on roadkill, and the tortoises often become roadkill themselves. To view the BLM report, go to www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/neefles/nef_1nea.html. BrightSource spokesman Keely Wachs said the company does not want to reconfigure the project and that doing so would provide minimal benefits for wildlife, so the outcome is still undecided. **Based on an article by David Danelski in The Press-Enterprise. Riverside, Ca., April 25, 2010.**

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**Cover Photo:** Ruby Dome from Ruby Pyramid. Photo by Bob Sumner.
ELECTION RESULTS and MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The 2010 election was a huge success. Almost 60% of the membership returned their ballots. That’s better than local government elections by a lot. Many people also included comments on their ballots and the management committee is very glad to have them. Voting is one of the best forms of feedback and it really helps the management committee know what some of the pertinent issues are.

The results of the election are:

Add McFarland Peak to the List? NO (yes: 29 votes; no: 101 votes. The people have spoken!)
Delete Kino from the List? NO (yes: 34 votes; no: 96 votes. Another resounding shutout.)
Delete Argus/Maturango from The List? NO (yes: 60 votes; no: 71 votes. A little ambivalence here. We must stay in touch with this situation.)
Add a clause to the DPS Bylaws giving the management committee the power to suspend a peak? YES (yes: 115 votes; no: 15 votes)
Add a clause to the DPS Bylaws for the provision of a Leader Emblem? YES (yes: 112 votes; no: 16 votes)

Gloria Miladin, Tina Bowman and Christine Mitchell will serve out the second half of their two year terms this coming year. And, we’re very excited to have two new eminently qualified and enthusiastic DPSers join us on the Management Committee:

DPS and HPS list finisher and past SPS management committee member Bob Wyka, and Honorable Desert Rat (yes, he took and passed the test many years ago) and experienced HPS Management Committee member Jim Fleming.

The management positions were doled out as follows:
Chair - Christine Mitchell
Vice Chair/Outings/Safety - Tina Bowman
Secretary- Bob Wyka
Treasurer - Gloria Miladin
Programs/Banquet - Jim Fleming

We feel very lucky that Ann Perkins will be joining us as Conservation Chair. And a thousand thanks to the people in appointed roles who will continue with their invaluable support:
Newsletter Editor - Bob Sumner
Webmaster - Larry Hoak
Mailer - Elaine Baldwin
Membership - Ron Bartell
Archives - Barbara Reber
Guidebook Editor - Ed Herrman
Mountaineering Committee - Bob Sumner, Ron Bartell, Brian Smith

GREAT BASIN PEAKS SECTION

The Great Basin Peaks Committee has been busily working to organize a peak section for the Toiyabe Chapter. The GBP Committee has established membership guidelines, recognition categories, designed an emblem patch, and has compiled a peak list.

Our purpose: to attract new members, to encourage members to explore the Great Basin & protect its wild areas, and to engage members in a new outings goal. Soon details will be posted on the Chapter website, a work in progress at http://nevada.sierraclub.org/GreatBasinPeaks.html.

If you have questions or are interested in joining the committee, contact Sharon Marie Wilcox at sharon.marie@sbcglobal.net.

Please note the first Great Basin Peaks Section scheduled trip is listed on page 5.
GEORGE WYSUP

George M. Wysup died at the age of 73. He was diagnosed with cancer on March 10, 2010. The cancer took his life on the morning of April 21, 2010. His wife Angie and son Michael will miss him very much. He will be watching over his daughter-in-law Shelley and his 4 grandchildren Chandler, Taylor, Hayden and his little princess Lily.

His parents were George R. Wysup and Rose Wysup, and he has a sister Carol Vincent who lives in Klamath Falls, Oregon. George was born in West Frankfort, Illinois and he graduated from the University of Illinois. He joined the US Army and became a member of the Army Corps of Engineers. He moved to California and began working at General Dynamics in Pomona, California. He met Angie there, and they soon got married and started their family in La Verne, California. Later, they moved to Alta Loma, California where they lived for 30 years. Recently, they moved to Pullman, Washington to be with their son and his family.

George had always enjoyed the outdoors and hiking. After retirement George began to pursue his passion for hiking and the outdoors. He hiked every chance he got. In November of 2009 when he and Angie were visiting family and friends in Southern California he hiked every day in the month of November except for Thanksgiving Day. He was a proud member of the Sierra Club’s Hundred Peaks Section. He loved it so much that he completed the list 9 times and was only a few peaks away from completing it a 10th time. As a member of the Sierra Club he was honored by numerous awards for his accomplishments. In November of 2006 he was the first to achieve the Explorer Emblem for 200 peaks. When someone had a question about a peak they asked George. He has completed over 2,000 peaks, led many hikes and served as a mentor and a role model to many of the members he leaves behind.

George Wysup was a husband, a father, a grandfather and a passionate hiker. Thank you for making all of our lives better. You will be deeply missed on the trail and at the dinner table. We love you.

- Michael F. Wysup

JOHN FISCHER

My dear friend John Fischer the great American Alpine climber died yesterday. John was coming to meet my friend Asher Waxman and I at the Virginia Lakes trailhead in the Eastern Sierra. We had seen him the evening before in Bishop and planned to climb Excelsior Mountain together. When he didn’t show up we asked some skiers arriving at the trailhead if they had seen any accidents on 395 and they said they had seen emergency vehicles. We went down to highway and it was John. His motorcycle had hit a deer and he was killed instantly. It was one of the most horrible moments of my life. I dealt with the police and called his children and brother. We spent most of the rest of the day with his girlfriend Shawn and friends at their house in Bishop. John was a very special person who always gave more than he took and enriched the lives of everyone he touched. My heart is broken and there is a hole in me that will take a long time to fill. I loved him dearly. Go well dear friend. Climb on.

- Dan Richter
Six or eight years ago I ran into John Fischer at Paradise Resort on Lower Rock Creek. It was Dana Miller's wedding party. Dana's dad George Miller had climbed and skied a lot with John and me back in the early Seventies when we first lived in Bishop.

John was in great form, not drinking, gracious and full of energy. I was happy to see him doing well. He invited me outside to see his bike.

John had always been into motorcycles. Back in the Haight-Ashbury, he lived in a house that was more defined by the road racing motorcycles being rebuilt in the living room than anything else like the sidelight of climbing. I was intrigued, so one day I borrowed a race-tuned Ducati with triangle-section tires that made it stick to the pavement better when heeled over at 45 degrees than when it was upright and the narrow tread would skitter over streetcar tracks. I got it downtown on Mission Street before it sank into me what I was riding. The bike was far from street legal, missing such niceties as plates and a muffler. It wouldn't run under 3000 rpm either, loud enough that its racket echoed down the canyon of buildings and causing people a block away to turn and look. I would sit at a stop light trying to sink into my jacket away from the attention this screaming machine generated, and back off the throttle another notch. Which killed the bike and meant that without a kick starter I had to push it down the next block to bump start it. Coming back, I rode the winding road over Twin Peaks, which made the whole thing worth it.

On the mantle of John's communal house, overlooking the cardboard boxes of disassembled transmissions, was a stuffed armadillo named Jeffrey. When John followed me to Bishop in the fall of 1969 and "Crazy Lester" Robertson came along, The Armadillos segued from fast bikes into a climbing group we called the Armadillo Rock Group. We fancied ourselves as similar to the Alpine Climbing Group in England. You can still see us signed into summit registers up and down the Sierra and especially in the Palisades.

At Dana's wedding, John's bike was parked right outside the bar at Paradise. It was one of those hybrid dirt-street BMWs, with high clearance and a big engine. He had ridden over for the wedding from Half Moon Bay, and taken a shortcut up the old Foresta road from El Portal, which was impassable to cars but that machine made short work of it and John was proud of the sophisticated bike.

Apparently John had gotten a new bike within the last year. The last time I saw him, he came to my slide show last November in Bishop. I was glad that I had put in slides of our early routes in the Buttermilk the ones that first cranked the place into a bouldering area, and others like the Checkered Demon ice gully that John and I had put up together in our first autumn of living on the Eastside. It felt good to honor my old friend.

John Fischer was my first climbing partner when we were in High School. We shared the intensity of early fumblings into climbing, which took so much longer than when every simple 5.5 climb was a trad lead with chrome-moly angles ringing into cracks for pro and a twisted chunk of Goldline knotted onto your waist.

Yesterday morning John's trajectory up Conway Summit intersected a deer and two sentient beings went down. I miss you my old friend. - Doug Robinson

More info on John Fischer can be viewed at http://www.spotteddogpress.com/fischer.html
On New Year's Day 1994, after a climb of Turtle Mountain, Tina Bowman and I drove on an old mining road toward the western side of Mopah to see if it could be accessed easily from the west. We passed a mile long mesa with what appeared to be unclimbable cliffs all along its western side. That was the first time I had seen Kettle and I thought then that someday I would like to climb it.

Last fall I was discussing with Brian Smith possible climbs we could do that weren't on the Desert Peaks List and Umpah came up. I had climbed its neighbor Mopah twice and I love the area and had mentally noted that I would someday return to climb Umpah. Having decided to climb it I remembered Kettle and searching for beta I couldn't find any reports of it being climbed, but looking at the maps I saw what appeared to be a possible way through the cliffs on its eastern flank just below its high point. I was hooked. I called Brian and Asher Waxman, and scheduled a DPS exploratory to climb Kettle and Umpah.

Early Saturday morning on March 20th Asher, myself, Brian, Rudy Fleck, Maria Yocum, Diane Dunbar, and Rich Gnagy met at the turn off to the Mopah Range or Umpah. Having decided to climb it I remembered Kettle and searching for beta I couldn't find any reports of it being climbed, but looking at the maps I saw what appeared to be a possible way through the cliffs on its eastern flank just below its high point. I was hooked. I called Brian and Asher Waxman, and scheduled a DPS exploratory to climb Kettle and Umpah.

On Sunday Asher, Brian, Rudy, Maria and I climbed Umpah approaching it from the north on the standard route in to Mopah. Taking a good look at its north face from the base of Mopah, I could see a clear line up to
its east ridge to the left rather than to the right side of the headwall as described in the DPS Road and Peaks Guide. When we got to the base of the headwall Rudy scouted the left side variation and it went beautifully. It was clean and elegant leaving us about a hundred or so feet below the notch on the east ridge. The rest of the climb followed the description in the guide. A small amount of easy 3rd class with some exposure was encountered as we climbed the SSW chimney that got us to the summit. We returned to our cars by the route we had used the day before for Kettle through that lovely valley fresh with green grasses, billions of flowers, and flowering cacti.

It was a wonderful spring weekend scrambling in the Mojave.

PORTER PEAK, 9101’
March 21-23, 2010
By Debbie Bulger

Our three-day backpack to climb Porter Peak in Death Valley was the perfect spring break. Richard Stover and I started under the watchful eyes of feral burros shortly before noon on March 21 about two miles from Ballarat on the Pleasant Canyon Road. We each carried 12 pounds of water. The views of the snow-capped Sierra were grand, and the mining debris interesting as always.

Clair Camp, an abandoned mining area, is a junk pile. We particularly noticed the tanks marked “Cyanide—Poison.” Glad we were carrying our own water. By 4:30 p.m., having gained about 3000 feet, we stopped at the cabin at the World Beater Mine about 4000’ below Porter’s summit.

Death Valley cabins are available for use on a first come, first serve basis. This one is maintained by CORVA (California Off Road Vehicle Association). Some of these off-roaders are fine people; others are total yahoos, tossing beer cans from their vehicles, shooting pistols and leaving their shells on the ground, and driving on fragile habitat.

That night the mice kept waking us up as they chomped down food left out by the previous cabin occupant. You can be sure I cleaned thoroughly before we spent another night.

We left at 6:30 a.m. the next morning and took about an hour to hike up to the Copper Mine road. There was continuous snow from about 8500’ and near the summit we spotted old tracks. “Only Doug Mantle or Steve Eckert have feet that big,” I remarked to Richard. Sure enough, in the register we saw Steve’s signature from February 13. He had snowshoed from Clair Camp.

On the way back we explored a side road from the Copper Mine road and found a deflated balloon (as we do on most trips) and some exquisite Newberry...
Milkvetch. At the junction of the Pleasant Canyon Road we decided to look for the Stone Corral which cannot be seen from the road. We found it. It does not appear to be a corral for animals at all; rather it is a circular stone structure which looks as if it were built to protect the spring from stock.

Then back to the cabin for another night and the next day a lovely hike out.

**PAHRUMP POINT & STEWART POINT**

*March 13-14, 2010*

*by Pat Arredondo*

Thirteen of us met at the Crow Bar Saloon in Shoshone at 7 am on Saturday and caravanned to the Pahrump trailhead. We parked along the highway and walked up the long dirt road to the canyon entrance. Following the DPS Peak Guide, we took the left fork at elevation 3770', stayed to the right at 4120', and then made our way up the steep slope to the ridge above. We headed up the ridge for about 50 yards and then went left through a ducked notch, traversing up and left through a second notch with a “window rock” on its left side. We followed the obvious chute up and right from here to the ridgeline above and continued hiking NE until we reached the summit ridge. We turned left here and followed the narrow, rocky summit ridge a short distance to the top. We reached the peak in time for lunch where we enjoyed spectacular vistas of distant ranges and valleys. After much picture taking, we descended to the cars without incident.

During the day the wind had increased in intensity and by the time we were back to our vehicles, it was really blowing. A few in the group went to Tecopa to soak in the hot springs before meeting us for dinner. The rest of us drove to the Crow Bar Saloon for dinner and respite from the wind. Thank you to everyone that joined us for this fine desert outing.

Participants: Virgil Popescu (leader), Pat Arredondo (co-leader), Chi Truong, Paul Cooley, Gloria Miladin, Peter Kudlinski, Tracey Thomerson, Michelle Chimenti, Peter Dressler, Dave Perkins, Anne Rolls, Dave Benson, and Ed Herrman.

Sunday morning four participants decided to sign out for the Stewart Point climb and head for home. Nine of us drove to the 58.50 point on Highway 178 where we parked our vehicles and continued hiking NE until we reached the summit ridge. We turned left here and followed the narrow, rocky summit ridge a short distance to the top. We reached the peak in time for lunch where we enjoyed spectacular vistas of distant ranges and valleys. After much picture taking, we descended to the cars without incident.

During the day the wind had increased in intensity and by the time we were back to our vehicles, it was really blowing. A few in the group went to Tecopa to soak in the hot springs before meeting us for dinner. The rest of us drove to the Crow Bar Saloon for dinner and respite from the wind. Thank you to everyone that joined us for this fine desert outing.

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As we descended, the wind started to abate and by the time we reached our cars, it had almost stopped completely. After a few cold drinks and snacks, we all left for the long drive home. There was a bit of slow traffic on the 15, no accidents, but it appeared the agricultural inspection station was the culprit because after we passed it, traffic was much more reasonable. Thank you to everyone that joined us for this great weekend trip.

Participants: Virgil Popescu (leader), Pat Arredondo (co-leader), Chi Truong, Gloria Miladin, Peter Kudlinski, Tracey Thomerson, Peter Dressler, Dave Perkins, and Dave Benson.
TIN MOUNTAIN, 8953'
April 2010
by Debbie Bulger

What in the world am I doing in Death Valley at the end of April with snowshoes, gaiters, and a bear can?

Richard Stover and I had set off to climb some Southern Sierra peaks, but heavy snow prevented us from reaching the trailhead. When Richard saw the mileage sign to Ridgecrest from Lake Isabella, he suggested we check to see if the Panamint Daisy was out. Last month, we found this elusive emblem of the California Native Plant Society, but it was not yet in bloom.

Have I died and gone to heaven? Here we are, in the Panamints, and resplendent on the hillside are Panamint Daisies in bloom. Hallelujah!

They are as grand as reported and as large as my open hand. The huge yellow corollas are 5 to 6 inches across and tossing in the strong wind.

What to climb? We didn’t bring maps of Death Valley, so it’s on to the Visitor Center at Furnace Creek to buy another map of Tin Mountain. The winds are strong and gain intensity for the next few days.

What we don’t have is the DPS Guide and detailed route instructions, but many routes will go. We start at first light from the Racetrack Road and, by the tracks, choose a common route. We also make a common error and almost summit Peak 8810 before we head for the saddle and the top of Tin. The lovely pine-juniper forest around us contrasts with the yucca and creosote below. The 4200’ of elevation gain have been slow with the 30 mph winds.

The view from Tin is expansive. We can see the Racetrack to the south and Scottie’s Castle below. White Mountain Peak really lives up to its name with a showy mantle of white surrounded by desert. On the descent we decide to take another way, eventually hiking through a maze of fascinating washes and canyons. Our knees complain from sliding down more than 2000’ of scree. We’re glad we have hiking poles. Once I’m knocked over by the wind. It’s a good thing it’s blowing into the slope.

Heading home we regret not having our Mohave flower book. There are Desert Sunflowers, Indigo Bush, Brittlebush, Apricot Mallow, Beavertail Cactus, Paintbrush, and lots more. We stop by the Eureka Dunes to catch the endangered Eureka Dunes Evening Primrose but don’t stay because of the dust storm. As we drive north at Bishop toward Monitor Pass, we are treated to a view of the high Sierra clad in snow, a rare treat for us.

TOROWEAP OVERLOOK
(FAMOUS LAST WORDS)
April 9-10, 2010
by Edna Erspamer

On April 9 and 10 Ed Herrman and I camped in the Toroweap Overlook area not far from the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, which I highly recommend for its views and remoteness. On the way out on a well-graded dirt road, about 40 miles from the turn off to St. George, Utah, Ed decided he wanted to show me a campsite he had camped in many times when his kids were little. It is situated along another dirt road that goes up and over Black Rock Mountain, roughly paralleling I-15. We
would return to I-15 at Mesquite in Nevada.

As we drove along, the road climbed in altitude and snow patches began to appear. At one point the road descended about 500 feet through a rather heavy layer of snow, but we could see clear road ahead. Ed remarked, "Maybe I shouldn’t drive down this," and I said, "It’s all down hill!" as he plowed through to the clear road. Further on we ran into more snow, and worse still, patches of deep mud caused by melting snow. It became evident that we had to turn around. Even that was a chore, with much churning up of snow and mud as our wheels spun around. When we reached the incline with the heavy snow we tried in vain, but to no avail: much spinning of wheels and sliding. No way out.

I had noticed a picnic table back a few yards where the road was clear. Ed backed down to it and we took stock of our situation. He has a friend living in St. George whom we decided to phone at 3:30 PM. Ed’s cell got no reception. My Verizon did, fortunately. But as soon as Ed told his friend Don our predicament and our location at 6900 feet, the battery went dead. Don also mentioned that he had never heard of Black Mountain, even though he lives 50 miles from it as the crow flies.

We set up camp with left-over provisions including a few gallons of water. By 9 PM Ed lit the lantern and put it on top of the 4Runner. We tried to sleep, but were quite nervous, to say the least. At 3:15 AM we were awakened by two sheriff’s vehicles, Arizona Search and Rescue. Leaving Kingman, where they are headquartered, at 4 PM, they had taken almost 12 hours to reach us. They had started to come in from Mesquite but had to turn around because of snow and mud, requiring them to backtrack and come in from St George. One of them put chains on all 4 of his wheels and towed Ed up the hill. We were escorted back to St George and had breakfast at 6AM in Mesquite.

Ed’s friend Don was turned down by St. George rescue because we were in Arizona. He tried Mesquite, but they said no, because it’s in Nevada. Kingman, AZ, is the seat for Mojave County, where we were and which extends up to the Utah border, I hate to think of what would have happened if my cell hadn’t worked for what little life was left on the battery. We would still be there, and nobody knew where we were. The weather forecast was for more snow that night. There’s a lesson here, right?

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DPS APRIL POTLUCK
April 11, 2010
By Mary McMannes

I don’t know about you, but I always look forward to the Spring Fling at the Casa de Tidballs where we walk up a tree lined street and weave our way through Barbee’s extraordinary gardens to the main house. And an extra perk is if one gets tired of talking to his buddies, there’s always the opportunity to gaze at the wonderful interior decorating, but hey, Barbee is an interior designer, and Larry is an architect. If they’re not taking care of their house, these two are out leading some incredible climbs for our section. If you want the difficult climbs (Weaver’s Needle and more), hook up with the Tidballs.

DPS management convened at 4:30 p.m. in the library, and we had plenty to do with counting the ballots and making sure we all understood our various duties in making the fabulous 2010 annual banquet happen in style. Elaine was getting the banquet jitters hoping we’d all come through, and we did! Barbara Reber, bless her heart, came early to help me count ballots, and we were pleased with the results. The List remains sacred, but the three worry wart peaks are indefinitely suspended. After much work, management finally released themselves, and raced out to the dining room to grab a glass of wine and start filling ample plates. The table was laden with the best dishes that DPS cooks are known for. The Tidball house is large enough, so there were clusters of mini-parties going on in the living room, the dining room, the kitchen, and of course, the back patio.

I was especially happy to see SPSers Greg Mason, Keith Christensen, plus supernova HPSer, Laura Joseph. Ellen Grau is always a welcomed sight (I call her the creator of the DPS monthly potluck idea.) Forever loyal, there was Rich Gnagy newly arrived from another party (what a

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Photos by Mary McMannes.
The merry month of May found many of us thinking of nothing but banquets and more banquets. A few of us hiking and climbing types journeyed on down to the Rose Bowl in Pasadena and made a bee line for the Brookside Country Club. The muckity mucks of the huge Angeles Chapter were getting together to award their best leaders or those of us who had hung around long enough begging for an award. We gathered on the veranda where the complimentary bar was set up, and beverages and braggry stories were flowing. Old friends were acknowledged and even a few old enemies, but hey, we’ve buried our hatchets long ago or left our hiking poles at home. Ma Webster (Mary Ann) scurried around setting up her fine Silent Auction, and there were good things to be had. I snagged a large coffee table book all about Robert Scott’s ill-fated trip to the South Pole. Ron Hudson grabbed Bob Sumner’s Hiking Nevada’s County High Points guide book, and he was happy with his find. Bob Cates was walking around having a high old time, and there were other notables, too. Frank Dobos, David Eisenberg, Bobcat Thompson, Dan Richter, Asher Waxman, Tina and Tom Bowman, Jane Simpson (WTC Chair), Bob Meyers, Paul Cooley, Jim Fleming, Winnette Butler, and, of course, we awardees smiling big Cheshire cat smiles.

Eventually, dinner was served, and Ron Silverman was one dapper and charming emcee. The Memorial Slide Show began with photos and brief resumes of fifteen of our Club’s finest leaders who deserved one final farewell and grateful thanks from all of us. It was a tough assignment having to put our beloved George Wysup into a Memorial Slide show. Only last year, George was there grinning for the cameras as he received the Elna Bakker Nature Award. At the end of this poignant and fitting memorial, one lady leapt from her seat in great consternation exclaiming loudly that one person had been left out. She was given blessed assurance that the named person would be honored in 2011. Such an outburst, but please don’t shoot the messengers.

Allison Chin, newly elected Sierra Club president was the keynote speaker, and everyone appreciated her good words. However, banquet organizers have assured us that next year’s program will begin AFTER diners have eaten and not during.

Finally, our time had arrived, as Sherry Ross and Ron Silverman handed out the Outings awards. I was in exceptional company with Larry Hoak, Karen Leverich, Patrick McKusky, Kathy Rich, Anne Marie Richardson, and Ron Hudson. Larry has been around since ice axes had...
wooden handles and was long time over due in deserving an award. The other recipients are phenomenal in their own special ways and make the climbing sections energized by their gifts and talents. Ron Hudson, the worthiest of contenders for the Chester Versteeg Award, gave one of the best speeches of the evening. We got a kick out of his childhood camping adventures; especially when he related that early on, he self-arrested on the saddle between Ritter and Banner with a fishing pole. It was obvious Ron was destined for great things. Congratulations to Ron, and we hope the Chester Versteeg Award will continue its tradition of being awarded to those mountaineers who scale and lead others up our great Desert and Sierra peaks with safety, style, and grace.

The program went by fast, and we were on our way home by 9:00 p.m. putting our plaques and our Outings certificates on our bedside tables dreaming about our early days in the Sierra Club and never realizing we’d be honored in such a lavish and happy ceremony by our peers. All of us are thankful to friends in DPS, SPS, HPS, and Verdugo Hills who took the time to throw our names into the Awards hat. It was one of those evenings we’ll cherish and remember for the rest of our lives.

HARRIS HILL (5,780’), LOST BURRO (6,097’), WHITE TOP (7,607’), UBEHEBE PK (5,678’)
May 7-9, 2010
By Steve Smith

The remote region of Hidden Valley and Racetrack Valley in the northwest area of Death Valley NP has several interesting and isolated peaks. This area is in the northern Cottonwood Mountains and southern Last Chance Range in an area I had never climbed in before. On May 7-9, I had the chance to join my son Shane, along with Terry Flood and Rich Gnagy to climb in that area.

On Friday, we met in Olancha and using two 4WD vehicles, drove over the Hunter Mountain road to Gold Belt, an old mining area at the south end of Hidden Valley. Over the years, I had driven the Hunter Mountain to Tea Kettle Junction road several times and it had always been rough and slow going. Fortuitously, the NPS had just finished grading this road, along with the other major dirt roads in the area, which really made the driving pleasant. Unfortunately, this did not include the steep Lippincott-Saline Road which we found to be more difficult than ever on our drive out of the area on Sunday.

After camping at Gold Belt, Saturday morning it was an easy 1,200’ climb of nearby Harris Hill. This peak, along with the other three we climbed in the area, all had vast panoramic views of numerous desert ranges. On each of the four summits that weekend, it was fun to identify the surrounding DPS peaks which could be seen, as far as White Mountain to the north and Charleston Peak to the south.

Driving to the north end of Hidden Valley, we climbed Lost Burro Peak from the road which goes to the Lost Burro Mine. This 1,500’ climb had a beautiful climb up a steep ravine followed by hiking up a broad ridge line to the summit. Returning to the cars, we drove to the Lost Burro Mine to look around at the remnants of a huge mining operation.

Driving eastward up the Perdita Canyon road, which had also been recently graded, we headed for the starting point for White Top Mountain. Using our 4WD vehicles, we were able to drive an additional half mile up to a huge outcropping of talc and site of an old talc mine on the crest of the Cottonwood Mountains. This talc outcrop is what gives the peak a very prominent white patch which is visible from many distant vantage points. From a distance, it looks just like a huge snow patch. That site made a great campsite with colorful views down into Death Valley at sunset that evening. Next day was an easy 800’ of gain southward along the crest to reach the summit of White Top. From there, it was northward to Teakettle Junction with its usual extensive collection of teakettles and then southward in Racetrack Valley to Ubehebe Peak. The first part of the 3 mile hike and 2,000’ of gain goes nicely on an excellent trail. The second part, going southward along the crest, dropping down into a saddle and then a final steep climb to the summit required some easy rock climbing. The register books showed a lot of people are climbing this prominent peak adjacent to the Racetrack playa. Exiting via the Lippincott Road down into Saline Valley is a scenic drive over to the Saline Valley road. That route has really deteriorated since my last visit and now definitely requires a 4WD vehicle. Once back to the Saline Valley county road, it was again easy driving as we went southward back to Hwy 190.

Terry nearing the summit of Ubehebe Peak. Photo by Steve Smith.
By BURTON FALK

BurtFalk@aol.com

BOOK REVIEWS

Desert Climbing & Hiking Guides: Two New & Three Revised

Hiking Nevada’s County High Points (2010), Bob Sumner

Afoot & Afield, Inland Empire (2009), David & Jennifer Money Harris

Hiking California’s Desert Parks (1996, Revised 2006), Bill & Polly Cunningham

Desert Summits (2000, Revised 2006), Andy Zdon

140 Great Hikes in and Near Palm Springs (2003, Revised 2007) Philip Ferranti

Hiking Nevada’s County High Points (2010), Bob Sumner

Bob Sumner, who for the past six years has done a masterful job editing The Desert Sage, has now published his own equally fine climbing guide, Hiking Nevada’s County High Points. An April 2010 production of Wynne Benti’s Spotted Dog Press, the 160-page volume is both well-conceived and well-executed.

Kicking off with a review of basic hiking necessities, including clothing (think layers) and equipment (think ten essentials), Sumner continues with tips on driving rough roads, camping suggestions, and notes on such diverse subjects as ducks and cairns, rock art, tree inscriptions, and summit registers.

Next comes the high point guides themselves. As Sumner explains, Nevada is made up of 16 counties plus one independent administrative unit, Carson City, the highpoint of which is also considered. He reviews the best time of the year to hike each highpoint, the type of route to be encountered (trail, cross-country, etc.), the length of the hike, the total gain involved, and the driving distances from nearby towns. A topographic map is included for each adventure, a description of the view from each summit, a “bonus” peak that can be bagged in the immediate vicinity, side trips, historic notes, and a nice selection of photographs.

Five of the Nevada county high points are currently on the DPS list: Clark County’s Charleston Peak, Elko County’s Ruby Dome, Esmeralda County’s Boundary Peak, Nye County’s Mt. Jefferson, and White Pine County’s Wheeler Peak.

Of the remaining eleven high points, two are located on the shoulders of peaks whose summits lie in an adjoining county (Lincoln County’s is on the shoulder of White Pine County’s Mt. Grafton; Lyon County’s is on the shoulder of Middle Sister, in the Sweetwater Mountains, the summit of which lies in neighboring California’s Mono County); and three lie in the Carson Range, flanking Lake Tahoe to the east, and should probably be regarded as Sierra Nevada peaks—indeed, Mt. Rose, Washoe County’s highpoint, is on the SPS list.

That leaves six high points, any or all of which—with the possible exception of Mt. Davidson, Storey County’s highest, a 2.7 mile hike from downtown Virginia City—might make fine additions to our DPS list.

Bob Sumner, an experienced mountaineer and an excellent writer, includes a host of interesting information regarding each climb. Did you know, for instance, that the “White Mountains were originally named for pale granitic White Mountain Peak (which we know today as Montgomery Peak)? Later, when a peak further south, Mount Olmsted, was discovered to be higher, the name was transferred to that high peak. Despite the predominant red rock on this fourteener, the name stuck—both on the peak and the range.”

Or how about the fact that 10,520’ Corey Peak, Sumner’s high point climb for Mineral County, isn’t the true county high point at all? No, indeed, the actual high point is 11,239’ Mount Grant “which is located on the Hawthorne Army Depot and is closed to the public.” Should you be determined to climb Mount Grant, however, Sumner describes the process of applying for special permission to do so.

Hiking Nevada’s County High Points is a valuable climbing resource, which, in my opinion, belongs in every DPSer’s library. Congratulations on a fine job to Bob, a resident of Hawthorne, NV, in the state that has “remained the enchantress that kept pulling me back for more, and the place where I ultimately settled.”

Afoot & Afield, Inland Empire: A Comprehensive Hiking Guide (2009), David & Jennifer Money Harris

So I was browsing through the high-piled book table at our local Costco earlier this year, when I spotted a copy
of David & Jennifer Money Harris’ 2009 Afoot & Afield, Inland Empire. Leafing through its 410 pages I realized instantly that I was holding a small treasure in my hands. The drudgery of another afternoon’s shopping trip suddenly vanished.

David Harris is a life-long hiker, an engineering instructor at Harvey Mudd College, the co-author of the 6th edition of San Bernardino Mountain Trails, and a Sierra Club trip leader. Jennifer teaches Early Modern English Literature—and I’m sure she can take much of the credit for the volume’s excellent readability—and is interested in preservation of indigenous South American cultures. The couple live in Upland, CA and have two small children.

Regarding the term “Inland Empire,” the Harrises contend that its origin “is shrouded in the mists of history, but one theory says it was coined by real estate developers to lure buyers to this purported paradise.” Although the actual boundaries of the so-called “Empire” are even murkier, the definition used for this volume is that “it spans Riverside and San Bernardino Counties and eastern Los Angeles County…”

And with such a large area to be considered, it’s not surprising that more half of the more than 200 hikes described fall outside the DPS climbing area. The remaining “desert” hikes can be found in the Afoot & Afield’s chapters entitled: High Desert, Desert Divide, Palm Springs and the Indian Canyons, Santa Rosa Mountains National Monument, Mecca Hills Wilderness, Desert and Mountain Preserves, Joshua Tree National Park, and Mojave National Preserve. Surprisingly, only three DPS climbs are included, East Ord Mountain, Rabbit Peak (three routes) and Spectre Point.

On the other hand, all the hikes described, both “desert” and “non-desert” include maps, GPS coordinates and interesting facts, and constitute a treasure trove for anyone looking for a good day’s hike.

Similar to Bob Sumner’s book reviewed above, the Harrises introduce their volume with basic information for hikers, i.e., what clothing and equipment are necessary, what precautions to take during the hike, simple courtesies to be practiced on the trail, plus pointers on camping. Each hike description includes: distance, hiking time, elevation gain, level of difficulty, trail use (e.g. dogs, cyclists, children), best times of the year for the hike, recommended maps, and whether or not a permit is necessary.

In Appendix A, the Harrises list their picks of “Best Hikes” in several different categories, many of which are located in desert areas. For instance a best bird watching hike can be found at the Big Morongo Preserve in the Little San Bernardino Mountains; a best geology tour might be the Ladder and Painted Canyons hike in the Mecca Hills; for a best hike with kids one might consider the Kelso Dunes in the Mojave National Preserve; a best strenuous hike could be the Boo Hoff Loop (12 miles, 8 hours, 2,000’ of gain) in the Santa Rosa Mountains near La Quinta, and a best monster hike would be the Nine Peaks of the Desert Divide (26.5 miles, 11-15 hours, 9,000’ of gain) stretching between the Devils Slide Trailhead in Idyllwild, continuing south along the Pacific Crest Trail (which incorporates much of the original, God rest him, Sam Fink Trail), and descending on the Cedar Springs Trail.

During the past season I hiked 4 of the 5 sections of the California Riding and Hiking Trail in Joshua Tree National Park as described by the Harrises. Having done so, I can attest that their hike descriptions are excellent, equivalent to those found in Patty Furbush’s On Foot in Joshua Tree National Park (not reviewed). Hiking California’s Desert Parks (1996, Revised 2006), Bill & Polly Cunningham

Bill and Polly (nee Burke) Cunningham lived in California “decades ago,” Bill in Bakersfield, Polly in San Diego. They met while exploring the Golden State’s desert regions and got along so well that they eventually married. Today, the Cunninghams live in Montana, where Bill is a conservation activist and backpacking outfitter, and Polly makes a living as a freelance writer, a wilderness guide, and by working with the elderly. The Cunninghams are the coauthors of several wilderness guides, including Wild Utah, Hiking New Mexico’s Gila Wilderness, and Hiking New Mexico’s Aldo Leopold Wilderness. In addition they’ve coauthored Hiking Death Valley National Park, Hiking Mojave National Preserve, Hiking Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, and Hiking Joshua Tree National Park and, though not specifically stated, it appears that they’ve consolidated much of the latter four volumes into one, Hiking California’s Desert Parks, a 1996 publication, revised in 2006.

Similar to the volumes reviewed above, the Cunninghams lead off with hiking basics, including what specifically to avoid, i.e., dehydration, weather-related problems (flash floods, lightning, hypothermia), the wrong sorts of vegetation (Cats-claw, Spanish bayonet, cacti), critters (rattlesnakes, scorpions, mountain lions), mine hazards, hanta virus, unstable rocky slopes, and, last but not least, Giardia. In Appendix B, they also offer a list of recommended hiking equipment.

Divided into four hiking sections, Hiking California’s Desert Parks offers 114 hike descriptions, beginning in the south in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, and continuing with Joshua Tree National Park, Mojave
Each of the four sections begins with a list of the hikes in the area, including a brief description of the features to be found on each, e.g., vista, canyon, historic site, oasis. Individual hike descriptions within each section include directions to the trailhead, the distance to be hiked, the hike’s difficulty, the condition of the trail, the best seasons to do the hike, and the USGS topo map(s) needed for the area. The only DPS climb listed is that of Telescope Peak, no doubt because it’s reached by trail.

I’ve recently completed several of the hikes listed and again I can assure you that the Cunninghams have done an excellent job in their descriptions. I do wonder, however, why they omitted Anza-Borrego’s Hellhole Canyon hike, one of the best in the area in my opinion.

I don’t have a copy of the 1st edition of Hiking California’s Desert Parks for comparison purposes, however the Cunninghams note that in this 2nd edition they include several new hikes, including the South Fork Hanaupah and Upper Hole-in-the-Wall hikes in Death Valley N.P., and the Lava Tube and Castle Peaks hikes in Mojave National Preserve.

**Desert Summits (2000, Revised 2006), Andy Zdon**

In my original review of Andy Zdon’s Desert Summits, appearing in the May/June 2001 issue of The Desert Sage, I wrote:

“What DPS member/Owens Valley resident/consulting geologist Zdon has done is start with Walt Wheelock’s classic Desert Peaks Guide(s), Part 1 & 2 (originally published by the La Siesta Press in 1971 & 1975 respectively) and, with Wheelock’s blessing (Walt, a former DPS chair, passed away in November 1997 at the age of 88), greatly expand and update the information contained therein. In doing so, Zdon has completed a monumental task as he considers more than 300 summits (versus Wheelock’s 178), in an area bounded by the Sweetwater Mountains, along the CA/NV border, to the north; the Virgin Mountains, along the NV/AZ border, to the east; and the Coyote Mountains, along the CA/Mexico border, to the south.”

“(Desert Summits is) a wonderful book. Every DPS member who doesn’t already own a copy should rush out and purchase one—right now!”

Well, what are you waiting for?”

In 2006, Zdon published a revised edition of Desert Summits, adding a handful of new summit climbs, including 7,620’ Harkless Peak, at the north end of the Inyo Mountains; 5,430’ Muddy Mountain, the highpoint of the Muddy Mountains, east of Las Vegas (by the way, 5,387’ Muddy Peak, in the same range, but slightly lower, is a DPS peak); 3,720’ Mercury Mountain and 3,237’ Ship Mountain, both in the Mojave National Preserve; and 5,518’ Eureka Peak in Joshua Tree National Park.

In his “Using this Guide” introductory, Zdon admits that “…once out in the desert, the hiker will find scores of peaks, named and unnamed, worthy of ascent, but not included in this guidebook.” That point was recently brought home when a high-pointer friend of mine asked if I could recommend a guide for a climb of 4,627’ Cady Mountain, the highpoint of the recently proposed Mojave National Monument. Well, naturally, I tuned to Desert Summits, where I found the peak not to be listed.

So, Andy, it looks like you might want to consider yet another revision.

**140 Great Hikes in and Near Palm Springs (2003, Revised 2007) Philip Ferranti; Maps by Hank Koenig**

In 1992, Philip Ferranti, a retired teacher and counselor living in Palm Desert, founded the Coachella Valley Hiking Club. In 1995, he published 75 Great Hikes In and Near Palm Springs, an instant boon for local hikers. Ferranti updated his guide in 2000, re-titling it 100 Great Hikes In and Near Palm Springs, a volume which I reviewed in the May/June 2001 Desert Sage as follows: “100 Great Hikes is a profusely illustrated, well-mapped volume, divided into nine geographic sections, namely: Mecca Hills/Box Canyon, Coachella Preserve, Desert Cities, Palm Springs and Indian Canyons, San Jacinto Mountains, Santa Rosa Mountains, Joshua Tree National Park, San Gorgonio Pass and Nearby, and lastly, Orocopia Mountain Wilderness and the Chuckwalla Mountains.”

“Having completed perhaps a quarter of the hikes described, I can truthfully report that this is a first-rate effort. The maps by Hank Koenig are much better than the rudimentary efforts contained in the earlier edition.”

Well, in 2003, Ferranti added even more hikes, creating 120 Great Hikes..., while in 2007, he came out with 140 Great Hikes In and Near Palm Springs.

Goodness knows where this will all end!

Should you decide to spend a weekend in the Palm Springs/Palm Desert area, you’ll find that any one of the above editions will offer a cornucopia of hiking suggestions. Unfortunately, Ferranti needs to publish yet another edition to describe the excellent new trails recently completed by the cities of Palm Desert and Rancho Mirage, i.e., the Mike Schuler and Herb Jeffries Trails (both of which connect with the ever-popular Bump & Grind), plus the northern extension of the Hopalong Cassidy Trail. The trailheads for all three of these new hikes can be found on Painters Path, just behind the shopping center at the southwest corner of Highway 111 and Fred Waring Dr., in Palm Desert.
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Ron Bartell, 1556 21st Street, Manhattan Beach, CA, 90266

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THE DESERT SAGE 22 July/August 2010
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DESSERT PEAKS SECTION

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

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EDITOR - Bob Sumner, PO Box 2354, Hawthorne, NV, 89415-2354
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