Greetings to all you other desert rats, and welcome to estivation season for desert climbers. Time to plan for late fall and winter trips and to relax in the sunshine - or to join SPS on one of their trips, or HPS, or do a local hike.

Lee and I just returned from a glorious trip to Alaska, where we were among the lucky 30 percent who actually saw Denali (Mount McKinley, to the USGS) in all its snowy glory. The trip was a Sierra Club Angeles Chapter trip led by Donna Specht and co-led by George and Fran Denny, very well done and enjoyable with stays in Anchorage, Talkeetna, and Denali. It's a good way to go if you haven't been to Alaska and want to see part of that state.

Limited good news on the desert power projects: according to a Los Angeles Times article Friday June 12 (page B1, California section) a Department of Water and Power review resulted in the City of Los Angeles dropping plans to buy electricity from the Soda Mountain Solar Project, planned by Bechtel Corporation. The project would be south of Baker and “less than a mile from the Mojave National Preserve”, according to the article, along Interstate 15 on BLM land. The project has been opposed by many groups including the Sierra Club and the Los Angeles decision could result in the project being dropped.

In last month's column I mentioned the availability of CDs containing the entire run of issues of Desert Magazine. I'm happy to report that I ordered the CDs and that they arrived in good condition. Perhaps I'll include perusal of some in my estivation time.

THE DPS NEEDS ONE MEMBER TO SERVE AS PROGRAM/BANQUET CHAIR ASAP!! IN ADDITION, THE DPS NEEDS ONE MEMBER TO SERVE AS TREASURER STARTING JANUARY 1, 2016!!

Please contact any DPS Management Committee member if you’re interested in serving on the Management Committee.

THE NEXT SAGE SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS AUGUST 09, 2015

The Desert Sage is published six times a year by the Desert Peaks Section of the Angeles Chapter of the Sierra Club. Subscription to The Desert Sage is ten (10) dollars a year. See back cover for ordering details. The Desert Peaks Section’s Sage is the property of the Desert Peaks Section of the Angeles Chapter of the Sierra Club. All rights reserved.

The Desert Peaks Section maintains a website at: http://desertpeaks.org/
Desert Peaks Section Leadership for the 2015 - 2016 Season

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Kathrynarich@gmail.com

Cover Photo Credit...
go to Daryn Dodge. The photo is of a DPS group on its way to Corkscrew Peak on November 1, 2014; the peak is visible in the background and is located in Death Valley National Park.

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

## August 2015 — April 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day(s)</th>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUGUST 2</td>
<td>SUN</td>
<td>LTC, DPS, WTC, HPS, SPS Navigation Noodle</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEPT 6-7</td>
<td>SUN-MON</td>
<td>DPS, GBPS King Lear Peak and Duffer Peak</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEPT 20</td>
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<td>WED</td>
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<td>OCT 3</td>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>LTC, DPS, WTC, SPS Advanced Mountaineering (Belaying)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCT 10</td>
<td>SAT</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCT 17-18</td>
<td>SAT-SUN</td>
<td>LTC, DPS, WTC, SPS Advanced Mountaineering (Techniques/Anchors)</td>
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### AUGUST 2 SUN

I: Navigation: Mount Pinos Navigation Noodle: 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 or sase, navigation experience/training, rideshare info, contact info, any WTC, leader rating to Leader: Robert Myers (rmmyers@ix.netcom.com). Assistant: Phil Wheeler. Note: Early (at least two weeks prior to the event) sign-up for all navigation checkoffs and practices is recommended. These outings require substantial pre-outing preparation work, including completion of both a comprehensive written exam and a route planning assignment that will be mailed to you prior to the checkoff. See Chapter 6 of the Leaders Reference Book for more information. Send contact information (including mailing address) and your qualifications to the leader as soon as possible.

### SEPTEMBER 6-7 SUN-MON

M: King Lear Peak (8,923') and Duffer Peak (9,397'): Join us for one or both of these Great Basin desert peaks located in northwestern Nevada near the Black Rock Desert. On Sunday, we’ll approach King Lear Peak by driving from the east via Highway 140 and Trout Creek Road. From there, we’ll climb the slopes and cliffs of King Lear Peak to just north of the summit ridge, and then head south to the summit (6 miles round trip and 3,400' gain, class 2-3). We’ll then drive north roughly 70 miles to Onion Valley Reservoir and camp near the trailhead for Duffer Peak. On Monday (Labor Day) we’ll hike south towards Bare Pass where we’ll first climb the higher class 3 south summit of Duffer Peak, then run the easy class 3 ridge to the named north summit (6-7 miles round trip and 1,800' gain, with some bushwhacking around lakes below Bare Pass). Send conditioning, 3rd class rock experience, carpool and contact information to Leader: Daryn Dodge at daryn.dodge@oeoha.ca.gov. Co-Leader Kathy Rich.

### SEPTEMBER 20 SUN

I: Navigation: Grinnell Ridge Navigation Noodle: 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: Phil Wheeler. Note: Early (at least two weeks prior to the event) sign-up [Continued on page 5]

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**An old cabin located near the Glass Mountain trailhead (photo taken by Terry Flood on June 7, 2014).**

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**The Desert Sage** 4 **July-August 2015**
for all navigation checkoffs and practices is recommended. These outings require substantial pre-outing preparation work, including completion of both a comprehensive written exam and a route planning assignment that will be mailed to you prior to the checkoff. See Chapter 6 of the Leaders Reference Book for more information. Send contact information (including mailing address) and your qualifications to the leader as soon as possible.

♦ SEPTEMBER 30 WED LTC, DPS, WTC, SPS
M/E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program (AMP12): Basic Safety System: First of four climbing workshops open to Sierra Club members with prior roped climbing experience. Today's indoor evening workshop of four hours reviewing ropes, harnesses, helmets and basic climbing gear will take place in Pasadena. As space is limited, priority will be given to participants who commit to all four workshops. Send email or sase, phones, Sierra Club number, resume to Leader: Dan Richter (818-970-6737, dan@danrichter.com). Assistant: Patrick McKusky (626-794-7321, pamckusky@att.net).

♦ OCTOBER 3 SAT LTC, DPS, WTC, SPS
M/E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program (AMP12): Belaying: Second of four climbing workshops open to Sierra Club members with prior roped climbing experience. Today, at Stoney Point in Chatsworth, focus is on belaying and principles of anchor building. As space is limited, priority will be given to participants who commit to all four workshops. Send email or sase, phones, Sierra Club number, resume to Leader: Dan Richter (818-970-6737, dan@danrichter.com). Assistant: Patrick McKusky (626-794-7321, pamckusky@att.net).

♦ OCTOBER 10 SAT LTC, DPS, WTC, SPS
M/E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program (AMP12): Rapelling: Third of four climbing workshops open to Sierra Club members with prior roped climbing experience. Today, at Stoney Point in Chatsworth, focus is on repelling. As space is limited, priority will be given to participants who commit to all four workshops. Send email or sase, phones, Sierra Club number, resume to Leader: Dan Richter (818-970-6737, dan@danrichter.com). Assistant: Patrick McKusky (626-794-7321, pamckusky@att.net).

♦ OCTOBER 17-18 SAT-SUN LTC, DPS, WTC, SPS
M/E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program (AMP12): Rock climbing techniques and anchors: Fourth of four climbing workshops open to Sierra Club 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. As space is limited, priority will be given to participants who commit to all four workshops. Send email or sase, phones, Sierra Club number, resume to Leader: Dan Richter (818-970-6737, dan@danrichter.com). Assistant: Patrick McKusky (626-794-7321, pamckusky@att.net).

♦ NOVEMBER 14-15 SAT-SUN LTC, DPS, WTC, HPS, SPS
I: Navigation: Indian Cove Navigation Noodle: Navigation noodle at Joshua Tree National Park to satisfy the basic (I/M) level navigation requirements. Saturday for practice, skills refresher, altimeter, homework, campfire. Sunday checkout. Send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare to Leader: Robert Myers (rmyers@ix.netcom.com). Assistant: Phil Wheeler. Note: Early (at least two weeks prior to the event) sign-up for all navigation checkoffs and practices is recommended. These outings require substantial pre-outing preparation work, including completion of both a comprehensive written exam and a route planning assignment that will be mailed to you prior to the checkoff. See Chapter 6 of the Leaders Reference Book for more information. Send contact information (including mailing address) and your qualifications to the leader as soon as possible.

♦ DECEMBER 6 SUN LTC, DPS, WTC, HPS, SPS
I: Navigation: Warren Point Navigation Noodle: Navigation noodle at Joshua Tree National Park for either checkoff or practice to satisfy the basic (I/M) level or Advanced (E) level navigation requirements. To participate, send email/sase, contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare to
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.
DPS Membership Report
By Ron Bartell

Membership Summary

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<td>Ted Lubeshkoff</td>
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<td>Edward H. Lubin</td>
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<td>Sharon Marie Wilcox</td>
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Activity Report

Achievements

Second List Finish

#21 Brian Smith  5/3/15  El Picacho del Diablo

Sustaining Renewals

Mary Jo Dungfelder  1 year

Brian Smith and Gloria Miladin celebrating Brian’s second DPS list finish on Big Picacho on May 3, 2015 (photo taken by Gloria Miladin).
As someone who joined the Sierra Club to do mountaineering and climbing, I have not paid close attention to the Club’s political and social programs. But as the new conservation chair I thought that I might review what the Club has done and is doing on the conservation front.

The Sierra Club has become an international force in matters of conservation and now claims the support of 2.4 million members and supporters. In recent years, it has gravitated toward green politics and especially toward environmentalism. Its recent focuses are green energy, preventing climate change, and opposing coal. Current campaigns and programs are: Beyond Coal, Beyond Oil, Beyond Natural Gas, Wild America, and Get Outdoors.

The coal, oil and natural gas campaigns aim at uniting grassroots activists across the country to move America away from the use of these resources. The Wild America program is the protection of our public lands from mining and drilling designed to safeguard America’s natural heritage, preserve wildlife habitat, help keep our air and water clean, and combat climate disruption. The Get Outdoors program features trips and volunteer opportunities.

One can get a good idea of the scope of their programs by visiting the website: www.sierraclub.org.

**INCOME**
- Banquet Book Sales: $79.30
- Banquet Silent Auction: $112.00
- Banquet Ticket Sales: $2,510.00
- Merchandise: $160.00
- Subscriptions: $1,450.00

**TOTAL INCOME** $4,311.30

**EXPENSES**
- Banquet Awards: $49.05
- Banquet Speaker Expenses: $200.00
- Banquet Payment: $2,220.00
- Postage for Merchandise Mailing: $37.00
- Sage Mailing: $535.57
- Sage Printing: $459.22
- Sales Tax: $10.72
- Web Page Expenses: $129.73

**TOTAL EXPENSES** $3,641.29

**CHECKING BALANCE** $3,729.87

**SAVINGS BALANCE** $501.25

**TOTAL BALANCE** $4,231.12

**UPDATES ARE NEEDED TO THE CURRENT DPS ROAD AND PEAK GUIDE!!**

Please send road and climbing route updates to the DPS Road and Peak Guide Editor, Jim Morehouse, at desertpeakssection@gmail.com. Jim is working on a new Version 6 of the guide, so be sure and send him a quick email after climbing a peak with suggested updates to the Guide while the information is still fresh in your mind. The DPS and Jim also welcomes volunteers to join the DPS Road and Peak Guide Committee to assist with updating the current Guide. Please contact Jim via email for further information.
Outings Chair
by Leo Logacho

Greetings Everyone,

I would like to introduce myself as your new Outings Chair for the Desert Peaks Section. My name is Leo Logacho and I have been hiking since I was a little boy. I am very pleased to be part of the DPS.

Here are some notes I am passing along from Chapter communications:

The Safety Report for 2014 can be found here:


Accident forms and guidelines can be found at:

http://angeles2.sierraclub.org/safety_incident_reporting

In addition, Leaders, please report any accidents or incidents promptly to the above link. There is a new website for Leaders (live since December) that also incorporates the LTC, OMC and Safety websites, which can be found at:

https://angeles2.sierraclub.org/leadership_and_outings

Searching for Inspiration

In my first DPS article I will attempt to inspire readers and get them to come, experience and enjoy our outings.

Our beloved mountains are always there. Have you visited them lately?

If you need a dash of inspiration, let me share a couple phrases from one person that loved the Sierras. John Muir was walking these mountains, peaks and valleys more than a century ago. He was writing on the joy of being in these places and how we are losing focus on such simple pleasures of life. Because of his vision, he founded the Sierra Club and fought to conserve such beautiful places as Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks. Here are some of his inspirational phrases:

“Going to the mountains is going home.”

“The world is big and I want to have a good look at it before it gets dark.”

“Most people are on the world, not in it.”

“I never saw a discontented tree.”

“Who wouldn’t be a mountaineer? Up here all the world’s prizes seem nothing.”

“In every walk with Nature one receives far more than he seeks.”

“One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.”

“One day’s exposure to mountains is better than a cartload of books.”

“None of Nature’s landscapes are ugly so long as they are wild.”

“The clearest way into the Universe is through a forest wilderness.”

I hope these wise words inspired you to get out and explore the desert and bag a DPS peak or two. Even though summer is almost upon us, the higher desert peaks - such as those in the Inyo’s and White Mountains are best climbed this time of the year.

See you on the trails.
After the Bartell’s Death Valley List Finish Party on February 21, 2015, I decided it would be a good time to try climbing Stewart Point from the west. Specifically from Highway 127 - the Shoshone/Death Valley Junction Road. Ron Bartell had previously suggested the route to me, so after a quick breakfast, Michelle Gomes, Gloria Miladin and I drove from our campsite south of Shoshone and headed north. The key to the route is to look for 2 small hills on the east side of the road and park about 1.5 miles south of them. This puts the main wash to Stewart, unmistakable on the map and easily seen from the road, at a bearing of 50 degrees from the parking spot. In retrospect, parking further north may have worked better, since walking on the bearing to the wash resulted in crossing several deep washes in route. Nevertheless, the going was easy on mostly flat desert and, having left around 7:25 a.m., we covered the 3.5 miles to the main wash in about 2 hours. This leads to a confusing area of narrow washes and low foothills, so we climbed out of the narrow wash we were in and walked along its bank to the right. Another half mile or so and we clearly saw the main wash, very wide now and fifty feet below us, heading for Stewart. We descended into it and followed it as it led west, then turned north. At this point, there was a side wash heading east, but, after consulting the map, we decided on the next side wash after the main canyon turned back east. It looked easier for getting the summit. After about 2 miles in the wide wash, at a point where it turned north again and narrowed to a gorge between high cliffs, we headed east up the side wash, which started wide with a gentle slope leading up to it. This wash swings sharp right, then left, then narrows into a gorge and finally terminates in a steep headwall, which did not look appealing. The peak soared 1,800’ up to our right and there was a steep gully heading directly for the saddle near the summit on this face, but we did not like that option either. We reached this point about 11:00 a.m.

After careful map study, I opted for a steep climb out of the wash we were in to the left before it narrowed into the gorge. This was at about 3,600’. The climb was very steep and passed through boulders and one rock band (high class 2) to a very easy ridge that circled over the headwall of the wash we had left. We followed the ridge around and it approached a steep gully on the right. Avoiding this, we climbed steeper left and intersected a narrow ridge heading south between 2 summits. Climbing the southern summit, we turned right (west) and continued to follow the ridge, now more rounded, to another summit. Here, the ridge resumed a southerly direction and descended to a prominent saddle. From the saddle, it was a steep climb up a rocky ridge and then an easy walk across to the summit, where we arrived at 12:45 p.m. - 5 hours, 20 minutes for what I deduced to be 7 (maybe more ) miles and 3,500’ of gain. Michelle led the way to the summit and celebrated when she reached it.
Gloria was determined to find a third route on this peak. We took off from the summit and, half way down to the aforementioned summit saddle, followed a ridge of black rock to some black cliffs about 600’ down. From there we descended very steeply left towards a red ridge. It got very steep. After some 3rd class and steep scree, we bypassed the red ridge and ran into the side canyon. The red ridge and side canyon is shown in the foreground in the photograph below. Other features in the photograph include Eagle Peak (top center), the road to Shoshone, the two low hills in the open desert and the main wash that leads to the 2 side canyons we hiked. The side canyon proved problematic as we came upon a dry waterfall and had to climb the left slopes above it and side-hill on loose scree around it. Further down, another waterfall appeared, but this one we were able to descend (3rd class). The canyon finally led us out to the main wash and turned out to be the side wash going east when the main wash turned north the first time. We were glad we had not ascended this route, as our ascent had been much easier.

The sky had been dark and threatening all day, but it was only as we crossed the desert to our parked car that it started a light drizzle. However, once we got to the car at 5:45 p.m., the heavens opened and we got torrential rain that stayed with us all the way to Los Angeles. Still the climb was enjoyed by us all and I had another Explorer peak.

Bullfrog Mountain (4,940’), Beatty Mountain (4,282’) and Chloride Cliff (5,240’)
By Terry Flood
April 7-9, 2015

Having wanted to explore the most eastern reaches of Death Valley National Park, even into Nevada, Henry Arnebold, Jim Murphy and I drove out to this area, checked out the small ghost town of Rhyolite, and then set off into the Bullfrog Hills via a series of dirt roads. After a bit of searching we finally found our way to a saddle at 4,400 feet where we parked, and headed up toward the summit of Bullfrog Mountain (4,940’). We struggled up through some serious 30 mph gusts where we found an old register and a great view of the surrounding peaks, including nearby Sawtooth Mountain. We could see what looked like a bull-dozed track all the way up to a communications platform about 200 feet below the rocky summit. After returning to the car, Henry expertly drove all the way up this steep dirt 4 wheel drive in some worsening wind conditions, and then we spent a little time struggling just to stay upright, before deciding...
that the last class 3 ledges would wait for a better time.

In these windy conditions, we decided to retreat to Beatty, Nevada and found a room at the Exchange Commission Motel, and after a nice Mexican dinner, watched the finals of the Women’s NCAA basketball finals, and went to sleep.

The next day we headed just out of Beatty and found a dirt road off of Highway 95 that got us up a ways along the base of Beatty Mountain (4,282’), where we were met by a bunch of wild burros that serenaded us most of the way up this steep, ball-bearing infested slope to the summit. There was no register in the cairn, so I left one; we took pictures of the town of Beatty, and the other summits of this Bare Mountain range, and then headed down to be greeted by our burro friends again. Henry had found some adventurous 4 wheel drive roads in his guide book that we went for next. He got us down the entire length of Titus Canyon Road where we checked out the ruins of the old ghost town of Leadfield where they mined a lot of silver ore, and then we headed back up the Daylight Pass Road to start up another 4-wheel drive track that Henry negotiated almost all the way up to the top of Chloride Cliff (5,240’). We found the old register in the cairn where I had signed in previously back in December of 2009 with Steve and Shane Smith. After helping a young lady who was stuck on a dirt road with her 3rd flat tire in three days, we drove all the way across Death Valley to try for another free night in the luxurious Boxcar Cabin but as it was already occupied, Henry headed for the hostel in Lone Pine where we checked in for the night.

After a nice breakfast at the Alabama Hills Café, Henry set our destination for an interesting traverse of Cactus Flat Road just off highway 395, and then we headed home back to the city.

This adventure was one in a series we have done based on Andy Zdon’s book Desert Summits, which I’ve been working on for many years now. We still have a lot to go out in the Mojave Desert!

Granite Mountain #1 (6,762’) - from the South
By Jim Morehouse
March 21, 2015

The purpose of this hike was to establish a route up Granite Mountain #1 from the south, as the DPS route published in the guide is and has been over the Sweeney Research Stations’ area, which has been closed to the public for some time. Although the peak is within the reserve’s boundaries, it has been communicated to me that an approach from the south would be OK. There are three possible routes up from the south; one climbs a wash to the east of the ridge I took, and is choked with boulders and cat’s claw. Then there is the ridge I took, and a third possible way might be to take the wash to the west. I have only partial beta on the western wash. I took the ridge. Here’s how it went.

From I-40, take the Kelbaker exit north. Drive approximately 0.3 miles to where the road begins to bend to the north (right) and take a dirt road on the west side of the road (left) and drive north on it approximately 0.4 miles to a fork. Go left and drive another 0.4 miles to another fork and go right and drive to the end of the road at the wilderness boundary and park. High clearance vehicles are a must for this.

(Wild Burros on Beatty Mountain.)
The Desert Sage

The start of the route to Granite Mountain # 1

From the parking area, head north up a sandy wash until it narrows down and begins to be choked with large boulders and cat’s claw. You’re looking for a way up to a saddle on your left, which will be hard to see because of the numerous blocky granite outcropping. A GPS with a topo map enabled will be useful here.

Upon reaching the saddle, one will begin climbing the rocky, pinnacle infested ridge. From this point to the crux pinnacle, one simply looks for the way up, over, or around each one to suit what they’re comfortable with. There is no one easy way. However, returning to the crest of the ridge after each obstacle worked well for me.

The view up the 3rd class slab and crack climb.

About midway up the ridge one will finally come to the crux pinnacle. Unless one is willing to drop at least 200’ and side hill around it, there is no other choice but to climb it. Fortunately it is an easy class 3 slab and crack climb.

The formation known as Granite Pinnacle can be bypassed easily on its right. Once passed the pinnacle, the real high point will come into view and the short stretch from there to the top is the easiest part of the day. On the way back, I climbed that prominent pinnacle using a class 3 to "easy" class 4 chimney. There is a register up there as well, but it doesn't look like it gets many visitors. Climbing it is best done on the return trip, as the easiest route up it is on its north side.

The summit of Granite Mountain # 1. The Granite Pinnacle mentioned in the text can be seen in the background.

Claret Cups were beginning to bloom.

(Continued from page 12)
Adventuring in the Grand Canyon and up Cheops Pyramid (5,401’)
By Bill Oliver
May 3-6, 2015

In the beginning there was nothing. Then, as revealed in Genesis, over a mere six-day period God created the heavens and the earth and everything in them, including two adventurers. It is widely held that God rested on the seventh day. However, that was undoubtedly the day He relaxed by playfully pulling out his pail, shovel and crayons and going crazy wild in the Grand Canyon. And it was very good!

I’ve been blessed to have now completed five rim-to-river backpacks. Let me tell you about the latest early this May with three long-time gnarly friends: Beau Lintereur, his brother Lou, and Kevin Bell.

I don’t remember how Cheops (pronounced key-ops) Pyramid first surfaced in my consciousness. [We’re talking here about a large formation a couple of miles west of Phantom Ranch at the bottom of the Grand Canyon - not the original one in Egypt.] Looking for climbing info, I was stunned to find that my Google search turned up an informative and engaging November 1974 trip report on the Sierra Club’s Desert Peaks Section’s website (http://desertpeaks.org/archives/dps02181.htm). I knew the author and trip leader as a friend, Bob Cates. Bob was teamed with Delores Holladay and Jon Hardt. They had intended to climb Isis Temple (7,006’), but settled for its lower neighbor Cheops (5,401’), which had then rarely been climbed. [Please check out my photo album of over 400 shots - http://bit.ly/Cheops2015. At the end of it I’ve included some shots taken on Bob’s climb.]

I want to acknowledge that the Arizona Hiking Club’s website is also a tremendous resource for all things gnarly in Arizona, including Cheops - http://hikearizona.com. I was very impressed to discover that at least a few people will day hike Cheops, and starting from Flagstaff! Well, no permit, fees or backpack, but certainly a big rush.

Arriving from four disparate home states, our intrepid team of four met up at the South Rim about 4:00 p.m. Saturday, May 2nd. Rather than camping overnight, we opted for the cheapest, but very nice, pair of rooms available: Yavapai Lodge-West ($153). Four months earlier, on January 1st, I had endured the fax submission process for our backcountry permit, and we landed our first choice of campsite dates (for permit information, see http://www.nps.gov/grca/planyourvisit/backcountry-permit.htm).

We would descend the South Kaibab Trail; stay two nights at Bright Angel Campground (next to Phantom Ranch); then ascend the Bright Angel Trail back to the surface, via a midway overnight at Indian Garden Campground. This itinerary would allow time for adventuring and also for simply reveling in being below The Rim. [The South Kaibab Trail is dry, and you may want to cache water if you’re returning this way. There are drinking water spigots at both campgrounds, as well as along the upper part of the Bright Angel Trail. However, as a broken pipe could temporarily shut the taps, one needs to bring a backup for treating creek water].

We were fortunate to be facing mild weather at the bottom, i.e., low-mid 80s rather than the typical mid-
high 90s and up, but with a chance of scattered showers every day. After setting up our car shuttle between the two trailheads (free buses are also available), we launched at 7:10 Sunday morning down the South Kaibab Trail [elevation 7,250’; 7 miles and 4,800’ loss to BA Campground]. This “corridor” trail, connecting the north and south rims, is in pretty good condition, but the mule trains do take their toll. There would be dozens of people running the trail in an attempt to do a rim-to-rim in a day (20.6 miles and 10,550’ elevation change), and even a rapid (rabid?) few attempting a round-trip in a very long day (for more information, see: http://www.ultrarunning.com/features/destinations/grand-canyon-basics-rim-to-rim-to-rim/).

We made the Kaibab Bridge crossing of the Colorado by 10:30. [At just under 72, I have a steady pace but I’m not as fast as my 25-30 year younger teammates. So they periodically waited for me to catch up, and we were one team]. Our timely arrival gave us a choice of many fine campsites, about half of which are just a few yards from Bright Angel Creek. The creek would gently serenade us all night long as stars slowly swirled above the canyon walls.

Trusting in decent weather and to save weight, we brought bivy sacks, which were quickly laid out. Then off we went to the nearby Phantom Ranch Cantina (http://www.grandcanyonlodges.com/lodging/phantom-ranch/) for the first of our many fine brews (or lemonade). Remarkably, our only serious bout of rain occurred while we were happily cocooned in the cantina. Oh, did I mention that, after repeated phone calls, I had earlier scored four PR steak dinners ($47.69 each) for our first evening, plus four hot breakfasts ($21.48) for our second morning. Life down in the canyon can be sweet - and sometimes outrageously delectable!

Details of our climbing day can best be viewed in my trip album. Approaching the Cheops-Isis saddle, one eventually departs the trail, which continues on to Phantom Canyon, and climbs the long, steep hillside up to the Cheops wall. From the base of the wall, traverse north over to the upper part of the saddle, which becomes the north ridge granting daunting access to the top. By 10:00 we were in position on the ridge and cinching our climbing helmets and harnesses. Based on prior reports, I figured we could get by with a single 8-9 mm, 65-foot rope. I had also brought a few slings and small pro, which were never used. This fun route up the ridge entails playing-it-by-ear to stay below 5th class. Though intermittent, all the write-ups note the exciting 4th class exposure. Some record that a rope is really not necessary, however it is almost always used if available. Two of us took belays at a 40-foot “crux” section; there were no rappels. [Bob Cates’ group descended very late in the day, finally taking a rapp with flashlights showing the way.]

Monday morning we departed camp at 6:40 for our intrepid climb of Cheops Pyramid, which would take us from 2,546’ to 5,401’ in under 3 miles. The hike begins with an unsigned ascent of the south canyon wall on a somewhat vague trail leading up to Utah Flats. With careful attention the route is not hard to follow in daylight, though in negotiating Piano Alley (large boulders) one suffers from sparse cairns. We were surprised to overtake a group of five backpackers, who were setting out on a multi-day, open-camping circuit.
An hour from the base and we were all atop Cheops “Pyramid” – actually a plateau, and shortly signing the register. The book was disorganized, but it appeared we were only the second ascent this year. Of course, not everyone signs registers! A stroll to the south end of the large oblong mesa reveals the wickedly exposed bridge to the lower pyramidal peaklet (5,206’) – knife-edged and loose-looking. I’m unaware of anyone succeeding in this traverse, though some may have.

By 12:40 p.m. we were back to our saddle base and removing harnesses. With partly overcast skies we had been blessed with quite mild temperatures. However, dark clouds that had been lurking ominously to the south were approaching. Our intention now had been to traverse along Cheops’ long east wall over to the base of the peaklet, which is rated 3rd class. It was a major bummer to abort this climb, however, as wet weather seemed imminent. Indeed, on our return a drizzle was persistent enough to call forth our rain jackets for about a half-hour, though in the end that was the extent of our wetness. Our dry campsite was reclaimed by 3:00, quickly followed by a refreshing creek bath and then over to the cantina for some celebratory frosty brews. [Aside: try not to miss the ranger talks. We especially enjoyed ones on condors and on the pack/saddle mules.]

Tuesday morning, after our splendid PR breakfast, we broke camp and headed out on the Bright Angel Trail at 8:15. We had 4.6 miles and about 1,350’ gain to our Indian Garden campsite, which target we achieved by 10:30. The backpack is not quite as easy as it sounds, as most of the gain seems to occur all at once near the middle. Be sure to saunter out 1.5 miles to Plateau Point for a superb overview of the river and of this overwhelming Grand realm. Wednesday morning we faced 4.9 miles and 3,090’ gain. We took 2½ hours to re-surface on the South Rim at 9:00; immediately followed by breakfast burritos and a frosty cone at Maswick Lodge. Hot showers at Mather Campground ($2 for 8 minutes) marked our concluding event.

Climbing high mountains can be very rewarding. Descending deep canyons also has its special rewards, and the Grand Canyon is tops. We were blessed with mostly mild weather, only minor scrapes, fine meals (even in camp) and Grand adventuring. I was fortunate to be accompanied by gnarly, supportive and ever delightful teammates. And it was very good, indeed!

The two photos located on page 11 of the last Sage identified Jim Morehouse’s route incorrectly. Jim’s route is in red (the route on the left); the better route is in blue.
Nevada is a state with endless peak climbing possibilities. Sometimes the roads to these peaks are as challenging as the peak hike. Although roads to a peak might be challenging, they often lead through interesting and wild portions of our state.

Larry Dwyer planned a joint Sierra Club/Friends of Nevada Wilderness trip connecting three prominent peaks to take advantage of Nevada’s peak offerings and wild beauty. All three peaks are on the Nevada Peaks with 2,000 feet of Prominence list.

What is Prominence? Basically instead of elevation above sea level, it measures a mountain summit using the vertical distance between it and the lowest contour line encircling it with no higher summit. (For more detailed information on prominence, The Finest Peaks: Prominence and other Mountain Measures, by Adam Helman is an excellent resource.)

Larry’s trip headed to Austin on the so-called Loneliest Highway in America (US 50) then north on Nevada 305 to Cain Mountain (8,409’), the Augusta Mountains High Point and a Wilderness Study Area (WSA). This hike started through a large burn area with scattered wildflowers and ended with nice summit views of our next two peaks.

Our campsite provided an overlook of Antelope Valley where we enjoyed singing along with Sue's guitar playing. A Nevada sky crowded with stars concluded the evening.

A colorful sunrise started our day as we drove towards Mount Moses (8,649’), high point of the Fish Creek Mountains in Lander County. We parked where a snow bank blocked the road, then hiked to the connecting ridge through sagebrush and rock up to the summit. Lunch and great views were enjoyed on the summit.

To reach Mount Tobin (9,775’), our hike followed a road as it contoured the peak and then cut-up through low brush to reach the summit. The summit greeted us with lots of ladybugs, a few snow patches, and nice views of Moses and Cain Mountains.

Our trip concluded in Winnemucca at "The Pig" for a group lunch to celebrate our memorable time exploring Nevada.

Some thoughts from those that have finished the 116 peaks on the Great Basin Peaks list:

Bob Sumner: “My favorite day was on Mount Gilbert in the Rubies, my List Finish peak. Good weather and a fun hike.”

Vic Henney: “There were many great days on GB list peaks but the one that comes to mind was our climb of Old Man of the Mountains. This is a difficult climb by any route and we ended up going a way that to the best of my knowledge had not been done before. This was not our last GB peak but there was a great sense of accomplishment in doing this peak and we knew that once we got the peak, we would be able to finish the list”.

Sue Wyman: “I had so many good days in the Great Basin, that’s it’s hard to remember any one day, especially since my first peaks from the list were back in 1981. I’d have to say that our second to the last peak, “Old Man of the Mountains”, in the Ruby Mountains, gave me the best feeling of accomplishment. After we got that one, I knew we could finish the list. This was the hardest peak by far, first because it involved a backpack (which I hadn’t done since back surgery many years before), and second, because for us it involved using a rope and climbing gear, something I also haven’t done much of in many years. It also required a day of good weather in the midst of summer/fall monsoon rains.”

Bob, Vic, and Sue all agreed that Old Man of the Mountain and Gilbert were the most challenging peaks on the Great Basin Peaks list. We’ll hear more from them in the future plus look forward to having other finishers by the end of this summer.
This year’s Banquet was again held at Luminarias Restaurant in Monterey Park, with about 60 DPSers in attendance. We were fortunate to be in the Buena Vista Room, which is bright and airy with big plate glass windows overlooking the San Gabriel Mountains along one side.

This year’s speaker was Steve Smith who gave a presentation entitled "Preservation of the Desert Cabins". Steve was a BLM ranger in the Ridgecrest area until he retired in 2004. Steve has traveled to many places outside the USA, most recent the Philippines and South Africa, but memories of our own Mojave Desert are never far from his mind. He joined the DPS in 1965, and led his first trip to Maturango and Coso Peaks with Bill Banks in 1967. He and some BLM volunteers started doing maintenance of desert cabins in 1989. They worked on 36 of them, and still continue to take care of them. Steve’s program took us through his desert experiences of the past 50 years, and specifically on his work to preserve and maintain desert cabins.

The other highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Bill T. Russell Mountaineering Award to Daryn Dodge. Daryn completed the DPS list in 2011, and is an M-rated leader in the Angeles Chapter, leading trips for DPS, SPS and HPS. An avid peakbagger, he has also completed the SPS list (in 2009) and the Andy Smatko Explorer Emblem (50 Sierra peaks not on the SPS list). In addition to leading DPS peak climbs, over the past 3 years he has been leading exploratory DPS trips to Desert Wilderness Highpoints. Lastly, he currently keeps track of the mountain records (registers) for the Section. Congratulations, Daryn!
COXCOMB and SHEEPHOLE (touching on OLD WOMAN) and GREAT BIG BOULDERS

This month we’ll visit (in print only; way too hot to visit in person!) two ranges which are in sight of each other and which are typified by the huge granite boulders that are so characteristic of Joshua Tree National Park. Indeed, they are geologic siblings – children of the same granite mother body. Underlying this whole part of the Mojave is the Cretaceous age Cadiz Valley batholith (literally, “deep rock”), along with the contiguous Old-Woman (yes, our peak) – Piute Range batholith, exposed where fault blocks have raised up chunks of it. The term “batholith” implies the biggest system of related granites (cf. “Idaho Batholith”). Imagine repeated deep intrusions of new molten granitic magmas over a substantial period of time, the mineralogy of each resulting granite pluton varying with time as the deep sources evolved and changed. The Cadiz Valley granites are divided into two “suites” depending on their chemistry; one of these, the Coxcomb “Suite”, (NOT a piece by Ferde Grofe) includes the granites that make up both the Sheepholes and northern Coxcombs. The Coxcombs are made up of at least four distinct plutons.(And, of course, all this is part of the great granite “factory” of the Far West that operated in Mesozoic time as plate subduction was actively going on.)

As elsewhere, these granites intruded and cooked the older Paleozoic sediments laid down on the quiet continental shelf before the fireworks began; one paper I read while working on this piece claimed to see equivalent rocks to the great Grand Canyon formations (Tapeats, Kaibab, etc.) in these mangled remains. The old “country rock” still comprises the southern Coxcombs, well south of our peak and out of the Park. From the south, this gives the range a striking “two-tone” look; light tan and chocolate-brown. This is the setting of the Eagle Mountain Iron Mine, which fed the old, long-gone Kaiser Steel Fontana mill. (As an aside, can you imagine a worse atmospheric setting for a steel mill? As a little kid in Pomona, I can still remember when the breeze was from the east.) Granite intruding limestones and reacting with them to deposit iron sulfide – pyrite – was the mineralizing agent. Exposed sulfide decaying to oxide in the near-surface oxidizing environment made for some very rich and extensive ore bodies. (Massive iron mineralization associated with granite is quite unusual – there had to be some weird chemistry with either the granite itself or the country rock.)

Where do these giant boulders that we have to scramble over on the routes come from? Although almost every kind of rock besides shale and mudstone can make boulders, nothing does it better than granite. Why? First of all, for perfect boulders, we have to have an isotropic rock. That means a rock that is pretty much the same in all directions from any given point -- no bedding or layering. And tough and massive - no shattering or cracking (expect for big cracks, as we’ll see). And evenly and slowly weathering – no dissolving and minimal crumbling. So far, granite is perfect. Now we have to crack the stuff on an epic regional scale. For the best boulders, our cracks should be in a fairly regular geometric pattern. Enter regional stress fields from the Cenozoic extension of southwestern North America (the same tensional force that gave us block-faulted mountain ranges). Add the northwest-southeast shear stress from the San Andreas system. Now we have a vertical crack system, ideally in two intersecting planes, perpendicular to the horizontal tensional stress. Another cause of an extensive system of vertical cracks might be shrinkage from cooling -- long after the granite has "frozen" or solidified, it would still be extremely hot, but it eventually has to cool down to near-surface temperature. Finally, although this cracking occurs when the rock is deeply buried (although, of course, long cooled to solid hardness), imagine what happens when the granite is "unroofed" by uplift and erosion – from being bur-

(Continued on page 20)
ied under countless billions of tons of country rock and overburden to having only the air or a little dirt above. The granite will respond to this stress release by expanding a tiny bit upward, enough to crack it horizontally – again, perpendicular to the vertical stress release. Now we have a huge grid of cracks across our granites, ideally roughly on the x, y, and z axes. If there’s significant movement on these cracks, they become faults; but if they’re just cracks that don’t do anything, they’re called joints. (Not to be confused with the kind you can buy over the counter in Washington and Colorado.)

Physical processes have prepared the ground for our boulder factory; now chemistry takes over. Water seeps down along the joints, beginning the extremely slow process of attacking and weathering the granite. Of the two main components of granite, the quartz is indestructible, but feldspar is not. At incredibly slow rates, the very slightly acidic groundwater reacts with the feldspar, turning it to clays – and there goes your granite. The decay will be stronger at edges, where two joint planes intersect, and most intense at corners, where three joint planes – the two vertical and the horizontal – meet. So, you have a perfect setup for the in-place formation of big rounded boulders! Eventually, with uplift, surface exposure to the elements, and continued slow weathering, some will remain upright, some will topple into piles, and a very few will end up balanced on others – and we get our classic desert granite boulder landscapes, beloved of old directors of Western movies and today’s rock jocks.

(Continued from page 19)

Desert Peaks
Register Report
By Daryn Dodge

The DPS has long been active in maintaining registers on many of the desert peaks on the DPS list, as well as other desert peaks that are not on the list. Anyone can help by placing new books in register containers in which the book is full or the book is missing. The Section is in the process of purchasing new register books with the DPS logo for Section members to take to desert summits.

If you would like to carry books to desert peaks, you can contact me at daryn.dodge@oehha.ca.gov and I would be happy to send you a few books. Carrying small pencils are also helpful as these often go missing from the register containers.

Feel free to send me reports on the condition of summit containers and the register books on DPS peaks. If I get enough input, I can publish the list of register needs in a later Sage.

A few select peaks on the DPS list used to have historic Sierra Club register containers on them. I’m sorry to report that many, if not all, of these few remaining register containers have gone missing over the last year or two. The Mount Inyo register, pictured here, disappeared from the peak last year. And most recently, the one on New York Mountain is now gone. A tradition of placing registers on summits that dates back as far as humans have been climbing them seems to be under relentless attack in both the desert and the Sierras.
Ruth M. Underhill (1883-1984), was one of the first anthropologists to study Native American cultures. While already in her forties and working on her PhD at Columbia, Underhill spent several summers working with and studying the Tohono O'odam (Papago) people of Southern Arizona and Northern Sonora. It was during this period that she published one of her most popular works, *The Autobiography of a Papago Woman* (1936), chronicling the life of Maria Chona, an elderly member of the Tohono O’odam Nation.

Earning her degree in 1937, Underhill began 12 years of employment with the government, first with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and then with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. It was during this interval that she authored several books and papers on Native American Indians, including *Hawk Over Whirlpools* (1940), one of her few fictional works.

In 1949, Dr. Underhill accepted a position as Professor of Anthropology at the University of Denver, a job from which she retired four years later in order to travel the world.

Still later, upon returning to Denver, she continued to write, publishing perhaps her most well-known work, *Red Man’s America* (1953), a volume which inspired a series of 30 documentary films for television. In 1979, Underhill was honored by the Tohono O’odham Nation for her work in preserving their past, and in 1981, she was presented with an award from the Colorado River Indian Tribes for her devoted and untiring effort in the gathering of information of their culture. On her 100th birthday in 1983, Colorado Governor Richard Lamm declared August 22 as Ruth Underhill Day. She died a year later on August 15.

Ruth's brother, Robert L.M. Underhill 1889-1983), became notable as well, but in a far different field. In the summer of 1931, after spending a season climbing in the Alps, Robert Underhill came to California at the invitation of Francis P. Fuquhar, president of the Sierra Club at the time, to teach the latest in Alpine-style rope and belaying techniques to a group of climbers, including Norman Clyde, Jules Eichorn, and Glen Dawson. During that summer the group made the first ascent of Thunderbolt Peak, the last of California's 14,000' peaks to be climbed, followed by the first ascent of the east face of Mt. Whitney. In commemoration of his efforts, the Underhill Couloir, above the Palisade Glacier, on the route to Thunderbolt Peak, was named in his honor.

But I digress. *Hawk Over Whirlpools* is the story of a Papago boy whose tribal name is Hawk Over Whirlpools and whose Spanish name is Rafael. Because the Papago don't use proper names, however, they address one another by position in the family, e.g., Rafael calls his older brother, my older brother, while Rafael's grandfather calls Rafael's mother,
mother of my grandchild.

After spending his childhood in Lizard-in-the-Rocks, a remote and primitive village in southern Arizona, Rafael is sent to the Indian School in a big city, presumably Tucson, for nine years. The time is probably the 1920s.

During Rafael's long absence from Lizard-in-the-Rocks his Papago cultural, religious, and personal values are gradually loosened and torn away—a familiar theme in other Indian-based novels of the time*—leaving the him in a confusion of conflicting cultures.

After graduating, working long hours at low pay in a cannery, and surviving a long recovery from tuberculosis at a sanitarium, Rafael returns to Lizard-in-the-Rocks where his built up enmity toward the white man comes to full fruition.

Underhill had a deep regard for the Papagos and proved it in her writing. Here she describes the best part of the year for the desert people—the harvest of the fruit of the saguaro, at which time the villagers "moved out to the cactus groves to camp for almost a moon. When every fruit had been picked and the red juice which was the only moisture on those barren hillsides had been sealed in jars, they would come back to Lizard-in-the-Rocks. There, in the sacred dark of the council house, the juice would be set to ferment, while the village sang, treading the earth all night while they called upon the clouds. The liquor would foam and the clouds would foam above. The villagers would drink and the earth would drink and blossom. The new year would begin."

Underhill's take on Papago temperment: "The Desert people do not shout and threaten when they are angry. They take a matter into their hearts for long thought and when they decide they do not change."

Underhill's idea of what many white men, attempting to assist with federal aid, think of the Papagos: "Old shellbacks that never had a bath and can't write their names. We probably shan't get anywhere till they're dead and a new crop comes along."

Should you be interested in learning more about our indigenous desert neighbors, you can't go wrong with Ruth Underhill. While many of her volumes are still in print, Hawk Over Whirlpools is not. A used copy, however, can be purchased from Amazon.com for anywhere between $10 and $75.

* See Oliver Le Farge's Laughing Boy, (1929) and Edwin Corle's, People on Earth (1937).

**THE OLD SPANISH TRAIL TREASURE**
(2012), Robert C. Nuzum

In keeping with Desert Book's series on the Old Spanish Trail, I acquired a copy of Robert C. Nuzum's The Old Spanish Trail Treasure hoping to strike it rich in interesting material for the ongoing history. The results of my prospecting were mixed.
In his preface, Nuzum reveals that since first visiting Death Valley in 1966, he and his family have returned almost every Christmas holiday since. And, as they continued their yearly visits, they began including other family members and friends, so that over the years the size of their group grew to thirty to forty people or more.

Centering his novel, The Old Spanish Trail Treasure, in the greater Death Valley area, Nuzum's descriptions of the Avawatz Mountains, the Grapevine Mountains, Corkscrew Peak, Mount Palmer, Chloride City, Wingate Wash, Beatty, Tecopa Hot Springs, Titus Canyon, Las Vegas, and Barstow thus seem accurate, lending realism for those readers who are familiar with the country.

Historically, the plot, so far as I can tell, is also correct. During the course of events Nuzum describes the mining towns of Virginia City and Bodie, and several men who made their fortunes in mining those areas, e.g., John Mackay, one of the four "Silver Kings," who owned the Comstock Mine in Virginia City; and George Hearst, the U.S. Senator from California, also a Virginia City mine owner, and the father of William Randolph Hearst.

Death Valley's Harmony Borax Works, Greenland Ranch (now Furnace Creek Ranch), and the twenty-mule team wagons that once transported borax from the Furnace Creek area to the railroad in Barstow play important roles, while two long-defunct railroads, the narrow gage Carson & Colorado, which ran from Keeler Junction to Carson City, and the V&T (Virginia-Truckee), the "crookedest railroad in the world" lend more historic credence to the story.

The plot of The Old Spanish Trail Treasure is a bit cowboy/western formulistic (i.e., including a damsel, a hero with sterling qualities that prevail over villains and win the heart of said damsel, and, of course, a treasure) but well-conceived.

The story begins in January 1885 when seventeen-year old Bob Brandt and his father, Carl, decide to take a break from farming in Las Vegas area to try their luck prospecting in the surrounding desert mountains. First poking around the Avawatz Mountains with no success, Bob and Carl keep moving north, eventually locating a good prospect on the slopes of Schwaub Peak, up Echo Canyon in the Funeral Mountains, east of the present day Furnace Creek tourist facilities.

To provide food for the men they have hired to develop their site, Bob sets off to hunt in the Titus Canyon area. While he's gone, two events occur, one most favorable, one tragic.

First, Bob literally stumbles across a well-hidden cache of raw gold--nuggets and dust--probably hidden years before by Spanish soldiers during a crossing of the Old Spanish Trail (hence the book's title). The tragedy is that when Bob finally returns to the Schwaub Peak mine, he finds that all the miners, including his father, are either dead or missing.

The rest of the story follows young Brandt as he tracks down and deals swift justice to those who carried out the murders. To add romance to the plot, Bob hires two Pinkerton Detectives to help him search for the killers, one of whom is a young woman, JJ, to whom he is immediately attracted. To add suspense, Bob contrives a clever plan to wreak disaster on the unscrupulous mine owner who planned the murders at Schwaub Peak in the first place.

The biggest negative for The Old Spanish Trail Treasure, is that Nuzum really needs to improve his writing skills. Much of his dialogue sounds forced and/or includes way too much information to be believable. Often its clumsiness overshadows an otherwise good story.

Still, congratulations to the author on his first novel. May his next be even better.

MARSHAL SOUTH RIDES AGAIN,
His Anza Borrego Novels, (2013) Marshal South, edited by and with a forward by Diana Lindsay

It's my guess that most older Anza Borrego State Park aficionados know a little bit about Marshal South (1889-1948). During the period 1939 to 1948, South
fascinated readers of Desert Magazine by describing his family's adventures in building a home, Yaquitepec, on top of Ghost Mountain, located south of Blair Valley, a mile or two east of State Highway 2, and then living there in a no frills-style between 1934 and 1946.

Randall Henderson, the editor of Desert, was so encouraged by the response to Marshal’s series, that he periodically provided background on the Souths, informing his readers that the family was “free and independent—and happy,” and that they worked “from sunup until dark, long hours of hard labor, (bringing) them added health and a serene philosophy of life.” Regarding their children, Henderson continued, “Tanya (Marshal’s wife) is teaching them from books. Marshal is teaching them from nature... For them, their experiment in primitive living has been a glorious success and they have no desire ever to return to the world where humans fight each other for food and shelter and power and gold.”

In addition to his Desert Magazine essays, Marshal South penned some 90 poems, almost 100 newspaper and other magazine articles, and was a talented painter, potter and designer of jewelry. Apropos of this review, between 1935 and 1943, South also published 12 books, two of which, reviewed below, were set in the Anza-Borrego area.

Full details of the lives of Marshal and his family can be found in Diana Lindsay's brilliantly researched book, Marshal South and the Ghost Mountain Chronicles, a volume which includes a complete collection of South's Desert Magazine articles.

**FLAME OF TERRIBLE VALLEY (1935)**

The U.S.-sanctioned Butterfield Overland Mail Trail operated between 1857 and 1861. Departing company's eastern termini in either St. Louis, MO, or Memphis, TN, mail and/or passengers could expect to reach San Francisco in a company stagecoach in a mere 22 days. Section 2 of the route, Los Angeles to Fort Yuma, 282 miles long, followed roughly the western boundaries of present-day Anza Borrego State Park, passing through Earthquake Valley, Box Canyon, and Carrizo Canyon.

In 1861, due to the Civil War, a new, northerly route was established leaving the original trail and the stage stations to molder away due to lack of activity.

Marshal South's Flame of Terrible Valley is set in the immediate vicinity of one of those buildings, the Vallecito Stage Station, located just south of and in view of South's home on Ghost Mountain.

The Flame of South's story is a young woman, living with her Uncle Amos on a ranch along the eastern slopes of the Laguna Mountains, not far from the crumbling adobe walls of the old station. The entire story enfolds in less than 24 hours.

At the story's onset, we meet twenty-eight year old cowhand, Jim Brandon, walking through the lonely desert valley near the abandoned station. Earlier in the day his horse had been killed falling off a steep trail, and now, as night approaches, he's tired, his feet...
hurt, and he's thirsty.

This is when Brandon meets Flame, a girl with "a face the like of which an inspired painter of magazine covers might create once in a lifetime; a face dazzling almost in its delicate molding, clean, golden-tinted outdoor beauty and deep-blue eyes--and about it like a halo, flashing back the light like a glowing mist of glorious red-gold fire was a great clustering bob of tumbled, waving curls."

*Flame of Terrible Valley*'s plot revolves around the search for a long-lost stash of gold and a case of mistaken identity. Regarding the latter, the Yellow Dragon Tong of San Francisco, seeking revenge for the murder of one of their members, has been chasing Flame's evil father, Jake, for nine years. Now, mistaking Flame's kindly Uncle Amos, for his identical twin brother, tong members have arrived in Terrible Valley ready to murder the wrong man and his only relative, Flame.

During the ensuing dark and windstorm-swept night, Brandon and Flame must escape both Jake and his murderous gold-seeking associates, and the Chinese gunmen. Can the young couple escape across the desert at night on foot? Will the crumbling adobe walls of the old stage station offer them any refuge?

Marshal South left us with a darn good story. Read *Flame* and find out for yourself.

**ROBBERS RANGE (1943)**

Brandon Kent's first glimpse of Marie Banniston came in a "mean and dirty little (book) shop on a frowsy, deserted side street" in San Diego. Both were looking for items--the Hesfor relics--as advertised in a local paper.

Brandon instantly intuits Marie as "an outdoor type. Her skin was tinged with a golden bronze that was a product not of rouge and crafty powder, but of genuine sunlight and wind. And she was distinctly pretty. Her hair and eyes were dark and there was a firmness and decision to her chin and mouth that spoke of character." As for himself, Brandon, twenty-seven years of age, was an out-of-work top hand, currently awaiting a job offer from a "big cattle outfit in Mexico."

Two ominous-looking men then appear on the book-store scene, one with "hard black eyes, roofed under bristling black brows;" another, "bullet-headed...with the face of a thug."

What all four are looking for is information regarding a treasure supposedly hidden in the desert of east San Diego County by Wolf Hesfor, an outlaw, who was hanged in 1860.

The plot soon moves to Robbers Range, a deserted ranch site in the Vallecito Mountains, once again near "write about what you know" Marshal South's home on Ghost Mountain.

Similar to *Flame of Terrible Valley*, *Robbers Range* takes place in a short period of time, three days, and in a limited location, i.e., the Canyon of Dead Man's Hand. Unlike *Flame*, however, hard-to-explain events occur. Why was Marie's father ingesting small doses of Jimson Weed juice, a trance-inducing but deadly poison? And who was that ghostly figure who safely guided Brandon, while searching for Marie, along a perilous path during a thunderous night storm?

Again, Marshal South has left desert lovers with a good story. And, even better, in *Marshal South Rides Again*, you get two for the price of one.
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If you haven’t already done so, please consider renewing your Sage subscription. Dues are $10 per year and multiple year subscriptions are encouraged. If you feel even more compelled, the DPS offers a “sustaining” dues option ($20). Send your check made payable to “Desert Peaks Section” to:

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*The Desert Sage*  
*July-August 2015*
DESERT PEAKS SECTION

DPS NEWSLETTER - The Desert Sage is published six times a year by the Desert Peaks Section of the Angeles Chapter of the Sierra Club. Please note that the submission deadline for the next SAGE is August 09, 2015.

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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 for one year. To work on the list you will probably want to buy from the Merchandiser (Gloria Miladin, 11946 Downey Ave, Downey, CA, 90242) the Desert Peaks Road and Peak Guide 5th Edition CDROM - $15. If you like to explore without much direction just purchase the DPS PEAKS LIST - $1 (enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope). Send completed peak and emblem lists to Membership Records Chair Ron Bartell, 1556 21st Street, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266, or ronbartell@yahoo.com.

SAGE SUBMISSIONS: We welcome all articles, photographs and letters pertaining to outdoor activities of interest to Desert Peak Sections members. If you are a participant and know that the leaders are not going to submit a trip report, then feel free to submit one. Some submittals may be too long and space limitations and other considerations are factors in the decision to publish a submission. The editor may modify submittals in an attempt to increase clarity, decrease length, or correct typos but will hopefully not modify your meaning. Please note that digital documents and photographs are required for submissions to the Sage. Trip reports should include trip dates and identify trip participants and photos should indicate when and where the photo was taken, what it is of, who is in it, and who took it. Please email SAGE submissions to the editor no later than the second Sunday of even numbered months.

ADVERTISEMENTS: You can advertise private trips that are of interest to DPS members in the SAGE for free. Also, you can advertise in the SAGE to sell items; the cost is $3.00 per line.

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