



The Desert Sage

OUR 76th SEASON

MAY-JUNE 2017

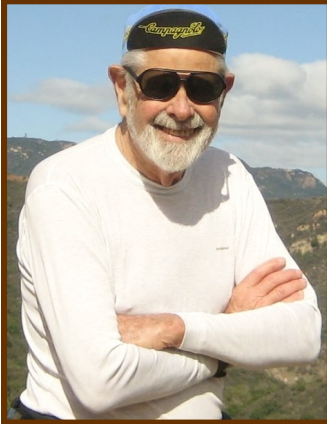
ISSUE NO. 369



<http://desertpeaks.org/>

Chair's Corner

by Paul Cooley



Well, we thought perhaps the insanity of mining the groundwater in the Mojave Desert had been prevented, but according to a report in the Los Angeles Times Wednesday, 5 April, p. B1, the new administration reversed a ruling made by the previous administration and Cadiz Inc. is again pursuing

it. Senator Dianne Feinstein still opposes this project; please help her by emailing her at this website (California residents only) (or just Google "Senator Feinstein"):

<https://www.feinstein.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/e-mail-me>

Desert flowers are again beautiful this year, I hear - when I was there in February it was a bit too early to tell but even then the bloom was beginning in the south end of Death Valley. A long time friend of mine has been all over, including Baja, and I'm waiting to hear from him. Even here where I live, in Culver City, the hillsides are gorgeous, and when we returned from the Bay area on Interstate 5, there were fields of California poppies gracing the hillsides near Fort Tejon.

Again: This year's DPS banquet will be at The Castaway restaurant, in Burbank, on May 21. Hope to see you all there. Please see the information on page 7 in this issue of the Sage.

THE NEXT SAGE SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS JUNE 11, 2017.

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DPS Peaks Register Report



Mark Butski is the Desert Peaks Section's Mountain Records chair. Please email Mark with the condition of summit register books and containers after climbing a DPS listed peak. Mark can also send you replacement DPS register books to carry up to DPS peaks. His email address is:

hbmark58@yahoo.com



Desert Peaks Section Leadership for the 2016 - 2017 Season

Elected Positions

Chair

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Cover Photo Credit...

goes to DPS member Richard Carey. The photo is of Grapevine Peak and was taken on March 20, 2017 from seldom climbed Peak 8572. Also, Grapevine Peak is on the DPS list and is located in Death Valley National Park.

Appointed Positions

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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 May 2017 — December 2017

A DPS group on their way to Granite Mountain #2 (photo taken by Shurovi Masud on February 4, 2017).

MAY 6-7	SAT-SUN	LTC, WTC, DPS, SPS	Advanced Mountaineering: Anchors
MAY 20	SAT	LTC, WTC, HPS	Navigation: Beginning Clinic
MAY 20-21	SAT-SUN	LTC	Rock: Joshua Tree Rock Checkoff and Practice
MAY 21	SUN	DPS	The Desert Peaks Section Annual Banquet
JUNE 3-4	SAT-SUN	LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS	Navigation: Mount Pinos Navigation Noodle
JUNE 11	SUN	LTC	Leaders Practice Hike at Malibu Creek State Park
SEPT 17	SUN	LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS	Navigation: Mount Pinos Navigation Noodle
OCT 7	SAT	LTC, WTC, HPS	Navigation: Beginning Clinic
NOV 11-12	SAT-SUN	LTC	Rock: Joshua Tree Rock Checkoff and Practice
NOV 18	SAT	LTC, WTC	Navigation Workshop on 3rd Class Terrain
NOV 18-19	SAT-SUN	LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS	Navigation: Indian Cove Navigation Noodle
DEC 10	SUN	LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS	Navigation: Warren Point Navigation Noodle

♦ **MAY 6-7** **SAT-SUN** **LTC, DPS, WTC, SPS**
M/E-R: Advanced Mountaineering Program (AMP15): Anchors and Real World Application: Fourth of four climbing workshops aimed at developing skills for 3rd, 4th, and 5th class climbing, both as a participant or a future Sierra Club M and E leader. This weekend completes the series of AMP workshops at Joshua Tree National Park and focuses on building anchors and applying previously learned skills in real world climbing situations and multiple participants. All participants must have prior roped climbing experience and commit to all four classes. To register, please see: <http://www.advancedmountainingprogram.org>. Leaders: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com); Patrick McKusky (pamckusky@att.net); and, Matthew Hengst (matthew.hengst@gmail.com).

♦ **MAY 20** **SAT** **LTC, WTC, HPS**
I: Navigation: Beginning Clinic: Spend the day one-on-one with an instructor learning and practicing map and compass skills in our local mountains. Beginners to rusty old-timers are welcome and practice is available at all skill levels. Not a checkout, but it will help you prepare. Many expert leaders will attend; many I-rated leaders started here in the past. 4 miles and 500' of elevation gain. Send sase, phones, rideshare info, \$25 deposit (refunded at trailhead, check made payable to the Sierra Club) to Leader: Diane Dunbar (818-248-0455, dianedunbar@charter.net) Co-Leader: Richard Boardman.

♦ **MAY 20-21** **SAT-SUN** **LTC**
M/E-R: Rock: Sheep Pass/Indian Cove Joshua Tree Rock Checkoff and Practice: M & E level rock checkoff and practice for LTC leadership candidates wishing to pursue a rating or practice skills. Also open to Advanced Mountaineering Program students wanting to solidify what they learned in the course. Practice Saturday and optionally checkoff Sunday. Restricted to active Sierra Club members with previous rock climbing experience. Climbing helmets and harnesses required. Email climbing resume to leader to apply: Leader: Patrick McKusky (pamckusky@att.net). Co-leader: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com).

♦ **MAY 21** **SUN** **DPS**
O: Desert Peaks Section Annual Banquet: Save the date! Join your fellow DPS members and friends for a wonderful evening at the Castaway Restaurant in Burbank (** please note that this is a new venue **). The Social Hour and No Host Bar starts at 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 7:00 p.m. and awards. Please see the banquet flyer on page 7 of this issue of the Sage for info, or to sign up for the banquet.

♦ **JUNE 3-4** **SAT-SUN** **LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS**
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. Saturday is for practice; Sunday is for checkoff or additional practice. Send email with contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare, to Leader: Robert Myers (310-829-3177, rmmyers@ix.netcom.com). Assistant: Ann Pedreschi. 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 Leadership Reference Book for more information. Send contact information (including mailing address) and your qualifications to the leader as soon as possible.

♦ **JUNE 11** **SUN** **LTC**
O: Leaders Practice Hike at Malibu Creek State Park: This trip is for leaders-in-training, at any rating, to learn and practice handling groups on Sierra Club trips. Topics covered will include: trip planning and communication, trailhead talk, group management, basic navigation concepts, conservation and ecology, problem solving, and safety issues. Participants will practice pace setting and other skills with a supportive peer group. Location tentative. Space limited, please contact leaders to reserve a place: Will McWhinney (willmcw@gmail.com), Jane Simpson (outdoorsimpson@gmail.com).

♦ **SEPTEMBER 17** **SUN** **LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS**
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. Saturday is for practice; Sunday is for checkoff or additional practice. Send email with contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare, to Leader: Robert Myers (310-829-3177, rmmyers@ix.netcom.com). Assistant: Ann Pedreschi. 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 Leadership Reference Book for more information. Send contact information (including mailing address) and your qualifications to the leader as soon as possible.

♦ **OCTOBER 7** **SAT** **LTC, WTC, HPS**
I: Navigation: Beginning Clinic: Spend the day one-on-one with an instructor learning and practicing map and compass skills in our local mountains. Beginners to rusty old-timers are welcome and practice is available at all skill levels. Not a checkout, but it will help you prepare. Many expert leaders will attend; many I-rated leaders started here in the past. 4 miles and 500' of elevation gain. Send sase, phones, rideshare info, \$25 deposit (refunded at trailhead, check made payable to the Sierra Club) to Leader: Diane Dunbar (818-248-0455, dianedunbar@charter.net) Co-Leader: Richard Boardman.

♦ **NOVEMBER 11-12** **SAT-SUN** **LTC**
M/E-R: Rock: Sheep Pass/Indian Cove Joshua Tree Rock Checkoff and Practice: M & E level rock checkoff and practice for LTC leadership candidates wishing to pursue a rating or practice skills. Also open to Advanced Mountaineering Program students wanting to solidify what they learned in the course. Practice Saturday and optionally checkoff Sunday. Restricted to active Sierra Club members with previous rock climbing experience. Climbing helmets and harnesses required. Email climbing resume to leader to apply: Leader: Patrick McKusky (pamckusky@att.net). Co-leader: Dan Richter (dan@danrichter.com).

♦ **NOVEMBER 18** **SAT**

LTC, WTC

I: Navigation Workshop on 3rd Class Terrain: This navigation workshop is limited to individuals participating in the Indian Cove Navigation Noodle and is intended to explore special navigation issues that arise on 3rd class terrain. Class 3 rock travel experience required. Restricted to Sierra Club members. Helmets and medical forms required, and group size is limited. Send email/sase, Sierra Club #, class 3 experience, conditioning, contact info to Leader: Robert Myers (310-829-3177, rmmyers@ix.netcom.com). Co-Leader: Jack Kieffer.

♦ **NOVEMBER 18-19** **SAT-SUN**

LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS

I: Navigation: Indian Cove Navigation Noodle: Navigation Noodle in Joshua Tree National Park to satisfy Basic (I/M) level navigation requirements. Saturday is for practice, skills, refresher, altimeter, homework and campfire. Sunday is for checkoff. Send email/sase with contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare, to Leader: Robert Myers (310-829-3177, rmmyers@ix.netcom.com). Assistant: Ann Pedreschi. 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 Leadership Reference Book for more information. Send contact information (including mailing address) and your qualifications to the leader as soon as possible.

♦ **DECEMBER 10** **SUN**

LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, 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 with contact info, navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating, rideshare to Leader: Robert Myers (310-829-3177, rmmyers@ix.netcom.com). Assistant: Ann Pedreschi. 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.

In order to participate in 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.

THE DPS NEEDS A NEW WEBMASTER

ASAP !!

Please contact any Management Committee member if you're interested in the Webmaster position.

DPS ANNUAL BANQUET

Sunday May 21

Where: Castaway Restaurant
1250 E. Harvard Rd.
Burbank, CA

Time: 5:30 pm Social Hour
7:00 pm Dinner
*Includes complimentary
wine at each table*



Swaney on rappel in Sand Witch Canyon. May 23, 2016 Photo: Ian Tuttle



Scott Swaney presents: **Death Valley Canyoneering Exploration**

In Ian Tuttle's Outside Online article Scott Swaney is described as a former oilman and current badass a couple years shy of 70. Scott has more first descents in Death Valley National Park than anyone on earth. He spent the past decade looking for everything from tight canyons to massive drop-offs and is believed to have led or been involved with 203 of the 258 first descents in the park.

Death Valley has provided a select group of canyoneers the opportunity to rack up hundreds of spectacular first descents through the park's dramatic canyons. Of these first descenders, Scott Swaney, has distinguished himself as particularly committed to exploring, logging, and naming all of Death Valley's numerous canyons. At this year's banquet, Scott will share these experiences with us.

SILENT AUCTION

We continue our silent auction of donated items. Please contact Tracey Thomerson for more info. We wish to thank the following companies for their generous donations:



CLASSIC WILDERNESS and CLIMBERS CHEAP BOOK SALE

(Be sure to bring books to donate to the sale)

Name(s): _____ phone or email _____

Indicate number of each

Dinner selection: Prime Rib _____ Chicken _____ Vegan _____

Number of reservations:

\$45 (\$40 if DPS List Finisher) until May 1 _____ \$50 after May 1 _____ Total enclosed _____

Please reserve by May 1. Mail check, payable to DPS, and completed form to DPS Banquet Chair:
Tracey Thomerson, 6808 Falconview Lane, Oak Park, CA 91377. Tickets will be held at the door.
For Questions email: Tracey Thomerson at tthomerson@roadrunner.com



2017 Desert Peaks Section Ballot

Please vote for up to FIVE of the following candidates who are running for the Management Committee of the Desert Peaks Section:

- Tina Bowman
- Diana Neff-Estrada
- Laura Newman
- Sandy Lara
- Tracey Thomerson

Write-in Candidates _____

What could the Desert Peaks Section (DPS) do to help you to climb more Desert Peaks?

Ballots may be returned by mail to **Ron Bartell at 1556 21st Street, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266** on or before **May 19, 2017**. Just fold, tape, and affix a stamp. They may also be delivered by hand at the DPS Banquet on Sunday, May 21. If you would like to vote electronically in the future, please send your email address to Ron Bartell (ronbartell@yahoo.com).

If you would like to vote electronically in lieu of submitting a paper ballot, please click on the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FHZ5LFM>

Outings Chair by Leo Logacho



Greetings Everyone,

Leaders, please report any accidents or incidents promptly to the link below. There is a website for Leaders that also incorporates the LTC, OMC and Safety websites, which can be found at:

http://angeles.sierraclub.org/leadership_and_outings

An inspirational quote from the Sierra club founder:

“Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop away from you like the leaves of autumn”. *John Muir, The Mountains of California*

Thanks to all the leaders for organizing and leading multiple outings. The DPS had multiple outings during the winter and spring seasons. Let's keep up the great work. There are still a few outings left until summer. Please check out the DPS website for upcoming outings at <http://www.desertpeaks.org/> and join or ask a friend to join them before summer comes upon us.

Finally, if you enjoy the Desert Peaks and love to share Mother Nature's wonders with others, please inquire on how to become a leader.

Check this link for more information:

http://angeles.sierraclub.org/get_outdoors/becoming_leader

Regards,
Leo Logacho
leologacho@hotmail.com
DPS Outings Chair

DPS Membership Report by Ron Bartell

Membership Summary

<u>Type</u>	<u>Regular</u>	<u>Sustaining</u>
Member	115	24
Household	29	
Subscriber	23	2
Totals:	167	26

Activity Report

Achievements

Emblem

#592 Kelley Laxamana 2/20/17 Signal Peak

New Sustaining Member

Rick Craycraft Weavers Needle

Sustaining Renewals

Andy Knapp 1 year

Renewals

Mark Adrian 1 year
Misha Askren MD 1 year
Randy & Joyce Bernard 1 year
John Bregar 1 year
Ron Campbell 2 years
Bill Hauser 1 year
Kenneth Jones 5 years
Miriam Khamis 2 years
Edward H. Lubin 1 year
Gene R. Mauk 3 years
Don Raether 2 years
Penelope Smrz 1 year
Don Sparks 1 year
Bruce Trotter 1 year
Jim Wick 2 years

Donations

\$50 from Andy Knapp

Conservation Chair

by Dave Perkins



Great Basin Desert

The Great Basin Desert, a temperate desert with hot, dry summers and snowy winters, lies between the Sierra Nevada and the Wasatch Range. It is part of a geographical region that largely overlaps the Great Basin shrub steppe defined by the World Wildlife Fund, and the Central Basin and Range ecoregion defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and United States Geological

Survey. The desert spans a large part of the state of Nevada; extends into western Utah, eastern California, and Idaho; and is one of the four biologically defined deserts in North America in addition to the Mojave, Sonoran, and Chihuahuan Deserts.

Basin and range topography characterizes the desert: wide valleys bordered by parallel mountain ranges generally oriented north-south. There are more than 33 peaks within the desert with summits higher than 9,800 feet (3,000 m), but valleys in the region are also high, most with elevations above 3,900 feet (1,200 m). The biological communities of the Great Basin Desert vary according to altitude: from low, salty, dry lakes, up through rolling sagebrush valleys, to pinyon-juniper forests. The significant variation between valleys and peaks has created a variety of habitat niches, which has in turn led to many small, isolated populations of genetically unique plant and animal species throughout the region. More than 600 species of vertebrates live in the Great Basin. Sixty-three of these species have been identified as species of conservation concern due to contracting natural habitats (for example: Desert Kit Fox, Greater Sage Grouse, Ord's Kangaroo Rat, and Northern Desert Horned Toad).

The ecology of the desert also varies across geography. The desert's high elevation and location between mountain ranges influences regional climate: the desert formed by the rain shadow of the Sierra Nevada that blocks moisture from the Pacific Ocean, while the Rocky Mountains create a barrier effect that restricts moisture from the Gulf of Mexico. Different locations in the desert have different amounts of precipitation, depending on the strength of these rain shadows. The environment is also influenced by Pleistocene lakes that dried after the last ice age: Lake Lahontan and Lake Bonneville. Each of these lakes left different amounts of salinity and alkalinity. The climate of the Great Basin Desert is characterized by extremes: hot, dry summers and cold, snowy winters; frigid alpine ridges and warm, windy valleys; days over 90 °F (32 °C) followed by nights near 40 °F (4 °C). This is the climate of the high desert. On any given day, the weather across the Great Basin Desert is variable. The region is extremely mountainous, and the temperatures vary

depending on the elevation. In general, temperature decreases 3.6 degrees F for every 1000 feet gained in elevation. This translates to as much as a 30 °F (17 °C) difference between mountain tops and valley floors on the same day at the same time. In the heat of summer this difference can be even more pronounced. With some exceptions, wind generally increases with elevation or altitude, and thus strong winds are often encountered on mountain tops and ridges.

The biological communities of the Great Basin desert can be generally grouped into six general communities or "life zones". These communities are shadescale, sagebrush, pinyon juniper, montane, alpine, and riparian.

Shadescale Community

In the lower valley bottoms, mountain run off evaporates to create saline soils, is the shadescale zone. Plants in this community are adapted to living with very little precipitation, high heat, and saline conditions. Certain areas of the valley floors may harbor no life. These parched areas that flood periodically are called playas. On the shores of the playas, shadescale is the dominant plant, but is kept company by iodine bush, saltgrass, spiny hopsage, winterfat, four-winged saltbrush, and green rabbitbrush. Trees are not found in this community. Big greasewood is the dominant shrub in more saline areas or where the water table is high. These shrubs and associated grasses typically produce abundant small seeds that are harvested by rodents and insects. The soil salinity and lack of moisture in this zone is not very conducive to most agriculture; however, livestock grazing and grain farming have historically contributed to a decline in the already scattered vegetation.

Sagebrush Community

The drop in soil salinity and increase in moisture as elevation increases leads to a transition to sagebrush and grasses just above the shadescale zone. This expanse, called the sagebrush zone, constitutes the largest amount of land in the desert (38.7 percent) and is dominated by big sagebrush shrubland. Introduced annual grasses such as cheatgrass and halogeton also characterize this zone, although native bunchgrasses once thrived amongst sagebrush. Historical fire suppression, adjusted fire frequency following the introduction of annual grasses, and widespread livestock grazing have contributed to contraction of the sagebrush zone. Other shrubs commonly found in the sagebrush zone are rabbitbrush, bitterbrush, snowberry and Mormon tea (ephedra).

Pinyon Juniper Community

Continuing up in elevation, you reach the pinyon-juniper community. The main plants in this community are singleleaf pinyon pine and Utah juniper, often with a sagebrush and bitterbrush understory as well as other species of junipers. The elevational range of this zone varies, but it is usually found between 6,000 and 8,000 feet (1,800 and 2,400 m), with lower limits determined by lack of moisture and the upper limits determined by temperature. The pinyon-juniper community consists of short

(Continued on page 11)

Conservation Chair - continued

By Dave Perkins

(Continued from page 10)

evergreen trees that rarely grow over 20 feet in height. This zone of dense vegetation, made possible by thermal inversions and increased precipitation, is important to a wide variety of isolated animals that rely on this vegetation interface for survival (for example Palmer's chipmunk). The trees are widely spaced and have an understory of a mixture of shrubs and herbaceous plants, often with nearly bare ground. These characteristics have led this zone to be named the "pygmy forest" by many scientists. The lower end of this zone is dominated by juniper; the middle is a combination of both species, and the upper end is dominated by pinyon.

Montane Community

This community is found in the higher ranges of the Great Basin desert. Due to the great distances created by basins between these small forest habitats, various rock substrates, and local climates, montane forests are tremendously varied across the desert.

Isolated from one mountain range to the next, montane communities in the region have long individual histories, each one affected differently by chance factors of migration over vast expanses of desert. Smaller communities are also vulnerable to adverse effects of climate change and to genetic drift. White fir, Douglas fir, and ponderosa pines are found in the middle elevations of some mountain ranges, while limber pine, subalpine fir, Engelmann spruce, and bristlecone pines occupy the higher elevations, continuing to the upper tree line. Mountain mahogany often dominates drier, warmer south-facing slopes. Pure stands of aspen are also common in this community. The bristlecone pine is an important species that is indicative of this desert. The harsh areas they occupy are often devoid of other plant life, so there is little competition and reduced risk of fire. The trees grow very slowly, producing very dense, disease-resistant wood. These factors contribute to the bristlecone's long life.

Alpine Community

Some mountain ranges in the Great Basin desert are high enough to have an alpine community; a community of low growing plants above the treeline. Treeline is generally found above 10,000 feet (3,000 m) in the Great Basin desert moving downslope with higher latitudes. The plants that grow above treeline are separated from other such areas by miles of foothills and valleys. This "island" phenomenon produces many endemic species - species that have evolved while isolated on a particular mountain peak or range and are found only in that one place. Grasses, sedges, low perennial herbs, and wildflowers grow above treeline.

Riparian Community

The riparian communities of the Great Basin desert cut across all elevations and life zones. In the Great Basin desert, surface



Treasurer's Report

by Laura Newman

DPS Account Summary from
January 1, 2017 to
March 31, 2017

INCOME

Banquet Silent Auction	\$0.00
Banquet Ticket Sales	\$0.00
Donations	\$189.00
Membership/Subscriptions	\$1350.00
Merchandise	<u>\$93.50</u>

TOTAL INCOME **\$1632.50**

EXPENSES

Banquet Expenses	\$1455.35
Merchandise Expenses	\$7.24
Sage Mailing	\$484.73
Sage Printing	\$302.69
Sales Tax	\$6.80
Supplies	\$0.00
Web Page Expenses	<u>\$0.00</u>

TOTAL EXPENSES **\$2,256.81**

PAY PAL BALANCE **\$9.41**

CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE **\$2,686.42**

water is rapidly lost by evaporation or infiltration. However, areas around streams where plant life is abundant constitute a riparian area. Water-loving plants like willow, narrowleaf cottonwood, choke cherry, wild rose, and aspen are found along these wet areas. The willow has a spreading root network that allows it to reach all around for water and it also helps streams by slowing erosion. These plants provide wood for beavers. In this community, silver buffaloberry often provides shelter for North American porcupines. *Abstracted from Wikipedia.*

There are 116 peaks on the Toiyabe Great Basin Peaks Section list. Of these by my count, 21 are also on our Desert Peaks Section list. It has been my pleasure to visit almost all the DPS summits twice. The views and the wide scope of the land are inspirational, and the high elevation just plain fun.

Passages

Delores Holladay 1930-2017

Delores Marie Platte Holladay, age 87, passed away Monday, February 27, 2017 in Prescott, Arizona where she had lived for 3.5 years. She is survived by 6 children, 5 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren, many of whom live in Alaska. Delores was an avid mountaineer, having climbed in the Himalayas, on Mount McKinley, and on mountains in almost every continent. She was twice honored by the Sierra Club Desert Peaks Section, having climbed the section's almost 100 peaks list two times. Delores raised her family in Rolling Hills in the Palos Verdes, California area, and in Santa Barbara, where she was a wilderness Search and Rescue volunteer. After retiring from Union Bank, she lived in a little cabin by a creek below Mount Whitney in the Sierra Nevada mountains that she loved so much. She hung up her hiking boots at age 81, but the mountains have called her back again.

Many blessings with joy and sorrow,

Delores' children: Therese Holladay, Will Holladay, Joel Holladay, Alicia Holladay, Camilla Holladay, and Celeste Holladay

The old timers and youngsters in all three climbing sections who had the chance to hike and get to know Delores were saddened with the news of her passing. What a career this beautiful, eternally-skinny and classy lady had, which included climbing the great peaks, finishing her preferred lists, and traveling the world to various countries while enduring the jokes of travel guides, Randy Bernard and later Bob Wyka.

Delores got into peak climbing when she dropped off her son and his Boy Scout troop in the Sierra Nevada mountains for an outing, then she drove up to Whitney Portal. In tennis shoes and her signature outfit of a sleeveless, cotton blouse and short shorts, she took off up the Mount Whitney trail and got fairly far. But without a backpack, she was smart enough to turn back knowing she'd return SOON. Learning the ropes, both literally and

figuratively, she came back by herself and conquered her first Sierra peak, Mount Whitney.

In Delores' own description sent from daughter Therese, she recalled her climb up Mount Whitney, after having had her first taste of trail climbing when she had hiked in her nurse's shoes up those many switch backs a few weeks before. Returning home, she made blanket sleeping bags for her six children and packed them up for the hike to Trail Camp. Early in the morning, Delores put on her new hiking boots, left the three little girls in a tube tent, and with her sons hiked part way up until the boys left her and returned to camp to feed breakfast to their sisters. Later the boys passed the daylight hours trying to catch some fish for dinner. Mom was gone a long time, and the smallest girl stood and asked each hiker coming down, "Have you seen my mother?" Eventually, mom Delores returned to camp, having successfully climbed her first Sierra peak, and one above 14,000', Mount Whitney.



**Delores Holladay on Mount Lamarck, August 17, 1973.
Photo by Robert Cates.**

This would launch her career into joining the HPS, DPS, and SPS, and bagging the peaks on the various lists. In most of her photos, she wore her signature outfit, even when the rest of us were bundled up. An accomplished climber and trained at what we'd call today, an EMT paramedic, she was an asset on the Mount McKinley climb of June 1983, where Jackie Van Dalsem tragically died after she and her sled fell into a crevasse. Days later, the climb continued, and it was a huge disappointment when Delores was not allowed to go for the summit. Only a few would actually conquer the peak on that ill-fated trip. In later years, she always asserted she was strong enough to do it and wished she had.

Delores raised a big family of six children (following in the footsteps of fellow climber Edna Erspamer). She was a devoted mother, a devout believer in her faith, a person of integrity and kindness, plus had a terrific sense of humor. I can still hear her laughter. How fitting her last trip was in

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a Navigator crossing the desert from Prescott to Independence, where her body lies in rest at the local cemetery, facing the Eastern sun and her first peak, Mount Whitney. She is now free to roam the mighty Sierras, as her spirit moves her. Hers was a life full and well-lived, our unforgettable friend.

Mary McMannes

I opened my email and read the sad news that on Monday, February 27, 2017 our climbing friend Delores Holladay, after 87 years on this earth, had passed peacefully to meet our Lord. I knew that I had to go, but I wasn't looking forward to the long drive up US Highway 395 to Independence, California for the Wednesday, March 15th funeral for our climbing friend. Back in the 1960's we looked forward to escaping the city on Friday after work and driving till midnight and sleeping behind a sage bush



Delores Holladay coiling the climbing rope the morning after a private climb of Cheops Pyramid in the Grand Canyon, November 14-16, 1974.

Photo by Robert Cates.

for an early start climb to Mount So-and-So. Old age had gotten to me! I decided to drive up on Tuesday in the daylight.

As I drove up SR 14, I passed the Mojave airport on my right; I saw the rows of old airplanes and airframes in storage and thought of times that Delores had joined us in flights to explore the world. In February of 1999, we flew to Singapore and took the 2nd class train for 2000 miles through Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to Bangkok, Thailand, and on to Chiang Mai and the Golden Triangle. We then flew over to Angkor Wat, Siem Reap, Cambodia.

In March of 2001, Delores again flew with us to Helsinki, Finland and then to Saint Petersburg and Moscow, Russia, then we took the fast ferry boat to Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, and then flew to Prague, Czech Republic. She enjoyed seeing the world!

At sunset I drove thought the city of Lone Pine, which was full of tourists driving to Death Valley to see the wild flowers that were in full bloom because of the extra heavy rains of February. I rented a motel room and enjoyed the warm shower. In the morning during breakfast the view of Sierra was fantastic as the snow was at 175% of normal. I was able to relax on a bench and admire Mount Whitney, which was the first peak that Delores climbed. She became a SPS Emblem holder on October 24th, 1975, and a DPS list finisher on November 29th, 1985 on Cerro Pinacate. By the time she retired from climbing she had summited 800 peaks.

I then drove the last 15 miles to Independence for the 2 PM service at Saint Vivian's Catholic Church, which is located just north of the Inyo County Courthouse. The funeral director's hearse was parked in front of Saint Vivian. He had driven the funeral coach, a big, black, shiny 4 wheel drive Lincoln Navigator from Prescott, Arizona. About twelve of Delores' family came from Prescott, Alaska, and California and met us at the church. Scott Sullivan and Elena Sherman came with Bob Wyka from Southern California and told us about Delores' adventures in Nepal and Island Peak in the Himalayas. Campy and Ski Camphausen, who knew Dolores from her time as a Wilderness Search and Rescue volunteer, drove down from Bishop. Delores had six children: Therese, Will, Joel, Alicia, Camilla, and Celeste. Also, her granddaughter sang "Ave Maria" at the Funeral Mass. Afterwards, we drove a mile over to the Independence Cemetery for the burial ceremony. About 4 PM, we rode over to the Mount Whitney fish hatchery; Delores had lived nearby for 3 or 4 years before being driven out by a forest fire that had



Independence Cemetery and the snow capped Sierra Nevada Mountains in the background.

Photo by Randy Bernard.

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leveled her cabin. She always loved the tail gate parties after the hike. We had cheese and wine next to the fish pond at the hatchery and told stories of a classy lady.

The Mountains have called her back again.

Randy Bernard

I had the great fortune of climbing many fine peaks in the company of Delores Holladay in the early and mid-1970s. She was a stalwart climber and always willing to take on any adventure, such as coming with me and Jon Hart on our second recorded ascent of Cheop's Pyramid in the Grand Canyon in 1974. She had the gracious temperament of a fine southern belle, with nary a negative comment about anyone.

Robert Cates

I just remember Delores as a very fun and very spirited young woman. I say that because her personality and energy belied her age. I had no idea she was 20 plus years older than me until I met her daughter Therese at Cal Poly, Pomona in the 70's where we were both going to college. Delores loved to climb peaks like I did, so we seemed to hit it off very quickly, climbing many HPS, SPS, and DPS peaks over the years. Delores came over to my condo several times for dinner when we weren't hiking.

Nepal was a natural extension of our hiking friendship. Delores went with me twice. The first time was when I climbed Island Peak (November of 1989, I believe). Delores and I made it to high camp where we tented with Andy Selters who was leading the climb for the American Alpine Institute. Delores didn't make it past that high camp, but we sure had a lot of fun together laughing and trying to stay warm. The second trip was a climb I put together with our dear friend Ang Karma Sherpa to climb Mera Peak and Island Peak in the Solo Khumbu area of Nepal (near Everest). Many well known SPS'ers couldn't wait to sign up. R.J. Secor wrote a trip report up but on first look I can't seem to find it on the SPS archives. I know it is in one of the Echo's from 1992.

Another trip that I did with Delores was to Turkey. It was 1989. I had just climbed the Matterhorn with Ang Karma Sherpa and the three of us rendezvoused in Istanbul. We were there to climb Mount Ararat. We flew into Ankara, and from there hopped onto a bus to travel the 1400 kms to Doğubeyazıt, Turkey, a two day bus ride to the east next to Iran. We didn't really think this through very well! Delores

was a great traveling companion, never the one to complain. We eventually got to the base of Ararat but were turned around when the military stopped us. To this day I haven't figured out why we couldn't climb. But we retreated back to Northern Turkey to the Kaçkar Mountains (another 8 hour bus ride) and did some hiking in this remote and beautiful area. We visited some small villages and Delores fell in love with the people. Meanwhile, Karma was using the bus system to travel Turkey on his own. Delores and I reconnected with Karma in Istanbul and went on to Nepal to climb Island Peak. When I went to Delores funeral her family never knew that she had been to Turkey. I shared my story with them as well as some Nepal adventures.

Bob Wyka

A final "how I started climbing" story highlights the almost accidental way some were captivated by the mountains, the easy access climbers had to mountains in the 1960s and 70s, and the innocence of American society in those decades. Delores Holladay, mother of six, drove a son to a Boy Scout outing at North Lake, and instead of driving home, she said, "my car just went up to Whitney Portal," the trailhead to Mount Whitney, highest peak in California. She slept in her car, and the next morning she accepted two peaches and a half cup of raisins from someone (the little store there had not opened yet) and set off for the peak in nurse's shoes. Above the upper trail camp on switchbacks, someone showed her the peak, and, realizing she could not reach the summit that day, she drove home. A few weeks later, having made blanket sleeping bags for her children, she packed them all up and they hiked in to a trail camp. Next morning early, she and her sons left the three little girls in a tube tent, and while Delores kept on to the 14,496' summit, her sons went down and packed up the camp. Waiting for their mother, they baited a line, caught a fish and cooked it, while one daughter kept asking all the hikers coming down if they had seen her mother.

Karen Leonard

Delores' DPS and SPS Climbing Accomplishments

DPS Emblem	February 24, 1974
DPS First List Finish	November 29, 1985
DPS Second List Finish	April 4, 1997
SPS Emblem	October 24, 1975
SPS Senior Emblem	September 1, 1983



Jim Morehouse, Don Raether, and Mark Butski on their way to Signal Peak (photo by Greg Gerlach).

Trip Reports

Villager Peak (5,756'), Rabbit Peak (5,623'), and Ruth Benchmark (5,070')

By Greg Gerlach

February 11, 2017

I met Jim Morehouse at the Villager and Rabbit Peaks trailhead located along Highway S22 around 7:30 p.m. on Friday night, where we spent the night. Jim and I were up at 4:10 a.m. and hiking at 5:10 a.m. from the trailhead, Jim heading to Villager Peak and Rabbit Peak and I heading to Villager Peak and Ruth Benchmark. We walked across the desert trying to follow the use trail in the dark for about one mile, then started up the ridge. For the most part, the route up the ridge is a well defined use trail up to the top of Villager Peak. About half way up a fellow named Max caught up with us; Max said that he has tried and failed seven times to ascend Villager, and hoped to be successful this time. I detected a slight accent, and asked if he was Canadian, thinking that he was a snowbird escaping the winter. He said "no, I'm from the UK," then promptly added "I have a green card". I guess his response is a sign of the times from an immigrant. Jim, Max and I continued up the use trail to the summit of Villager Peak, where all three of us signed the peak register. Max took a few photos, including one of Jim and me in a group shot, then asked me to take a photo of him on the summit. Max was happy to be on top, but soon said his goodbyes and headed down.

Afterwards, Jim and I headed down the north side of Villager toward Rabbit Peak, passing two tents along the way. The use trail to Rabbit across the up and down ridge is faint or non-existent; however, the route is very obvious. Just prior to Peak 5859, I headed to Ruth Benchmark and Jim continued on to Rabbit Peak. From the ridge, I dropped down a slope to a drainage course, then contoured over and up to Ruth BM, which is just a bump on Rabbit's ridge. Ruth BM is on an old list called the "San Diego Peaks Club List", which was an active list from the late 1980's to the early 2000's and is what the Sierra Club's San Diego 100 Peaks list is based on. I've been working on this list for the last several years, and this was number 114 out of a total of 117 peaks for me. I know of three people climbing this old list, and the

only people who have completed the list, as far as I know, are DPS members John Strauch and Terry Flood. I looked around for the summit register for about 10 minutes, finally locating it as well as the survey benchmarks slightly below the high point on its east side. The register, which was placed in 1992 by a SDPC group, listed 12 ascents of the peak between the first



Ruth Benchmark from the north. The Salton Sea can be seen in the background.

entry in the register in 1992 and the last entry in 2003, all by SDPC members. My ascent was the first ascent since 2003.

I didn't like my route over to Ruth, so I climbed up the ridge to about 5,600' in elevation, then contoured over and up to the saddle located south of Rabbit Peak, where I met up with Jim after he successfully climbed Rabbit Peak. Jim is working on the DPS list for the second time, and this was number 66. Jim reported that on the way up to Rabbit he ran into two women, who failed on four previous attempts of Rabbit, and finally made it this time. Also, they were the owners of the two tents located on Villager Peak, and were climbing Rabbit as a three day backpack. Jim and I took a break at the saddle, then made the long trek out to the vehicles, arriving about 11:10 p.m., for an 18 hour day for these two "old guys".

Trip statistics: 22.3 miles and 8,300' of elevation gain.

Trip Reports - continued

Klinker Mountain (5,462') and Dome Mountain (4,974')

By Debbie Bulger

Photos by Richard Stover

February 20-21, 2017

Klinker Mountain and Dome Mountain are two small peaks in the tiny Golden Valley Wilderness located northeast of Randsburg. After delaying our trip because of the heavy rain and mudslides, which blocked most of the highways leading in and out of Santa Cruz, Richard Stover and I finally got away.

On February 20, we explored the nearby Steam Wells Road, which is just south of the trailhead. It looked familiar. I had driven down this dirt road in the mid 1980s in my little Subaru wagon and had gotten stuck in the sand. There, more than 30 years ago I met Walter, an aging, self-proclaimed “desert rat” who was living in the shed housing a steam pipe. My friend Ken and I watched as Walter demonstrated how to turn on the valve which filled his modest abode with steam. He offered us coffee and told us where to find petroglyphs.



The remains of Walter's home at Steam Well.

Today that steam well is capped and the shack gone, although there are bits and pieces of the past strewn

about: steel pieces, crockery, and a pile of curious E braces looking for all the world like a broken eye test chart.



An optometrist somewhere is missing parts of her test chart.

The petroglyphs are still there, although some of the best ones have been chipped out of the rock and stolen. I had come to this remote corner of the desert long ago because I was chasing Pilot Knob, a beautifully layered brown and white parfait of a peak, which can be seen from Highway 14. Unfortunately, Pilot Knob is on the China Lakes Naval Weapons Station, and the navy does not allow access to people such as me. Over the next few years I tried many times to get permission to climb that peak to no avail. But that's another story.

That afternoon Richard and I camped at the trailhead for Klinker and Dome Mountains. The trailhead is located at the apex of the looped RM174, an off-highway vehicle road in BLM's Red Mountain Subregion. This road is about 1.7 miles north of Steam Wells Road. We hiked up the broad canyon leading to the ridge and explored the route we would take the next day. There was a shallow cave previously used as a bivy site, perhaps by a lonesome miner, and across the canyon there was a much larger one, which we named Owl Cave. There, owls had lived. Also, there were lots of raptor stains on the

Trip Reports - continued

walls under perches. The floor of the cave was littered with small bones and owl pellets.

The next morning we left our vehicle at 6:30 a.m. and followed the former jeep road (now in the wilderness area) up the canyon. We decided to gain the ridge via



Richard Stover and Debbie Bulger hunkered down to get out of the fierce wind on the summit of Dome Mountain.



View to the southeast from the summit of Dome Mountain.

the nose of the slope rather than by the saddle as described in the route info that we had from previous climbers. The predicted storm was not supposed to hit until late afternoon, but clouds hid our view. We couldn't see Klinker Mountain, but there was no chance for navigational error: just follow the ridge.

On Klinker's summit the weather started to clear. We got glimpses of Cuddeback Dry Lake. Then on to Dome Mountain.

The wide bowl between the two peaks was easy hiking. We left tracks in the mud. There was actual water in the drainage between the two peaks this wet year. We found a lost balloon (Mylar) and remnants of latex balloons. If you must let a balloon go, let it be latex, which eventually breaks down. Mylar is forever. We saw the dried stalks of a special flower I have never seen in bloom: the Desert Candle.

Strong winds met us on the top of Dome Mountain. We hunched down on the leeward side of the summit rocks and had a snack before heading back to Klinker Mountain. Amazingly, not far from the summit we met another couple, Robin and John from Santa Cruz County of all places! Small world.

Rain was threatening. Dark clouds were moving in from the south. We hurried back to our vehicle and took refuge in Ridgecrest.

Lookout Mountain (4,100')
By Debbie Bulger
Photos by Richard Stover
February 22, 2017

Lookout Mountain is an easy hike with an especially interesting ghost town on the summit.

Richard Stover and I had arrived near the base of the mountain the evening before, intending to sleep in our truck. The wind was so fierce we decided it would be impossible to cook supper and settled for sharing a can of sweet potatoes, some applesauce, and half a bag of popcorn. And of course, home baked chocolate date bars.

Trip Reports - continued

Up early the next morning we debated on the best approach. Most of the dirt roads appeared to have suffered serious wash outs and were either not discernible or more like rock piles than roads. Originally, we had planned to park at the junction of the Nadeau Trail with the road now labeled “LO City,” but we discovered the intersection with the Nadeau Trail has been obliterated. Since we did not have that landmark, we traveled up the canyon farther than we had planned. If you intend to go, take the road signed “LO City” and don’t expect a junction.

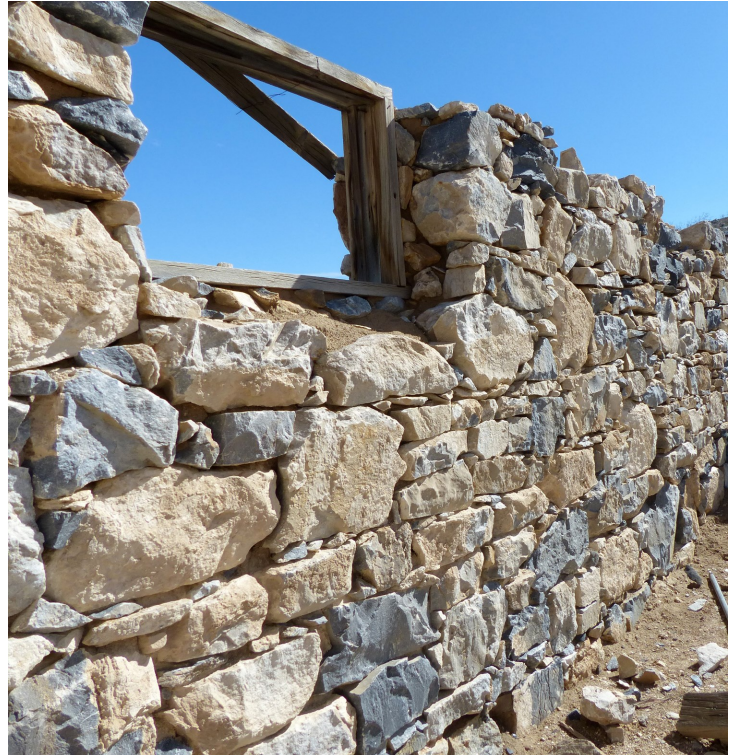
Our plan was to hike up the Pack Trail as described in Digonnet’s book *Hiking Western Death Valley National Park* and return via the China Wall Trail. Without a topo map and road junction to guide us, however, we overshot our route. Instead, we hiked up the north ridge to the true summit following a maze of burro trails.

Did I mention there are feral burros here? The ancestors of these cute creatures accompanied miners on their treks a hundred years or more ago. Some of them got tired of carrying ore and mining equipment and escaped to a life in the desert.



We watched burros and they watched us.

From the summit, after enjoying views of snowy Telescope Peak, we followed a road to the lower east summit to explore the remnants of Lookout City. In its heyday in 1877, Lookout had over 50 buildings,



The walls of this general store ruins are straight and true, even after more than 130 years.

including 5 saloons. The famous Wildrose Canyon kilns were erected to produce charcoal for the smelters at the silver mines surrounding Lookout. The precision stonework of some of the buildings in Lookout City and that on the roads and trails was built by Chinese craftsmen.

Perhaps ten buildings survive in various states of decay. They and the network of stone walls are the true treasures of this ghost town.

Lookout lasted less than five years. Once the major mine shut down, the miners moved on. Present residents have more than two legs.

After exploring the ghost town, we hiked down the Stock Trail thinking it was the China Wall Trail because of its stone retaining walls. When we reached the bottom, we figured out where we actually were. We plan to return to find and hike on the China Wall Trail.

Trip Reports - continued

Pahrump Point (5,740')
By Gary Schenk
Photos by Tina Bowman
March 18, 2017

Leaders and participants met at the Crowbar Café in Shoshone on Friday night at 7PM. The intention had been 6PM, but LA traffic dictated otherwise. After a good meal and good service we headed out SR 178 to Furnace Creek Road and drove in a bit over a mile to “camp” on the road. With everyone prepared to sleep in the cars, this worked out great.

The next morning we caravanned to the trailhead for Pahrump Point and started up a faint road at 7AM. The



Pahrump Point from the east.

2017 superbloom hadn't visited this part of the desert yet, but we saw some nice desert chicory. About a mile in we spotted a gravesite to the right of the road. The headstone was not inscribed. My theory involved the Manson gang, Tina thought it was a bit far from Goler Wash for that.

About this time we were overtaken by a young couple from San Francisco. They'd seen our cars parked and figured something interesting must be up here. They joined us as far as the “abrupt” end of the road.

It was a pleasant day and we enjoyed the hike up the canyon. Tina led most of the way. The group allowed me to lead here and there, at least until I inevitably lost the use trail. Tina did a fine job “connecting the dots” and the climb went without a hitch.



Front to back, Mary Jo Dungfelder, Ron Eckelmann and Gary Schenk on Pahrump Point's summit ridge.

We spent a good hour on the summit. The views were nice, Telescope Peak and Mount Charleston covered with snow.

We headed down, Tina asking me to take the lead. The canyon was soon echoing with cries of “Hey, we came up over there!” and “Gary, the trail is over there!” and “Where's he going now?”

We had made the bottom of the canyon when I suddenly heard locusts. I froze midstride. The others heard it, too, even though they were on the use trail across the canyon. I didn't want to move until I knew where the buzzworm was, but could not spot it. Finally, looking down I saw him about a foot and a half behind my right foot, coiled and ready to go. This little tableau lasted for just a bit. Then the snake relaxed, lowered his head and quit rattling. I took a couple of very slow steps, looked back, and that beautiful pinkish-red Panamint rattler was already slithering away.

The rest of the hike out was uneventful, that is if you consider hiking in spectacular terrain on a perfect day uneventful. Thanks to Tina Bowman, Mary Jo Dungfelder and Ron Eckelmann for making this trip a wonderful reminder why hiking around Death Valley is such a joy.

DPS Potlucks

By Roving Girl Reporter Mary McMannes

Potluck Gatherings of the Old, the Bold, the Restless

February 12th found many of us wearing red for Valentine's Day and hanging out at Kathy Rich's beautiful corner house in Pasadena. When we arrived, management was



From left to right, Jack Wickel, former DPS Chair Jim Fleming, DPS Mountaineering Committee member Tina Bowman, John Fleming, potluck hostess and DPS Webmaster Kathy Rich, and DPS Chair Paul Cooley at the February 12th potluck.



From left to right, potluck hostess and DPS Webmaster Kathy Rich, Mary McMannes, and DPS Mountaineering Committee member Tina Bowman at the February 12th potluck.

busy meeting in another room: Tina and Kathy, chair Paul Cooley along with Laura Newman, Mike Dillenbeck (from HPS), Tracey Thomerson, Jorge and Diana Estrada. The rest of us opened wine bottles and began imbibing. It was great seeing Jack Wickel plus Kathy's long time friend Chris, Jim and John Fleming. Delightful food choices appeared, especially Tracy's homemade sauerkraut and sausages and Paul's gingerbread squares. There were lots of conversations about summer trips and seeing the pending full eclipse. Word has it that Brian Smith is finishing the Colorado list of 54 "14ers," with a summit on one of the Ivy League peaks near Buena Vista, Princeton or Yale? Then he and Gloria will hightail it to Wyoming for the eclipse.

On March 12th and the arrival of Daylight Savings Time found us at Tom Sumner's house in Sylmar – always a treat



From left to right, Jim Hinkley and the March 12th DPS potluck host Tom Sumner.

to gather around his kitchen island and later retreat outside for cool evening breezes from the local mountains. Three dogs were present along with Jim Hinkley, Jan and David Reneric, Ellen and Ron Grau, Jack Wickel, John and Jim Fleming, Julie Rush, Edna Erspamer, Tina Bowman, Julie Rush, Tracey Thomerson, Paul Cooley, Diana Estrada, and Dan Richter. Julie gave us thumbs up that Bobcat Thompson was turning 70 and friends were invited to a hike and party in La Canada at the end of April.

On April 9th, our annual spring fling was in Long Beach at Larry and Barbee Tidball's, and as usual, a bigger crowd appeared with many homemade dishes. The food delight

DPS Potlucks – continued

By Roving Girl Reporter Mary McMannes



From left to right, Jan Brahms, DPS Secretary Diane Estrada, and DPS Banquet Chair Tracey Thomerson at the March 12th potluck hosted by Tom Sumner.

old recipe that had been handed down for generations. There was no schenking from having seconds. Paul Cooley reminded folks to buy their DPS banquet tickets and



From left to right, new DPS members John and Missy Padka and DPS Chair Paul Cooley at the April 9th potluck hosted by Larry and Barbee Tidball.

of the evening was the constant and ever-changing pizzas coming from Barbee's oven. Jan Brahms had made the incredible tasty pizza dough with Barbee and Elaine Bald-

gave an appeal for someone to serve as DPS chair and give him a break. Thanks, Larry and Barbee for hosting our spring gathering once again at your beautiful house and gardens. We never leave hungry or asking for more. Sorry we couldn't lure the Bartells from Europe or the Sholles from Mammoth, even with the promise of Mary's cheesy potatoes.



From left to right, the pizza creators and servers, Dave Reneric, potluck hostess Barbee Tidball, Sage Mailer Elaine Baldwin, and Jan Brahms at the April 9th potluck.

win supplying the toppings. David Reneric, our trusty waiter kept refilling the pizza platter and serving us individually. Best pizza I've ever had! Gary Schenk surprised us all with a lemon flavored Chess pie, well-known to all who have Midwestern pioneer roots. He told us it came from an



DPS Conservation Chair Dave Perkins with Ann Perkins at the April 9th potluck hosted by Larry and Barbee Tidball.



DESERT BOOKS

By Burton Falk

The quotations contained in the following essay can be attributed to the following volumes:

THE TAOS TRADERS: The Fur Trade in the Far Southwest, 1540-1846 (1968), David J. Weber

EWING YOUNG: Master Trapper, (1967), Kenneth L. Holmes

THE PERSONAL NARRATIVE OF JAMES O. PATTIE (1831), James Ohio Pattie, edited by Timothy Flint

THE GILA, (1951), Edwin Corle

KIT CARSON'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY (1935), Kit Carson, edited by Milo Milton Quaife

THE HISTORIC DESERT: THE LATE 1820s AND THE TAOS TRAPPERS

The first non-natives to set foot in the Sonoran and Mojave Deserts and the Great Basin were driven by the prospect of finding a city whose streets were paved with gold, converting the native people to Christianity, and establishing an overland route between Sonora and California.

By the early 1800s, however, a new force--the demand for beaver pelts--became the prime mover for desert explorations. Indeed, in 1826, Jedediah Smith, along with a small band of fellow trappers, blazed a trail from southwestern Utah, following the Virgin and Colorado Rivers, to Southern California. The following spring, Smith and two of his men, after a successful season of trapping along the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada, made the first crossing of the Great Basin, west to east, from Ebbetts Pass to the Great Salt Lake.

Although Smith and most other trappers had been operating in Canada and the Greater Northwest, beaver were also plentiful in New Mexico, Arizona, and along the lower Colorado River. The problem was that, until control of those areas was ceded to Mexico in February 1821, the xenophobic Spanish authorities were unhappy with foreigners entering their borders for any reasons. When the change did occur, the news was slow to reach the outlying areas, and it wasn't until September of that year that officials in Santa Fe abruptly reversed Spanish policy by allowing foreign merchants and trappers to enter New Mexico.

The Arrival of Trappers in New Mexico

In his volume, *The Taos Trappers: The Fur Trade in the Far Southwest, 1540-1846* (1968), David J. Weber notes that prior to Mexican control of New Mexico, "(a)lthough some trappers might have succeeded in obtaining supplies or wintering in Taos, Abiquiu, or more remote villages, neither the French nor the Americans were able to penetrate effectively the Spanish trade barrier." Soon after the Mexicans took over, however, those few early trappers were "joined by others who would come to know the New Mexican settlements, the Rockies, and the Southwest even more intimately."

Among the newcomers were Ewing Young, "a tall Tennessee carpenter," and James Ohio Pattie, born in Ohio but most recently from Missouri, both of whom will be considered in more detail below.

By 1824, working out of Taos and Santa Fe, those early trappers had expanded their operations to such an extent that, after three seasons of concentrated trapping on the Rio Grande and its tributaries, the beaver stocks were depleted to the point that finding new sources of pelts was a necessity.

As a result, during the 1824-25 trapping season*, many New Mexican trappers moved northwest into present day Utah where they encountered "ruthless competition" from the Hudson's Bay Company and other American trappers, including the likes of Jedediah Smith, James Beckwourth, and Joseph Walker.

The 1825-26, 1826-27 Seasons

Disappointed in the results in Utah, during the 1825-26 season a group including James O. Pattie most likely became the first to trap the Gila River in what is now Arizona. On their return to New Mexico in the spring of 1826, their glowing reports of success created a stampede to the Gila that fall.

In September, eager to return to the hunt, Pattie joined a party of French trappers led by Michel Robidoux, heading for the Gila near its junction of the Salt River. There they encountered a group of seemingly friendly Indians--thought by Pattie to be Papagos, but more likely to be Apaches or Yavapais--who invited the men to spend the night in their village. All agreed to do so, with the exception of the suspicious Pattie, who camped some distance away. During the night, he was awakened by the sounds of violence and

Desert Books - continued

was soon joined by Robidoux and an unidentified Frenchman. Next morning, discovering that their companions had all been slain, Pattie and the two survivors made their escape, heading up either the Salt or Gila River where they came across a party of trappers led by Ewing Young.

Young and his group, along with the three survivors, then returned to the site of the massacre where, as Weber describes it, their "rifles spoke out with deadly results. A number of braves fell, and the rest ran. The whole village hurried off toward a nearby mountain, leaving one old blind and deaf man, who was not molested by the trappers."

Pattie remained with Young's outfit for the balance of the 1826-27 season. The men trapped up and down the Salt and Verde rivers, then followed the Gila to the Yuma crossing, becoming the first Americans to make the trek. From there they moved up the Colorado to the Mojave villages where another fight between natives and trappers ensued. As Kenneth L. Holmes describes the incident in his 1965 volume, *Ewing Young, Master Trapper*, a Mojave "chief demanded horses, and to impress the trappers he shot an arrow into a tree. Ewing Young made no other reply than by raising his gun and shooting the arrow, as it still stuck in the tree, in two. The next day the chief returned and again demanded a horse. When Young refused him, the Indian threw a spear at the animal in question. The trappers immediately opened fire with their rifles, and the chief fell with four bullets in him. Another day brought a full-fledged attack by the Indians, but the rifles were too much for them. The trappers shot sixteen of their number. The rest fled."

As evidenced, Young and his men were firm in their dealings with the Indians. As Holmes continues, "(T)hey believed that there was only one way to impress these native peoples, and that was to deal out severe and immediate retaliation when a trapping party had been attacked. It was their feeling that if one showed weakness toward the Indians, or even too much kindness, one would be apt to have his scalp lifted at some future time."

Young's harsh measures, however, inflamed the Mojaves. In August 1827, a few months after the skirmish between Young's trappers and the Indians, Jedediah Smith and his group of trappers, while on their second trip to California, arrived in the Mojave villages, where their encounter with the once friendly people soon turned deadly.

Dale Morgan describes Smith's fatal encounter in his 1953 volume, *Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West*, thusly: "Jedediah had no intimation that (the Mojaves') hearts were bad. He remained three days among them, recruiting his horses and trading a few articles of merchandise for beans, wheat, corn, dried pumpkins and melons." On or about August 18, "leaving the horses and half of the company on

the left (east) bank, Jedediah loaded a part of his goods on rafts of cane grass, and moved out on the broad river. The Mohaves** had waited patiently for this moment. Raising the war cry, they fell on the ten men and two women who remained behind...Within minutes all the men... were dead and the two women were prisoners."



EWING YOUNG

MASTER TRAPPER

Kenneth L. Holmes

The First New Mexican Trappers Arrive in California

While Jedediah Smith and his group, in 1826, were the first trappers to reach coastal California, the credit for the first trappers from New Mexico to reach the Golden State is attributed to Richard Campbell and his band, who trailed Smith by a year. Campbell, at the end of the 1826-27 trapping season, leaving the Gila/Lower Colorado area, reportedly led his group of thirty-five men, first to San Diego, and then on to San Francisco where they sold their furs to the captain of a Russian ship. As Weber notes, however,

Desert Books - continued

Campbell "remains an obscure figure in the fur trade of the Southwest" and that his route to California "remains unclear." Although it is usually assumed that the group departed from the mouth of the Gila--perhaps via the route Anza established crossing the present-day Imperial Valley in 1776 and 1778--this is not certain. Campbell later remembered taking a more northerly route, perhaps from Zuñi, the Hopi pueblos, across the Colorado at the Crossing of the Fathers, then heading west, north of the Grand Canyon.

In the summer of 1828, a group led by Sylvester Pattie, James Pattie's father, and twenty-four trappers--including James--left Taos heading for the Gila River. There, as described by the younger Pattie in his *The Personal Narrative of James O. Pattie*, they found, "but few beaver remaining (on the Gila), and those few were exceedingly shy." The men then continued on to trap the San Pedro River, which yielded beaver in "considerable number." Later, reaching the Colorado, the group split up, most heading north, while the Patties and six fellow trappers opted to continue down the river.

The Patties' decision was cause for much misadventure, including having all their horses stolen, burning an Indian village in revenge, killing two Indians who they suspected of being horse thieves, and building four canoes in which to float down the Colorado to its mouth where they believed they would find a settlement. As Weber continues, "Instead of finding a settlement, they found themselves in a desolate area with no sign of beaver, many signs of Indians, and no way to navigate back up the river." To add to their discomfort, though it was winter, Pattie described the weather as "exceedingly warm." They cached their furs along the river bank and set out west, crossing Laguna Salada and the Sierra de Juarez of northern Baja, only to be taken as prisoners upon reaching the Mission Santa Catalina***, east of Ensenada. Correctly--as history was soon to prove--the Mexicans were suspicious of foreigners.

Pattie's *Personal Narrative*--which Edwin Corle, in his 1951 volume, *The Gila*, described as "interlarded with such preposterous adventures to the point of monotonous reading"--explained what happened next in often self-glorifying terms. After the trappers were transferred from Mission Santa Catalina to San Diego, the governor of Alta California, Jose Maria Echeandía concluded that the Americans were spies and had them reimprisoned. While locked up, young Pattie, by acting as a translator for Echeandía, gained permission for six of his fellow trappers to return to the Colorado to recover their cached pelts. Of those sent out, however, two made their way back to New Mexico, while the remaining four brought back the news that all the pelts had been water damaged and were worthless. Unsympathetic, the governor had the returnees reincarcerated.

While the failed recovery effort was in progress, the Patties, father and son, remained as hostages, locked away in separate prison cells. Sadly, Sylvester Pattie died alone in his cell, even while his son was forbidden to see him. In his *Narrative*, Pattie explains that after "some" months in prison, a smallpox epidemic broke out in northern California, and because Pattie knew how to administer smallpox vaccine, the governor asked him to help inoculate the populace. Pattie refused to do so unless he was set free. After a brief stalemate, Echeandía granted Pattie and his four fellow trappers year-long paroles, reserving the option to remand them to prison if he so chose. Setting off from San Diego, the five men started moving north up the chain of missions, first to San Luis Mission at Oceanside, then to San Juan Capistrano, San Gabriel, et al., inoculating hundreds if not thousands on their way. At Monterey, the Americans took part in squelching a revolt against the governor, and as a reward Echeandía offered them all Mexican citizenships.

Pattie refused the offer, departed California by ship in May, 1830, traveled across Mexico, up the Mississippi, and arrived in Ohio in August, 1831, where he--with the obvious help of a comma-happy editor--wrote and published *Narrative*. Nothing of further significance was heard from James O. Pattie again, and it is believed he perished in June, 1833, in a cholera epidemic that began in Augusta, Kentucky.

So, while Pattie was skirmishing with Indians, serving prison time in San Diego, and performing mass inoculations, what was Ewing Young up to? Well, after returning to New Mexico at the end of the 1826-27 trapping season, Young found himself beset with legal problems. Fighting being jailed, he was also attempting to recover a wealth of pelts which had been confiscated by authorities, both problems due to the fact he had been trapping in what is now Arizona without proper permission. Those difficulties, plus a health problem, caused Young to remain in New Mexico during the two trapping seasons, 1827-28, and 1828-29. Young's inactivity, however, was destined to become a bright spot in the history of the desert west. In December, 1827, Christopher (Kit) Carson--later to become famous as a guide, scout, and Indian agent--an eighteen year old runaway from an apprenticeship to a saddler in Franklin, Missouri, arrived in Santa Fe, where Young employed him as a cook.

In August, 1829, at long last, Young and a band of forty trappers left Taos, heading for what they hoped would be a bountiful trapping season in California. Because they, again, didn't have permission to trap in the west, Young's party, which included both Carson and Peg-leg Smith (later to become a notorious horse thief), started off north, up the Rio Grande, along the Old Spanish Trail. After some fifty miles, they veered off to the southwest, and headed, illegally, for the White Mountains, the headwaters of the Salt River.

Desert Books – continued

Once in Arizona, Young and his group trapped down the Salt, then turned up the Verde River, continuing all the way to its headwaters just above present-day town of Ashfork, Arizona. There, as reported by Carson, "We were nightly harassed by Indians, who would frequently crawl into our camp, steal a trap or two, kill a mule or horse, and do whatever damage they could."

Splitting up at that point, half the trappers began their return to New Mexico, while Young's group, consisting of twenty-one men, started west for California.

It took four waterless days for the west-bound trappers to travel through high, dry desert country, which, according to Carson, "had never been explored," before arriving at a spring near present-day Truxton, Arizona. Recuperating there for two days, the group took another four days to reach the Colorado River at a spot believed to be about forty miles northeast of present Needles, CA. Resting along the river for three days, the trappers refilled their deer-skin water bags and started west again, taking three days to reach the Mojave River--a well-traveled Indian trade route. After that, as Holmes notes, "(t)hey traveled up the Mohave's sandy bed for another four days and then worked their way down through Cajon Pass to the region near the present site of San Bernardino, turned west, and reached the Mission of San Gabriel four days later."

And San Gabriel is where, for now, we'll leave Young and his Taos trappers. In the next chapter of the Historic Desert, "The Early 1830's," we'll follow the trappers' further adventures, delve into California's nascent, cross-desert horse and mule trade, and consider the first commercial uses of the 'Old Spanish Trail.'

.*Beaver pelts were best taken during the colder month when the fur was thicker and glossier. During the warm summer months the pelts became less valuable.

** Mojave or Mohave? Both spellings are correct, the version with the 'J' in most common use today. There is a Mohave County in Arizona, however, and the 'H' version is used here to be true to the original quotations.

*** Also called Mission Santa Catarina, the mission, now a ruin, was located near the pass of Portezuelo on an ancient Indian route that led from the mouth of the Colorado River to the Pacific Coast. The DPS peaks, **Pico Risco** and **Picacho del Diablo** are located some 30 air miles to the north, and some 43 air miles to the south of the mission's ruins respectively.

Great Basin Peaks Section News

Great Basin Peaks News
By Sharon Marie Wilcox
March 12, 2017

After an exciting month in Antarctic waters on an incredible adventure, I questioned the ease of a transition back to life at home. The first morning back, I sipped my coffee as I sleepily opened a month of unchecked email. The first email that caught my eye announced a hike in the Stillwater Mountains the next day. Logic told me to stay home, rest, and catch-up with life. However, I immediately signed up for the hike. Hiking might be the new cure for jet lag!

Consequently, on my second day home I joined Larry Dwyer's Sierra Club/Friends of Nevada Wilderness trip into the Stillwater Range. As I drove to our meeting location, Mount Rose and Peavine Mountain displayed their lovely, rosy morning glow as the sun burst over the Virginia Range. This welcome home from my Nevada mountains assured me that there was no issue in my transition home.

The Stillwater Range, about an hour from Reno, provides unlimited exploration opportunities. We drove through the old ghost town of Stillwater, the 1868 county seat of Churchill County when the town was a mail stage stop. Our drive skirted the edge of Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge, which offered excellent bird watching opportunities. We also had a good view of Job Peak on the Great Basin Peaks list.

Larry introduced our hike up Sheep Canyon to Peak 7002 with a discussion of areas proposed for military expansion by the Fallon Range Training Complex. This expansion withdraws public lands including portions of the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge and several FNW proposals for lands with wilderness characteristics currently managed by the BLM. The military expansion proposal also overlaps portions of three wilderness study areas: the Stillwater Range, Job Peak, and the Clan Alpine Mountains.

We spent a sunny day hiking to Peak 7002 and savoring the solitude of the Stillwater Range. It saddened me to realize how our public lands in this area could be taken from us by the proposed expansion.

I encourage you to contact your representatives. These wild areas must be preserved as public lands that we all can explore and enjoy. For more information, maps, an easy to send letter, and how you can take action check the following link on the Friends of Nevada website:

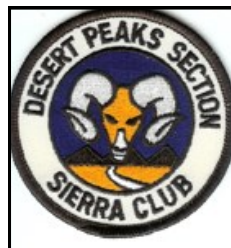
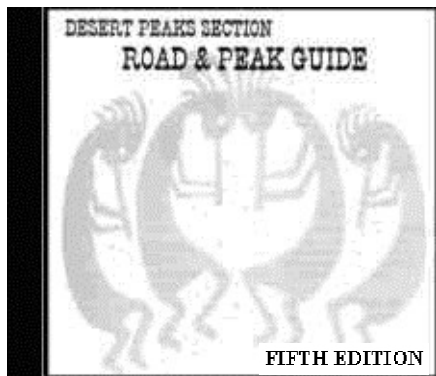
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