Hello, my fellow desert explorers! This is my very first column for the Section as your new Chair and I am grateful for those of you who voted for me.

I wish to do the best job that I can this coming year, and earn the respect that you have given me. In following our Past Chair, Bob Wyka, it will be a challenge to me to attain the lofty goals that were met in the 2011-2012 year.

Bob, my hat is off to you for all that you have done for the DPS! We have entered the electronic age in publication of this newsletter, and provided various avenues for membership feedback in the form of on-line surveys and voting. These changes are for the better, in line with other groups and climbing sections in the Angeles Chapter and the National Sierra Club.

I’d also like to recognize the many contributions of the other members of the Management Committee for the last year—we had a very cohesive group that included our returning members Ann Perkins (Vice Chair/Outings & Safety), Secretary (Ron Eckelmann), Treasurer (Pat Arredondo), Archives (Barbara Reber), Conservation (Virgil Popescu), Guidebook Editor (Daryn Dodge), Sage Mailer (Elaine Baldwin), Membership (Ron Bartell), Merchandiser (Gloria Miladin), Mountain Records (Daryn Dodge), and Webmaster (Larry Hoak). These are the pieces of the machine that keeps things running smoothly for our Section.

This year, also we are welcoming a new member to the Committee in Greg Gerlach. He is going to handle the Programs/Banquet position, and having done it a couple of times now, I wish him luck! OK, well, I will be helping him along with it as we progress into the year.

Now, there is one position that remains OPEN, that of the Sage Editor! This fine publication has been handled very adequately and appreciatively for some time now by Bob Wyka and Peter Christian—thanks to them for all the extra hard work they are doing!!

However, we really need to have someone take the reins over on this and go with it! This is the first priority of this season for me, to find someone to fill the spot. SO, PLEASE let me know (and copy Bob Wyka also) if you can help us out in this endeavor! Bob has information on how to put the thing together and will be more than happy to send it to you!

Also, we are looking for folks to put together more outings, without which our Section cannot accomplish its goals and purpose of exploring and protecting the desert ranges that we so love! If you are a leader and would like to assist here, let Ann Perkins know. I personally want to lead for DPS more in the next few years—it is much fun (besides being a way to schedule peaks I need to finish the list).

Have a wonderful summer, and Happy Trails to Y’all.
**Elected Positions**

**Chair**  
Jim Fleming  
538 Yarrow Drive  
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jimf333@att.net

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(818) 366-7578  
anne.perkins@csun.edu

**Secretary**  
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eckelmannr2@yahoo.com

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paarredo@verizon.net

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Los Angeles, CA, 90036-4912  
larryhoak@ca.rr.com

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**Cover Photo Credit...**
...goes to Ron Bartell...
...on a drive to Mt. Patterson (north of Bridgeport on the CA and NV border) for his third DPS list finish and Christine Mitchell’s second list finish led by Gary Craig and Mary McMannes, July 10, 2010.

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**The Desert Peaks Section**  
explores the desert mountain ranges of California and the Southwest, stimulates the interest of Sierra Club membership in climbing these ranges and aids in the conservation and preservation of desert wilderness areas.
TRIPS & EVENTS
JUNE 2012 — NOVEMBER 2012

AUG 4  SAT  DPS
Boundary Pk., Montgomery Pk.

AUG 5  SUN  LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS
Mr. Pinos Navigation

AUG 29- SEP 3  WED-MON  DPS
Mt. Jefferson, Wheeler Pk., Rudy Dome, Arc Dome

SEP 20-23  THU-SUN  DPS
North Guardian Angel, South Guardian Angel, Mountain of the Sun

SEP 23  SUN  LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS
Grinnell Ridge Navigation

OCT 14  SUN  DPS
DPS Potluck and Management Committee

NOV 4  SUN  DPS, WTC
Bridge Mountain

NOV 11  SUN  DPS
DPS Potluck and Management Committee

NOV 17-18  SAT-SUN  DPS, WTC
Castle Dome Pk., Signal Pk.

♦ AUG 4  SAT  DPS
I: Boundary Peak (13,140’), Montgomery Peak (13,441’): Join us on this very strenuous hike to summit a couple of spectacular peaks high up in the White Mountains north of Bishop, CA. The first peak is the high point of Nevada; from there we’ll cross the state line into California along a steep and rocky ridge to a peak high above all other DPS Emblem Peaks. Expect 12 miles round trip and 5,000’ elevation gain. Comfort hiking up very steep, loose, and rocky terrain at high elevation is essential. Contact leader at mkelliher746@gmail.com with recent conditioning and experience, including high altitude experience and vehicle/rideshare information, for trip status and details. Leaders: Mat Kelliher, Jim Fleming.

♦ AUG 5  SUN  LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS
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 Ldr: Robert Myers: rmyers@ix.netcom.com. Asst Leader: Kim Homan

♦ AUG 29-SEP 3  WED-MON  DPS
I: Mount Jefferson (11,941’), Wheeler Peak (13.064’), Ruby Dome (11,387’), Arc Dome (11,773’): Join us for a week in Nevada climbing these remote but relatively easy peaks - all are Class I except for Ruby Dome which is Class II. You may join us for some or all of the peaks. The tentative schedule is: Wed. meet at Tonopah at 8:00 am, drive to Mount Jefferson roadhead, climb is 2400’ gain and 4 mi. rt. After the climb drive to Great Basin National Park. Thurs. climb Wheeler Peak (3100’ gain, 8.5 mi. rt). Fri. leisurely day, explore the Lehmann Caves, then drive to Elko and find a camping place. Sat. climb Ruby Dome (9 mi rt, 5000’ gain). After the climb either camp near there or drive to Battle Mountain to camp. Sun. drive to the roadhead for Arc Dome and climb the peak (4600’gain, 12 mi.). Monday drive home. The peaks are not difficult, but the trip requires good conditioning and willingness to drive long distances. 4WD is minimal. Contact Ldr. Dave Perkins at david.perkins@csun.edu or Asst Ldr. Ann Perkins at ann.perkins@csun.edu with information on conditioning and experience, and for more details.

♦ SEP 20-SEP 23  THU-SUN  DPS
ER: North Guardian Angel (7,395’), South Guardian Angel (7,140’), Mountain of the Sun (6,722’): Join us for a 4 day E rated provisional bash out in the spectacular Zion National Park in Utah. In addition to the DPS classic Guardian Angel Peaks (NGA 800’ gain, 6 mi., SGA approx. 3100’ gain and 9.5 mi.) we’ll do an offbeat climb of Mountain of the Sun which towers above the Zion Lodge. And if that were not enough there’s the possibility of an

(Continued on page 5)
additional bonus peak Sunday before driving home! Must relish or at the very least be on speaking terms with exposure. Send email with Sierra Club #, medical form, resume detailing climbing experience and conditioning, and rideshare info to Leader: Matthew Hengst at mhengst@hotmail.com, Assistant: Tina Bowman.

- **SEP 23**
  - **SUN**
  - **LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, 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 experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare, to Leader: Robert Myers: rmmyers@ix.netcom.com, Assistant Leader: Phil Wheeler.

- **OCT 14**
  - **SUN**
  - **DPS**
  - **O: DPS Potluck and Management Committee Meeting:** Join us at the home of Elaine and Dave Baldwin for their famous Oktoberfest potluck. Committee meeting at 4:30 pm and potluck at 6:00 pm. Bring an item to share and a beverage of your choice. Contact Reservation: Elaine Baldwin (DWBaldwin@aol.com).

- **NOV 4**
  - **SUN**
  - **DPS, WTC**
  - **Provisional MR: Bridge Mountain (7003’):** Mountaineering outing for Sierra Club members only. Climb interesting desert peak in the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area near Las Vegas. Sat night car camp off 4WD road accessed from paved Lovell Canyon Road. Sun climb class 3 Bridge Mountain, 8mi round trip, 2,800’ (including 850’ on the return), then head home. Helmets and recent 3rd class rock climbing experience required. Send an email with recent experience and conditioning, H&W phones, and rideshare info to Leader: Sandy Lara (ssperling1@verizon.net). Co-Leader: Jack Kieffer.

- **NOV 11**
  - **SUN**
  - **DPS**
  - **O: DPS Management Committee Meeting and Potluck:** Join us at the home of Christine Mitchell & Ron Bartell in Manhattan Beach. Committee meeting at 4:30 pm and potluck at 6:00 pm. Bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. RSVP to Christine at: christinebartell@yahoo.com.

- **NOV 17-18**
  - **SAT-SUN**
  - **DPS, WTC**
  - **M/R: Castle Dome Peak (3788’), Signal Peak (4877’):** Mountaineering outing for Sierra Club members only. Climb two sought-after desert peaks in the Kofa Wilderness of SW Arizona. Sat climb class 3 Castle Dome Peak, 6 mi round trip, 2,100’ and then have happy hour back at car camp. Sun hike to Signal Peak, 4 mi round rip, 2,000’. Helmets and recent 3rd class rock climbing experience required. Send an e-mail with medical form, recent experience and conditioning, H&W phones, and rideshare info to Leader: Stephanie Smith at: ssmith@platinumequity.com, Assistant Leader: Mike Adams.

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In order to participate on one of the Sierra Club's outings, you will need to sign a liability waiver. If you would like to read a copy of the waiver prior to the outing, please see [http://sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms](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.
### Membership Summary

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### Activity Report

#### Achievements

Emblem

#583 Carol Hubbard 7/2000

*Telescope Peak*

#### New Subscribers

- John Beringer 1 year
- Ray Cheeney 1 year
- Ronald Richardson 1 year

#### Sustaining Renewals

- Bob Henderson 1 year
- Gordon MacLeod 1 year
- Robert M. Myers 5 years
- Dave & Ann Perkins 2 years
- Bob Wyka 3 years

#### Renewals

- Jim Adler 1 year
- Misha Askren MD 1 year
- Randy & Joyce Bernard 1 year
- Lynne Buckner 1 year
- Winnette Butler 1 year
- Diane Dunbar 1 year
- Rudy Fleck 1 year
- Bill Hauser 1 year
- Kevin & Lisa Heapy 1 year
- Sandy Lara 1 year
- Ken Linville 1 year
- Edward H. Lubin 1 year
- Don Raether 1 year

#### Donations

- Anne Rolls 2 years
- Julie Rush 1 year
- Kent Santelman 3 years
- Jon Skaglund 2 years
- Sharon Marie Wilcox 1 year

- $100 from Gordon MacLeod

### SAGE EDITOR WANTED

The Desert Sage position is still open. We need someone with creative skills to continue the high quality newsletter our members deserve.

The Desert Sage has been produced since the 1940’s and needs its legend to continue.

If interested, please contact Bob Wyka at r.wyka@att.net.

### NOTICE FROM SAGE MAILER

*Need copies of old Sage’s? Contact Sage mailer Elaine Baldwin at: [DWBaldwin@aol.com](mailto:DWBaldwin@aol.com) for copies of most Sages going back to 2000 (maybe even earlier). Going once….going twice….then into the recycle bin!*
In Memoriam
Dr. M. Marlin Clark
Contributed By Campy Camphausen

We missed our friend and fellow Desert Peaks Section climber, Dr. M. Marlin Clark, since his retirement in Boise, ID and his passing there about a year and a half ago. He was “The Doctor in Trona” who joined us in Sierra Club climbs during the ’70s to the early ’90s.

We have remained in contact with him and his wife Donetta over the years, and visited them in Boise after Marlin contracted Parkinson’s. Marlin climbed with the whole bunch of DPS/SPS friends—Ron, Barbara, Joe and Betty, Duane, Mary, George, Dick, Steve, myself, and many more.  

(Images of Dr. Marlin Clark)

From Ridgecrestca.com, December 27, 2010:

He is survived by his wife of 28 years, Donetta Collett Clark. He is also survived by his daughters by his first wife, Patricia Louise Bowden, and their families: Patrice Lyn Des Pois, MD., husband, Jon and son, Patrick Beau of Rough & Ready; and Marla Denise Clark of San Francisco; his step-children, Cathy Reichman; Cary Hattabaugh and wife, Yvonne; Eric Hattabaugh and wife, Julie; Tim Hattabaugh and wife, Susan; 15 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Dr. Clark was born Nov. 30, 1926, in Glendale, the only child of Merrel Everet and Phoebe Hines Clark. He graduated from Glendale High in 1944 and left the next morning for Pacific Union College in Northern California.

His education was interrupted April 13, 1945, when he was called to duty in the Army, as a surgical technician assigned to a hospital ship in the Asiatic/Pacific Theater. After discharge, he returned to college and completed his degree; entered Loma Linda University Medical School obtaining his MD in 1953.

Upon completing his residency, he opened his own practice in Delano, where he stayed for 18 years. Known as an excellent diagnostician, he did everything from deliver babies to stitching dog bites on humans and dogs.

Dr. Clark eventually accepted a position as Medical Director for Kerr McGee Chemical Company in Trona, a position he held until retiring in 1994. He then moved to Tehachapi and continued to serve the various Indian reservations in the area. He moved to Boise Idaho, Donetta's home town, in 1999.

Services were held at Timber Creek Ward (LDS church), 7200 Duncan Ln, (north off of W. State St.), Boise, ID, Monday, Dec. 20, 2010, at 1:30 p.m. Internment to follow at Idaho State Veterans Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research, Church Street Station, PO Box 780 NY, NY., 10008.
As the guests arrived, they were given an attractive plastic nametag hung on a convenient neck cord – an innovation of Chairman Bob Wyka. It eliminated the self-stick tags used in the past, but which never seemed to stay in place for long. The guests were also given a dinner ticket confirming their previous selection of sirloin steak, salmon or vegetarian Wellington.

Next, the guests passed tables of attractive donated items to be bid on in a silent auction, which replaced the traditional raffle. At the far end was a table of donated mountaineering books offered for sale at a tiny fraction of their original price. Meanwhile, a history of the DPS – starting with photographs of founder Chester Versteeg – was projected onto a nearby screen, next to the DPS flag.

Midway through the social hour guests ventured outside or gazed through the large wall of windows to see the moon block out most of the evening sun, leaving only a small crescent of sun visible at maximum eclipse.

Bob planned that this year’s banquet would not extend late into the night, so he had the appointed time for each event printed prominently on the banquet program. Consequently, at 6:53 p.m. – only three minutes behind the scheduled time – he called the attendees together and welcomed them to the banquet.

Dinner started promptly at 7:00 p.m. The restaurant staff served it quickly and without the “who gets what entrée” confusion that frequently occurs. This seems to confirm the benefit of distributing dinner selection tickets as the guests...
Most people had finished eating when Bob announced that bidding for the silent auction would end in a few minutes at 7:50 p.m. He then gave a PowerPoint review of DPS history, observing that what started as a small group of friends climbing a few desert peaks with no formal organization, has evolved into a highly structured activity now in its 71st year and focused on a list of 96 peaks located in four different states.

Next came a modified version of the traditional “standing-and-sitting” ritual. It recognized new members, new emblem holders, and all members according to their years of membership. “Last standing” was Barbara Lilley who has been a member for 61 years. During a lifetime of climbing, she has reached the summit of more than 4,000 peaks, and has been honored with the Sierra Club’s prestigious Francis P. Farquhar Mountaineering Award.

Absent but warmly remembered were Rich Gnagy and Henry Heusinkveld, who passed away last year. Both were long-time members, and both had finished the DPS list, Rich twice!

Bob gave special recognition and thanks to the rated leaders who have led for the DPS. He then called Tina Bowman forward and presented her with a certificate recognizing her as only the ninth person to lead at least 50 of the listed DPS peaks. As Tina was about to return to her seat, he surprised her with an attractive plaque honoring her with the Bill T. Russell Mountaineering Award. It recognizes not
only her extensive mountaineering accomplishments, but also her wider service to the Sierra Club.

Bob thanked the officers and members of the extended management committee who have served with him. Then he introduced the new officers by reviving a ritual from the earliest days of the DPS: he removed a gold crown from his head and placed it on the head of incoming chair Jim Fleming, signifying the passing of DPS leadership.

Jim announced the new officers and Extended Management Committee:

**Officers**
- Chair: Jim Fleming
- Vice Chair: Ann Perkins
- Treasurer: Pat Arredondo
- Secretary: Ron Eckelmann
- Programs: Greg Gerlach

**Extended Management Committee**
- Desert Sage Editor: Open
- Desert Sage Mailer: Elaine Baldwin
- Conservation Chair: Virgil Popescu
- Peaks Guide Editor: Daryn Dodge
- Archives/History: Barbara Reber
- Mountaineering Committee: Ann Perkins (Chair), Ron Bartell, Tina Bowman, & Brian Smith
- Merchandising Chair: Gloria Miladin
- Membership Chair: Ron Bartell
- Webmaster: Larry Hoak

(Continued on page 11)
The winners of the silent auction were announced, and, following a 10-minute break, program presenter Daria Malin was introduced. Daria’s program was entitled “A Love Affair with the Inyos: A Double Traverse & Other Solo Explorations”. It focused on the extremely rugged and seldom visited canyons carved into the east side of the Inyo Range – the high desert mountains on the east side of the Owens Valley, opposite Mt. Whitney and the other high peaks of the Southern Sierras. The great length, elevation drop, steepness, dense brush, variable water supply and isolation of these canyons present an alluring challenge; but they also expose the solo adventurer to many risks that must be anticipated and carefully planned for in advance.

Everyone seemed to have a great time, thanks to banquet chair Jim Fleming. Jim closed the banquet by expressing our thanks to Bob for all his hard work as chairman. The banquet ended at 10:10 p.m. -- just 10 minutes beyond the scheduled time.
Two Weeks in the Mojave
January / February 2012
By James Barlow & Keith Christensen

Keith and I had some available weekends at the end of January and beginning of February so we planned a few desert peaks, both from the DPS List and the P2k List. For those who may have missed P2k definitions in the last issue or two of the Sage, P2k is a peak with at least 2,000 feet of prominence, or elevation gain from the saddle connecting it to the next highest peak. There are about 1,200 in the lower 48, with 164 In California. There are over 50 P2ks on the DPS List, so DPS folks are usually well on their way towards completing P2k peaks in every state that DPS has peaks in.

We started our first weekend by meeting in Victorville and consolidating to the van to head out past Barstow towards Clipper on the 40. For our first weekend out in the desert, we set our sights on Clipper for Saturday and Old Dad for Sunday.

I was up in Northern California climbing when I was contacted by Janice Gnagy. I arranged to meet her in Sacramento and we shared a couple of hours of looking at pictures of Rich on my computer. She insisted that I take about six boxes of his books and Alpine Journals which I will distribute to all who wish.

Their two sons, Matt and John, are fighting over possession of Rich’s famous Sierra Cup and we had a good laugh about that!

Editor’s Note: I received the following note from Janice:

Dear Bob, thank you so much for sending the copy of the Desert Sage with the article about Rich. I really appreciate you taking the time to mail this to me. The article about Rich is so nicely done—and what perfect selection of pictures. They really typify him. In his later years, he really enjoyed the desert and the DPS group, and spent a good amount of his time visiting and hiking in the desert or planning his trips. It was a big part of his life. Thanks again for sending the Sage. Janice

Clipper is one of the P2k peaks that would make a fine DPS peak. We stopped about 30 minutes east of Barstow to camp for the night with the intention of getting an early start and driving the rest of the way to Clipper the following morning. We were up before first light and on our way east towards

(Continued on page 13)
Essex Road. Finding the start point for Clipper is quite easy. Exit I-40 at Essex Rd (same exit as Edgar/Mitchell) and head south about half a mile. We actually parked along the side of Essex Rd, but there is a big dirt pull-out another ¼ mile past where we parked that would have been better. From Essex Rd, we cut across the open desert back west to the large canyon that heads into the heart of the Clipper Mountain Wilderness Area from the northeast. This canyon is followed along its most prominent path all the way to the very top which takes you to within a quarter mile of the summit. There are a few sections where due to the meandering wash, we exited to the left of the wash to save some distance. The summit has fine views like nearly every other peak we have ever done.

Since this peak is not on the DPS list, it is less visited than most of our other peaks. We did see a lot of the usual suspects in the summit register as always. After lunch on top, we retraced our steps back to the van, right back down the main wash. From Essex Road, we headed back on to I-40 West to get off at the next exit, Kelbaker Road. From here, we followed the standard driving directions to Old Dad to make camp for the night. We found it ok in the dark, so the directions are still good from our reading of them.

We were up with the sun again and got an early start on Old Dad. We selected Old Dad for Sunday because Keith needed a shorter hike to make it to the SPS Banquet and I figured I would spend the afternoon in Victorville with my son. We followed the standard DPS route up the peak, which is a very enjoyable Class 2 if you stick to the main rib. Flipping through the register revealed the usual DPS hikers and 1-2 ranting anti-Sierra Club idiots. Old Dad has plenty of trip reports and ascents, so there is not much more that Keith and I can add to the info already out there. We were out early, and after lunch at the Mad Greek in Baker, Keith was off to the SPS banquet and I was catching a round of Frisbee golf in Victorville with my son.

Our second weekend took us to some un-listed desert peaks that are on the above-mentioned P2k list. First up was Tiefort Peak, a peak that has extremely difficult access due to its location onboard Fort Irwin. Luckily, my ID got us past the gate and Keith and I killed them with kindness to talk our way on to the peak. After a dull safety brief and a number of bureaucratic road blocks by some rude contractors, we were on our way. Now I remember why I joined the Navy – I can hike peaks on military bases fairly easily. Tiefort was a rather unremarkable peak as we followed old power lines up to a false summit, then followed a nice ridge to the actual summit, which is covered in all kinds of mechanical junk in typical military base fashion. We saw a helicopter on the summit landing pad when we were on the false summit, but it had departed by the time we arrived. We achieved our objective, so we hiked down and departed the base for dinner in Barstow at a decent Mexican food place. If you want to hike Tiefort, there are a bunch of rules, and you have to arrange the trip in advance. It’s a pain, but it can be done. I would recommend getting as large a group together as possible to avoid multiple requests to the base.

Following our success on Tiefort and obligatory victory dinner in Barstow, we were back on I-40 east, familiar territory from the previous weekend. Our next objective was Providence BM in Mojave Nat’l Preserve. Providence is another P2k and a fine desert peak, as good as many on the list. We followed the Dennis Poulin and Daryn Dodge trip reports from peakbagger.com to approach and hike the peak.
from the east side from Essex Road. We started around 3,600 ft, about 2km due east of Warm Spring on the topo map. There is a wash here that stopped the van, but the road really ends here anyway, so there is no point in driving further. We aimed southwest towards the old railroad grade on the topo map, following it for a short distance until it gets on to the main east ridge of the peak that goes directly to the summit. We followed this ridge on its almost due-west course until it joins the north ridge. At this point the ridge cuts southwest to the summit. The summit register has a number of familiar DPS names in the register, some of which were up there scouting a provisional peak for the list it seems. After the usual lunch stop on top, we headed west to an interesting rock feature which hiker Eric Kassan named “Decaying Molar.”

It was a fun block of rock to climb and enjoy the view of Granite & Silver Peaks to the west. Following our bonus bump, we headed north along the main ridge of the range to snag a second bonus bump and make a loop out of the hike, a peak identified as “6,043” on the National Geographic Trails Illustrated Map. This bonus bump is just northwest of Warm Springs. From here, we followed the ridge first east then southeast, then east again back to the car. Providence was a great hike, taking the better part of the day to complete the full loop with bonus bumps. We made our way back out the dirt roads to Essex Road and headed home. Since we did Tiefort on a Friday and Providence on a Saturday, I spent Sunday with my son at Rainbow Basin Nat’l Natural Landmark and Calico Early Man Site, both near Barstow. If you have an extra day in the Mojave after a DPS hike, check out these two interesting desert sites!

In summary, two great weekends in the Mojave with four peaks under our belt, only one of which was on the DPS list. If you have finished the list or find yourself in the Mojave with a weekend to kill, we highly recommend the unlisted peaks: Clipper Mtn & Providence BM.

Sheep and Martinez Mountains
April 21-22, 2012
By Tina Bowman & Rudy Fleck, Leaders

We had eight participants joining the leaders at the Cactus Spring trailhead-- veteran DPSer John Ide and seven WTC students: Rachel Cushing, Chris Doyle, Jim Dunn, Gary Hughes, Kris Kuhlman, Francesca Marcus, and Rick Miller. Uh oh. Not only was the weather going to be quite warm, but it looked like I was the oldest and most broken down member of the group. So my cover excuse was that we would move at a slow but steady pace because of the heat, hiding the fact that I could move faster only if chased by rabid jackalopes or their ilk. I’m sure everyone saw through that excuse, but they were a very generous lot.

They were so generous that they good naturedly went along when I led us the wrong way virtually right off the bat when we started about 7:15. The road went one way and what looked like a trail seemed to parallel it, both in the general direction of the old dolomite mine. Some post was lying split on the ground by the side of the “trail,” but there was no sign on it, and I assumed the two would link up. Wrong. Later we saw many more of these posts with “Trail” carved into them. Too bad we hadn’t seen one before; I might have gotten a clue from it. (On the way back, I didn’t see any lettering on this broken rail.) Take the trail on the right. Of course, I had no memory of the correct way to go from the previous two times I was there, in 1983 and 2005, though presumably I followed the trail. What we did is follow the road till it ended rather abruptly with a view of the mine southeast of us. The trail is on the north side of the mine. Oops. After various apologies, I led us around various pointy plants down the slope and
up a small drainage to meet the trail just east of the mine. Ok, that’s better. Let’s just say I was teaching the WTCers a lesson that they should always pay attention and that leaders are not always right. Besides, they got a bit x-c experience as a taste of more to come when we climbed the peaks.

Clearly I was going slowly when the whole group was together on one another’s heels whenever I led. Two members might have been slower had I persuaded them not to carry extra gallons of water from the car. Maybe, but doubtful. It was bad enough to load up at Horsethief Creek for the two miles to our camp near Cactus Spring, let alone carry lots of extra water about three more miles. We weighed packs loaded with water: the heaviest was 52 pounds, lightest 36. Rudy and I both had 48. On we plodded up out of the canyon and into the wash. By the way, before we reached the stream, we crossed two tiny streams, still flowing helped by the past weekend’s rain and snow up high. Rudy thought I’d missed our watering spot when we crossed the first one, so I enjoyed calling back, “Not yet, Rudy!” when we crossed the second one. At our camping spot at 10:45, we took an hour to set up camp, eat something, and get ready for our assault on Sheep.

Off we went for Sheep, keeping an eye out for Pat Vaughn’s lost GPS. No sign of it. We took several nice, long breaks in a bit of shade and finally wandered to the summit at 1:40. When we had a breeze, it didn’t feel so hot; when we didn’t, yikes. Though I had a scale with me for the outing, I didn’t have a thermometer. My guess is high 80s, low 90s—that’s what the NOAA forecast said when I clicked on various points of our route. It was 104 in Palm Desert below us. We stayed about half an hour on the summit, but without shade lingering wasn’t all that enticing. Having offered to turn the lead over to someone else, I was pleased that Francesca said she’d give it a go. So down we went with Rudy staying beside her. I trailed along in back. We were back in camp about 3:40.

At 5:00 we gathered for happy hour—lots of goodies making the rounds for an hour or so. Half the group—Rudy, Kris, Rachel, Chris, and Gary—decided to go back to the stream for more water and left on the four-mile round trip about 6:15, back at 8:20. Francesca and I were starting to imagine all sorts of things that could happen and were quite relieved to see the headlamps bobbing our way.

Sunday morning we hit the trail just after 6:00, enjoying the hiking before the sun reached us. Rachel went back to camp not long after the trail turned south towards the saddle west of Martinez, having a foot problem. Not too far below the saddle, Kris decided to wait for us, a bit concerned about the hike out in the heat. Two wise women. I was dragging along behind the group since Rudy was in the lead. We had a bit of miscommunication when I said we could decide between the gully and the ridge route when we got to the base of the gully. What I was thinking of was the DPS guide, which suggests the prominent gully on the north or the ridge just east of it. The ridge Rudy was talking about and led us on was the one from the saddle (described as very brushy in the DPS guide) often used by the HPS. Ah ha! It’s very well ducked and not very brushy—a good route. Rudy was on top of the summit block at 8:40. Some of the group stayed below. About 9:15 we started down, with me leading—so we were all pretty much bunched up again. After a break at the saddle, we soon picked up Kris and tooled along back to camp (Rudy was in the lead again).
TRIP REPORTS - continued...

We were all ready to go and back on the trail at 12:25, bunched since I was leading. Everyone said they were happy about the slow pace, but they were a very kind and perhaps not very truthful group. We pushed through the heat back to the stream and had a lovely break there. Many of us dipped hats and bandanas in the refreshing water before I led the plod up, mostly, back to the cars. We had some steep sections, usually where there was no breeze, which made keeping on the move challenging. One member of the group was flagging, but that was the heat’s doing, not my pace. Besides, we did almost 3800’ gain and eleven miles or so on Sunday after 2500’ and eight or more (squiggle factor) on Saturday, several miles with pretty heavy packs. We took some nice breaks to help us out the last three miles and admired the wildflowers to keep our minds off the heat. Some were talking about ice cream as a post-outing treat.

We were back to the cars about 3:40 and soon on our way home. Thanks to having a fine co-leader and a great bunch of participants. Everyone did really well.

THE ROCKS WE CLIMB

By Bob Michael

PICACHO DEL DIABLO (and Risco, Pescadores, and, by extension, Jacumba, Sombrero, Indianhead, Rabbit, Martinez, Rosa Point, and all the HPS peaks in the Peninsular Ranges)

In the last issue of the Desert Sage we looked at Pinacate and its genesis related to the opening of the Sea of Cortez by the nascent seafloor spreading zone that has torn Baja away from the North American plate and will eventually tear it, and western California, geographically away from the North American continent*. So…it’s only natural that we mosey on over to the western side of all this action and see the peaks it’s made for our pleasure in Baja and southwestern California, U.S.A. Let’s do some megathinking….much fun….we play God and push around chunks of the planet!

I’m sure many DPS climbers who have done Big Picacho from the now-less-traveled eastern desert side have marveled at how much its granite battle-ments soaring out of a desert valley look like the eastern side of the Sierra…and, close up, its rock is the same familiar Sierra granite. This is no coincidence. The wall of granites on the east side of the Californias from Cabo San Lucas to Lassen County (broken only by the Transverse Ranges between San Gorgonio Pass and Tejon Pass, where the plate boundary makes an “end run” around the southern terminus of the Sierra block) is proof positive that the southwestern margin of our continent was once the top of a very active subduction zone which probably looked (at least geologically) a whole lot like most of the length of Chile today. This was when the East Pacific Rise was out in the Pacific (as any proper oceanic spreading zone should be), slowly generating new oceanic floor and sending its product plate eastward, where it encountered the western edge of North America, passively being pushed west by seafloor spreading thousands of miles east along the Mid-Atlantic Rise. (Here’s a little mind-blower….Reykjavik is, essentially, on the same plate as Yucca Valley!) Little problem – Earth can’t expand, so some shuffling is going to happen. The heavy, waterlogged basaltic oceanic seafloor, made mostly of heavier iron-rich minerals but carrying quartz-rich sediment eroded off the continental margin, is shoved beneath the high-riding, comparatively lighter continent, basically a block of silica-rich “slag”. When the descending oceanic plate gets deep enough – well inland from the coast – it begins to melt, aided by the water it contains, at unimaginable pressures and temperature. Although the melt starts out pretty much basaltic, it mixes with the quartz-and feldspar-rich continental sediments that went down with it. Slowly this physically and chemically aggressive melt begins to work its way upward, assimilating chunks of continent into the magma chamber, all the while becoming more and more “sialic” (term for silicon & aluminum-rich continental crust). Remember, also, that this upward intrusion takes place over mil-

(Continued on page 17)
lions of years, so, as minerals crystallize from the liquid, the heavier iron-rich ones tend to settle out towards the bottom of the chamber, in a process called “fractionation”. So, given sufficient time, we can derive almost white Sierra granite by a “distillation” from what begins as black basaltic stuff. Meanwhile, a chain of volcanoes blow off at the ground surface, as I vividly observed last year in the Atacama. All this was taking place during the Mesozoic – the Age of Dinosaurs.

These granitic melts intrude into the “country rock” – limestones, sandstones, shales, volcanics, what have you – and cool and solidify, another mega-year process. (Some remnants of the tortured and cooked country rock can still be found in places like HPS Red Tahquitz in the San Jacintos and Red Kaweah and Bloody Mountain in the Sierra.) If, much later, processes uplift this granitic complex, or “batholith” high enough, erosion will strip off the cover of country rock. All we need now is a few more eons of erosion to carve this granite into peak lists! Ideally, we have the help of glaciers, as in the Sierra, but anyone who has climbed the Devil’s Picacho can testify that you don’t need glaciers to make a spectacular peak.

We need a mechanism to do this uplifting, and rift zones can do the job splendidly, with their high heat flows and upward drive. The Ruwenzori in central Africa, on the west side of the Great Rift Valley, have been uplifted to over 16,000 feet by rift-related faulting. The west side of the Sangre de Cristos in southern Colorado is another example, on the east side of the Rio Grande Rift. Although the actual spreading zone in the Gulf is to the east of the Baja sierras, the region of crustal upheaval and faulting extends for some distance outward from the rift axis. (The Sierra is uplifted on the western margin of a broadly diffuse spreading zone that encompasses the Basin and Range...Better not get into that now; more on this later.) Thus, the Gulf seafloor spreading zone is not only an agent of lateral motion, but mountain uplift. We can imagine Mt. San Jacinto as the big locomotive at the head of a mighty freight train of granite slowly and inexorably driving northwest. However, this is just a scenic, not actual, metaphor, as San Jac isn’t “pulling” anything; it’s passively being driven northwest by plate motion, in a regime of compressional (San Andreas) rather than extensional (Gulf) tectonics to the south. Might this be the reason San Gorgonio, the part of North America that the “granite train” is impacting, has been thrust up so very high? Told you megathought was fun! (Especially when you don’t have to scientifically prove your speculations.)

The Sierra de Cucapa (Cerro Pescadores) is also granite, showing that the underlying granite batholith doesn’t end at the eastern boundary faults of the Sierra Juarez/Sierra San Martir; a smaller but similar fault has uplifted this block, which ends at Cerro Centinela just south of the border. It’s somewhat analogous to the Alabama Hills, a little fault block of Sierra granite east of the main escarpment. To the north, the San Andreas northwestward (right-lateral) shear motion becomes even more splintered into a number of parallel faults; uplift along these faults has given us the more complex topography of Anza-Borrego, which still has the “backbone” uplift (HPS San Ysidro and Combs; Indianhead) but several parallel ranges, most notably the Santa Rosas with HPS Toro and everyone’s favorite death march, Big Rabbit!

*More megathought: the west coast of Mexico has an anomalous “pocket” centered on Puerto Vallarta which sure looks to me like the place the south end of Baja pulled out of the mainland when the spreading began. About 320 miles separation between Cabo San Lucas and Puerto Vallarta. Get a map and check it out.

FOOTNOTE to my Humphreys Peak article (SAGE #337) I recently read a paper that estimated the pre-blast height of Humphreys as over 16,000 feet. Too bad we missed it!

ARGYLE SWEATER
By Scott Hiblum

ONE-WAY TICKET TO GALVESTON
FLYING MONKEY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16
Walter Van Tilburg Clark loved Nevada. The author often described his home state in evocative, near-poetic terms, for example:

It’s 1885, and two cowboys are riding down an abandoned stage road leading into a small Nevada cow town. “It was a switch-back road, gutted by the run-off of the winter storms, and with brush beginning to grow up in it again since the stage had stopped running. In the pockets under the red earth banks, where the wind was cut off, the spring sun was hot as summer, and the air was full of a hot, melting pine smell. Rivulets of water trickled down shining on the sides of the cuts...On the outside turns, though, the wind got to us and dried the sweat under our shirts and brought up...the smell of the marshy green valley. In the west the heads of a few clouds showed, the kind that come up with the early heat, but they were lying still, and over us the sky was clear and deep.”

The Ox-Bow Incident

Tim Hazard, the protagonist, has hiked to a small lake in a high meadow south of Mt. Rose: “It was a still, Indian-summer day, into which the mountain breathed softly and coolly now and then. When the air was quiet it was warm and full of the smell of hot shale, resin and black meadow sod. The water was glassy and black then, and mysterious shapes glowed with a soft gold in its depths. When a breeze came, the color of sky would play lightly over the surface of this dark splendor.”

The City of Trembling Leaves

“The snow mist broke open over them, and islands of light began to glide across the meadows to the southeast, and then the islands of light became islands of shadow that fled over the white expanse and diagonally up the eastern hills, to vanish in the blue...The whole length of the lower range showed from there, stippled black with timber the wind had cleaned, and the main range loomed above it like a white wall, with the last dark clouds rising thinly out of it here and there.”

The Track of the Cat

Walter Van Tilburg Clark (1909-1971), was, for a decade, a prominent name in the field of Western American literature. His first novel, The Ox-Bow Incident, published in 1940, received critical acclaim, including a New Yorker review in which Clifton Fadiman called the book a “masterpiece,” so perfectly done that “it seems to deny the possibility of growth on the part of the author.”

In 1945, Clark published The City of Trembling Leaves, a 690-page volume which, although he denied it, was highly autobiographical. The reviews of The City were mixed, however. As Clark’s biographer, Jackson J. Benson, notes, “One reviewer called it ‘formless and sprawling,’ and another, ‘uneven and generally too long.’” Others were more favorable. A reviewer for the Boston Daily Globe wrote in part, “...it is an imperfect but vital piece of work, tremendously moving, long-winded but never dull. It is not tight and compact, but formless and sprawling, as is America.”

Clark’s third novel, The Track of the Cat, was published in 1949. A dark story, circa 1900, of a dysfunctional family stranded on a lonely Nevada ranch during an early October snow storm, the book recounts the hunt for a mountain lion which had attacked the family’s cattle. The Track of the Cat, Benson wrote, “is a haunted and haunting story, one that is likely to

(Continued on page 19)
stay with the reader for a long time.” Receiving mostly favorable reviews, the novel had strong sales.

In 1950, at the age of forty-one, Clark’s *The Watchful Gods and Other Stories*, a collection of nine short stories and one novella, became his last major publication. Although containing stories previously published in magazines such as *The Atlantic*, *The Saturday Evening Post* and the *New Yorker*, one or two of which are still included in American short story anthologies, Benson noted that “sadly (TWG&OS) got little attention and had small sales.”

And then it was over. Clark stopped publishing. Although he lived for another twenty years his creative career had come to an end. Many people wondered why? With the help of Jackson Benson’s 2004 biography, let’s take a look at Clark’s life to see what happened.

**THE OX-BOW MAN (2004), Jackson J. Benson**

Walter Van Tilburg Clark was born in East Orland, Maine on August 3, 1909. He lived on the East Coast until he was eight, at which time his father, Walter Ernest Clark, accepted the job as President of the University of Nevada, and moved his family to Reno. As his biographer, Jackson J. Benson, notes: “In those days, Reno was a railroad and college town, one that had not yet welcomed divorcées or high rollers. ‘The Biggest Little City in the World,’ as it called itself, did have some tourist trade by its proximity to Lake Tahoe and the Sierra Nevada. The city had the rough district of saloons and bordellos and a bustling banking and commercial area, but for most residents it was a sleepy large town that housed the state’s university.”

Walter V. T. Clark attended Reno public schools and then continued on to earn a B.A. and an M.A. in English at the University of Nevada. While still in graduate school, Clark met his wife-to-be, Barbara Morse, and in 1933 the couple was married by Barbara’s father, a retired Presbyterian minister, in Elmira, New York.

Accepting a teaching fellowship at the University of Vermont, Clark, with a thesis on the poetry of California poet, Robinson Jeffers, received, with honors, his second M.A. The following year, the young couple lived in an old farmhouse near Lake Champlain, “shoveling snow, drawing water, splitting wood, and writing.” In 1935, the Clarks moved to the “lovely old village of Cazenovia in the Finger Lakes region of New York,” where, except for one year off spent writing, Walter, until 1945, taught English at the Cazenovia Central School.

The Clark’s ‘sabbatical’ year (1941-1942) was made possible by royalties accrued from *The Ox-Bow Incident*, which Clark penned in the late 1930’s, and the proceeds from the sale of the movie rights to the story. Spending the year with Barbara and their, by then, two children, Barbara and Robert, in Indian Springs, NV, Walter completed the first half of *The City of Trembling Leaves*. In the fall of 1942, at the end of their sojourn, the Clark’s returned to Cazenovia, where Walter finished *Trembling Leaves*, and where once again he taught at Cazenovia Central School.

In late 1946, following a brief stay at Mabel Dodge Luhan’s art colony in Taos, NM, the Clark family moved to the Reno area—“back in the country where I’d grown up, and which I loved most”—where Walter started *The Track of the Cat* and finished his novella, *The Watchful Gods*.

Three years later, in the fall of 1949, the Clark family moved again, this time to nearby Virginia City, “…the ultimate Western town, a fitting setting for what, in many ways, was the ultimate Western man. It was dear to his heart, the one place above all in which (Walter) felt comfortable.” Accepting a low-paying job at the site of the 1890s Comstock Lode boom, Walter began teaching English at the local grade school and high school.

But to earn a decent living an author must produce a stream of new material, teach at a proper salary, or juggle a combination of the two. In Walter Clark’s case, because he had begun to...
experience serious writer’s block, he was compelled to teach. Trading on his repute as a successful writer, Clark began a multi-year, multi-locale career as a creative writing instructor.

Between 1950 and 1961, Clark, sometimes with his family, often without, taught at, in chronological order, the Writers’ Workshop at the University of Iowa (1951-52), the University of Montana (1953-54), Stanford University (in Wallace Stegner’s creative famed writing program, 1954), San Francisco State (1956-60 & 1961-62), and the Center for Advanced Studies at Wesleyan University (1960-61). Between college stints, he frequently spoke at writers conferences.

In 1962, the University of Nevada offered Clark the job of researching and writing a biography of Alfred Doten, a man described as a “California 49er and rancher, Nevada silver miner and long-time Comstock (Virginia City and neighboring Gold Hill) newspaper reporter and editor.” Having acquired seventy-nine volumes of Doten’s journals and other materials, the University enlisted Clark to produce a volume on the Nevada pioneer as a part of the State centennial, to be celebrated in 1974.

Writer’s block, however, remained a big problem for Clark. Although he completed editing Doten’s massive journals, he never really got started on the actual biography. As Benson speculates, “consciously or unconsciously, the work on Doten ...seemed to give him ‘cover,’ or an excuse for not getting back to his creative work.

Benson cites passage after passage gleaned from letters that Clark sent to his wife and son in which he admits that, after beginning a new effort and finishing only a few pages, he tore them up.

“Wallace Stegner has speculated that Clark’s lapse into publication silence during the last twenty years of his life may have come from a ‘perfectionism’—Clark himself thought that he was too much of a perfectionist.”

In the end, Walter Clark “was most proud...of his record of more than thirty years of devoted teaching...as proud of being a teacher in a small high school as he was of being a professor teaching in a university. He didn’t give a damn about fame or money or status. He lived to serve others, and he did.”

Both Barbara and Walter Clark died in Virginia City; Barbara on November 12, 1969, and Walter, two years later, on November 10, 1971.

THE OX-BOW INCIDENT (1940), Walter Van Tilburg Clark
It’s the spring of 1885 and the two cowboys, Gil Carter and Art Croft, introduced in the opening passage of this review, ride into the small Nevada town of Bridger’s Wells. After long months on the winter range, they have pay in their pockets and they’re looking for whiskey, a good barroom brawl, and a few days of relaxation. Unfortunately, they’re in for an unpleasant surprise.

The same afternoon, after Art and Gil have settled into the local saloon and downed a couple of drinks, a rider rushes in to report that rustlers have shot and killed a well-respected local rancher and driven off several of his cattle.

Because the sheriff is out of town, a group of twenty-some citizens, led by Major Tetley, an ex-Confederate officer, sets off—in spite of a plea by Davies, the owner of the general store, to wait for the sheriff to return and properly deputize a posse—to find the and lynch the offenders.

What happens next is not pretty, certainly nothing akin to the popular Westerns of the day. Of The Ox-Bow Incident, Clark once said, “I had become irked at the way the West was treated in popular fiction and the moving pictures, with two-gun cowboys stuffed with Sunday-school virtues, and heroines who could go through a knock-down without getting a curl misplaced...I decided to write a Quixotesque ‘western’ that I hoped in my youthful enthusiasm would make the whole thing look so silly that people would stop writing or reading such junk.”
THE CITY OF TREMBLING LEAVES (1945), Walter Van Tilburg Clark

While *The Ox-Bow Incident* was praised for its tight structure, *The City of Trembling Leaves* was panned for its lack thereof. One critic pointed out that the novel “employs at least five distinct styles: lyric, dramatic, ironic, satiric and farcical.”

To this reviewer, however, Clark’s 690-page novel is so readable that he has plowed through it twice (although with at least 10 years between readings). The story follows the life of Tim Hazard from his arrival as a child in Reno to his maturity as a husband, father and composer, and back in Reno. In the coming of age story, Tim falls into chaste love with three girls/women and has an affair with another. He manages to shake off his blue-collar family background through close friendships with Lawrence Black, a renowned artist-to-be, Jacob Briaski, a would-be violinist from a highly musical family, and a set of composer friends in Carmel.

Tim’s story—as told from a third person point of view, probably to distance it from seeming too autobiographical—is recounted by none other than Professor Walt Clark.

THE TRACK OF THE CAT (1949), Walter Van Tilburg Clark

The Bridges family consists of “the father,” who spends his waking hours drinking whisky, playing cards and complaining; “the mother,” bitter and narrowly religious; a daughter, Grace, unmarried and likely to remain so; and three brothers, Arthur, the oldest—a dreamer and a reader; Curt, second oldest—strong, tough, his father’s favorite; and Hal, the youngest, a combination of his two older brothers, and currently engaged to Gwen, a woman also marooned at the Bridges ranch house during an early October snowstorm. The only other player in the story, much of which could be adapted as a play set in the ranch house kitchen, is Joe Sam, an ancient Indian ranch hand.

In the end, blood is shed, not necessarily that of the cat. One of the brothers, Curt, spends three days in the storm tracking his prey (or is his prey tracking him?). How he survives during the icy hunt—he’s lost most of the time—is worth the price of admission.

Some critics have compared the object of the hunt—perhaps a black panther—to Moby Dick, the symbolic white whale of one of Clark’s favorite novels.

THE WATCHFUL GODS AND OTHER STORIES (1950), Walter Van Tilburg Clark

Three of the nine short stories included in *The Watchful Gods*—“The Indian Well,” “The Wind and Snow of Winter,” and “The Buck in the Hills”—are set in Nevada. All three are excellent, and by themselves are worth the price of the volume.

In the first, an old prospector, perhaps non compos mentis, in revenge for killing his closest companion, a burro, sets out to kill a mountain lion; in the second, another prospector, again of suspect mentality, enters an old mining town one cold evening, looking forward to settling in for his customary over-winter stay, only to find the place has changed (this story won the O. Henry short story award for 1945); while the third is the grim tale of a hunter who shoots a trophy buck, purposely only wounding him, so that he can drive the frightened, bleeding animal toward his car, thus saving him the effort of hauling the heavy carcass.

These stories are reminiscent of Hemingway and Steinbeck, Clark’s contemporaries, who were writing equally fine stories at the same time.
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<td>Make check payable to the Desert Peaks Section</td>
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<td>Questions: (562) 861-2550 (H) or <a href="mailto:miladingloria@yahoo.com">miladingloria@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<td>Gloria Miladin, DPS Merchandiser 11946 Downey Ave Downey, CA, 90242</td>
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