



The Desert Sage

OUR 77th SEASON

NOVEMBER–DECEMBER 2017

ISSUE NO. 372



<http://desertpeaks.org/>

Chair's Corner

by Tina Bowman



The management committee met informally via FaceTime on September 12th and had a most productive meeting. Having reviewed the bylaws, we are proposing two changes, which you can read about in a separate piece on page 12 in this issue of *The Desert Sage*. Our general

focus of discussion was on ideas for offering more outings and for attracting new members and retaining members.

For offering more outings, we're going to provide some incentive to our leaders: lead one or more outings to receive one free year of *The Desert Sage* to maintain membership. There are certain restrictions: only two leaders per outing—which must be a peak climb, not the chili cook-off or similar event—may qualify for the free year; all paperwork must be sent in a timely manner to the outings chair, meaning the sign-in sheet and, if it's a restricted outing, the medical forms; and an article about the outing must be submitted to the *Sage*, written by a leader or participant. Pretty good deal and a nice thank you to our leaders. Sandy Lara, vice chair and outings chair and the source of this plan, has some other good ideas for having a full schedule of outings.

In 2018 we will offer a free year's subscription to *The Desert Sage* to new members or subscribers (please see page 12 of this issue of the *Sage* for more information). We're hoping that with a full slate of outings, we'll also retain those new members, who will then tell their friends about the great trips we offer. More irons are in the fire for attracting new members.

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Please mark your calendars for the 2018 DPS banquet on May 20th. We're contemplating doing something a bit different, so stay tuned for more information.

Happy trails,
Tina



THE NEXT SAGE SUBMISSION DEADLINE **IS DECEMBER 10, 2017.**

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Desert Peaks Section Leadership for the 2017 - 2018 Season

Elected Positions

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Cover Photo Credit...

goes to Jim Morehouse. The photo is of a waterfall seen on the way to Campo Noche on a three day backpack and climb of El Picacho del Diablo, which is a DPS listed Emblem peak located in Mexico. Please see the story on pages 10-11 of this issue of the Sage.

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 October 2017 — May 2018

View along the trail to Superstition Mountain via DPS Route B (photo taken by James Barlow).

OCT 28	SAT	DPS,HPS,WTC	Sheephole Mountain
NOV 12	SUN	DPS	DPS Management Committee Meeting and Potluck
NOV 18-19	SAT-SUN	LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS	Navigation: Indian Cove Navigation Noodle
DEC 9	SAT	HPS, DPS	Twentynine Palms Mountain and Joshua Mountain
DEC 10	SUN	LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS	Navigation: Warren Point Navigation Noodle
DEC 10	SUN	DPS	DPS Management Committee Meeting and Potluck
JAN 6-7	SAT-SUN	LTC, WTC,HPS, DPS, SPS	Navigation: Indian Cove Navigation Noodle
JAN 14	SUN	DPS	DPS Management Committee Meeting and Potluck
FEB 11	SUN	DPS	DPS Management Committee Meeting and Potluck
FEB 17-18	SAT-SUN	DPS	Smith Mountain and Stewart Point
MAR 11	SUN	DPS	DPS Management Committee Meeting and Potluck
MAR 23	FRI	DPS	Pyramid Peak
MAR 24	SAT	DPS, HPS	23rd DPS Chili Cook-Off
MAR 24-25	SAT-SUN	DPS, HPS, WTC	East Ord Mountain and Brown Peak
APRIL 8	SUN	DPS	DPS Management Committee Meeting and Potluck
MAY 20	SUN	DPS	DPS Annual Banquet—Save the Date!!

◆ **OCTOBER 28** **SAT** **DPS, HPS, WTC**

I: Sheephole Mountain (4,593’): Join us the day of WTC Graduation for 5 miles round trip, 2,300’ of class 2 scrambling to this high point of the Sheephole Valley Wilderness Area. The trailhead is accessible by passenger car and is located 45 minutes east of Joshua Tree Lake (the location of WTC Graduation). Send an email with recent experience and conditioning, phone, and rideshare info to Leader: Sandy Lara (ssperling1@verizon.net). Co-Leader: Peter Lara.

◆ **NOVEMBER 12** **SUN** **DPS**

O: DPS Management Committee Meeting and Potluck: Join us at the home of Christine and Ron Bartell in Manhattan Beach for the DPS Management Committee meeting at 4:30 p.m. and potluck at 6:00 p.m. Please bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. RSVP to Christine at christinebartell@yahoo.com.

◆ **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, rmmymers@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 9** **SAT** **HPS, DPS**

I: Twentynine Palms Mountain (4,560’) and Joshua Mountain (3,680’): These peaks may not be on the HPS or DPS lists, but they are listed in Andy Zdon’s Desert Summits guidebook. Meet in the town of Twentynine Palms, then we’ll drive to the trailhead for Twentynine Palms Mountain first, combining into 4WD vehicles as needed. Expect five miles round trip and 2,200 feet gain on dirt roads and cross-country terrain.

We'll then drive back north several miles to Highway 62 and park near the base of Joshua Mountain. Expect some rock scrambling to gain the summit and three miles round trip and 1,200 feet gain. Leaders: Daryn Dodge (leader) and Kathy Rich (co-leader). Contact Daryn Dodge at daryn.dodge@oehha.ca.gov for more details or to sign up for the trip.

◆ **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.

◆ **DECEMBER 10** **SUN** **DPS**

O: DPS Management Committee Meeting and Potluck: Join us at the home of Tom and Tina Bowman in Long Beach for the DPS Management Committee meeting at 4:30 p.m. and potluck at 6:00 p.m. Please bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. RSVP to Tina at tina@bowmanchange.com.

◆ **JANUARY 6-7** **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.

◆ **JANUARY 14** **SUN** **DPS**

O: DPS Management Committee Meeting and Potluck: Join us at the home of Diana and George Estrada in Newbury Park for the DPS Management Committee meeting at 4:30 p.m. and potluck at 6:00 p.m. Please bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. RSVP to Diana at dneffestrada@verizon.net.

◆ **FEBRUARY 11** **SUN** **DPS**

O: DPS Management Committee Meeting and Potluck: Join us at the home of Tom and Tina Bowman in Long Beach for the DPS Management Committee meeting at 4:30 p.m. and potluck at 6:00 p.m. Please bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. RSVP to Tina at tina@bowmanchange.com.

◆ **FEBRUARY 17-18** **SAT-SUN** **DPS**

I: Smith Mountain (5,913') and Stewart Point (5,265'): Join us for two peaks in the Death Valley ranges. Saturday we'll meet and consolidate into 4WD vehicles for the approach to class 1 Smith Mountain, then hike 5.5 miles with 2,300' gain round trip to bag that peak, which has great views down to the Badwater area. Saturday night we'll camp along the Greenwater Valley Road. Sunday we'll drive to Shoshone and continue east 15.5 miles on state route 178 for the parking area for class 2 Stewart Point. Stewart's stats are 6.5 miles, 2,600' gain round trip per the DPS guide. Leaders: Tina Bowman (562-438-3809 or tina@bowmanchange.com) and Gary Schenk (714-596-6196 or gary@hbfun.org).

◆ **MARCH 11** **SUN** **DPS**

O: DPS Management Committee Meeting and Potluck: Join us at the home of Tom Sumner in Sylmar for the DPS Management Committee meeting at 4:30 p.m. and potluck at 6:00 p.m. Please bring a beverage of

your choice and a potluck item to share. RSVP to Tom at Locornnr@aol.com.

♦ **MARCH 23** **FRI** **DPS**

I: Pyramid Peak (6,703’): Join us Friday for a class 2 climb of Pyramid Peak (10.5 miles round trip and 3,800' gain) just east of Death Valley before the DPS Chili Cook-Off on Saturday in the Shoshone/Tecopa area to the south of Pyramid. With luck we'll have some wildflowers. Leaders: Tina Bowman (562-438-3809 or tina@bowmanchange.com) and Nile Sorenson (714-203-1405 or nsorenso@pacbell.net).

♦ **MARCH 24** **SAT** **DPS, HPS**

O: 23rd DPS Chili Cook-Off: Join us in the Mojave Desert near the Tecopa/Shoshone area for this DPS Classic (and it's so close to Death Valley)! Whether you like your chili Texas- style (no beans), traditional or vegetarian, bring your favorite recipe or just hearty taste buds. Cook for free or taste for \$10. Cooks prepare chili from scratch at the site, then all enjoy happy hour, chili tasting and judging, and campfire. Prizes will be awarded by category, with special recognition for the Spiciest Chili, Best Presentation, Most Original Recipe, and the coveted: Best Overall Chili. Specific location to follow. Hot springs, wild flowering, date shakes at China Ranch? and other exploring opportunities abound for the weekend!! Send ESASE with your choice as Taster or Cook and Chili Type to receive directions, contest specs, carpool info and exploring/hiking activities. Hosts: Gloria Miladin, Linda McDermott, and Julie Rush. Emails: (julierush11@gmail.com) or (miladingloria@yahoo.com).

♦ **MARCH 24-25** **SAT-SUN** **DPS, HPS, WTC**

I: East Ord Mountain (6,168’) and Brown Peak (4,947’): Come join us as we make our way out to the Shoshone Area for the 23rd DPS Chili Cook-Off with a stop along the way to climb a classic Desert Peak in the Ord Mountains northeast of Lucerne Valley, California. Saturday morning we'll start out nice and early at a moderate pace to ascend the DPS “Alternate Route” up the SE Ridge of East Ord Mountain to its summit. After enjoying the views up top we'll return to our cars the same way we came up for a day's total of 2.7 round trip miles with 2,000' of gain. We'll then drive from that trailhead to the site of the DPS Chili Cook-Off where we'll join in on that celebration with a most festive Happy Hour complete with roaring campfire, chili testing and judging, and all around good times!! We'll camp out Saturday night right there at the Cook-Off venue, but be sure to register with Julie Rush (julierush11@gmail.com) or Gloria Miladin (miladingloria@yahoo.com) for the Cook-Off as either a Cook or a Taster to completely maximize your enjoyment. Sunday morning we'll get up early and drive into Death Valley via Shoshone to the trailhead for the west side approach to Brown Peak in the Greenwater Range. A strenuous 3 miles with 2,100' of gain, that we'll do at a moderate pace, will get us up to the summit, where we'll eat a little lunch and enjoy the views before heading back down to our cars via the same way we came up. High Clearance, 4WD vehicles are required for each summit. Join us for one or both summits. This DPS Outing is co-sponsored by WTC and HPS. Email Mat Kelliher at mkelliher746@gmail.com with contact info, vehicle type and carpool info, recent conditioning, and experience for trip status and details. Leaders: Mat Kelliher and Bill Simpson.

♦ **APRIL 8** **SUN** **DPS**

O: DPS Management Committee Meeting and Potluck: Join us at the home of Barbee and Larry Tidball in Long Beach for the DPS Management Committee meeting at 4:30 p.m. and potluck at 6:00 p.m. Please bring a beverage of your choice and a potluck item to share. RSVP to Barbee at lbtidball@verizon.net.

♦ **MAY 20** **SUN** **DPS**

O: DPS Annual Banquet: Save the date for this great event—info to follow in a future Sage and on the DPS website.

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. In addition, 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.

Outings Chair

by Sandy Lara



Hello Fellow Climbers!

October is almost here as I write this, a great time to climb in the desert and to plan trips through the fall, winter, and spring. October had (by the time you read this) DPS trips to Bridge Mountain, Mummy Mountain, Charleston Peak, and Sheephole Mountain (the last in

conjunction with WTC graduation). There was also a private trip to El Picacho del Diablo in Mexico--please see Jim Morehouse's trip report on pages 10-11 in this issue of the Sage.

The 23rd DPS Chili Cook-Off is scheduled for Saturday, March 24th, near Tecopa/Shoshone. Mark your calendars and let Julie Rush (julierush11@gmail.com) or Gloria Miladin (miladingloria@yahoo.com) know if you want to cook or be a taster. We will have climbs to several peaks in the area offered that weekend. Let's have lots of leaders and participants!

As always, we are looking for leaders. Send your write-ups to me at ssperling1@verizon.net. Please let me know if I can help you put a trip together for our membership. Private trips opened to the membership are also appreciated. We can print these in The Sage and put them on our website if it clearly states that they are private, non-Sierra Club outings.

Let's go out and play!

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 continuously revising the current Version 6 of the guide; therefore, be sure and send him a quick email after climbing a DPS listed peak if you have suggested updates to the Guide while the information is still fresh in your mind. The DPS, and Jim, want to keep the guides as up to date as possible.

DPS Membership Report

by Ron Bartell

Membership Summary

<u>Type</u>	<u>Regular</u>	<u>Sustaining</u>
Member	117	24
Household	30	
Subscriber	25	2
Totals:	172	26

Activity Report

New Member

Peter Lara Clark Mountain

New Subscriber

K C Wylie

Sustaining Renewals

Steve Corona 1 year
 Karen Isaacson & Brian (Wolf) Leverich 1 year
 Barbee & Larry Tidball 1 year

Renewals

George Barnes 1 year
 Mary Ann & Jeff Bonds 1 year
 Sharon Boothman 2 years
 Stephan Bork 1 year
 Beth Davis 2 years
 Daryn Dodge 1 year
 Sandy Lara 1 year
 Sharon L Moore 1 year
 Tanya Roton & Mat Kelliher 1 year
 Greg Vernon 2 years



Conservation Chair

by Dave Perkins



There are currently several important issues in which scientific research is pitted against economic and political interests. Below is an example of how scientific discoveries have directly improved the health of Americans and have saved lives.

We all know what a roaring success the automobile was and is especially in the U.S. One of the problems with early autos, however, was engine knock. This problem was solved in 1921 by the General Motors Lab by adding tetraethyl lead to gasoline. Although it was known that lead was a serious menace to public health, the production of leaded gasoline began in 1923. It was clear that handling lead compounds was hazardous, but the effects of inhaling lead were less known at that time. In 1955 235,000 tons of lead were put into gasoline, and by 1975 445,000 tons of lead were added. In the late sixties and early seventies the petroleum industries came under intense pressure to take the lead out of gasoline and a chemical engineer named John Sinfelt, working for Standard Oil, developed and patented a catalytic process that allowed refiners to produce inexpensive gasoline without using lead. In 1973, after environmental hazards began to become overwhelmingly apparent, the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) announced a scheduled phase out of lead content in U.S. motor fuels by the end of 1991. In 1975 congressional hearings, which have been labeled the “Great Lead Debate” were held on the proposed ban on leaded gasoline. This debate pitted scientist Clair Patterson, the man to have most successfully given a date for the age of the earth (4.55 billion years) against Robert Kehoe, an MD who was the foremost paid apologist for the use of tetraethyl lead as a gasoline additive. Kehoe pioneered a methodology based on the admitted uncertainty of scientific data that provided a model for the asbestos, tobacco, pesticide and nuclear power industries. Patterson won the “Great Debate” in part by providing measurements that showed that pre-industrial levels of lead were $0.0005 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, (micrograms per cubic meter of air) in contrast

to the modern American levels of approximately $1 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ —we were breathing in 2000 times as much lead. Patterson’s efforts advanced the phase out of leaded gasoline by five years, and the successful ban of leaded gasoline was also carried over to canned food and paint. An interesting take on this debate was shown in Neil deGrasse Tyson’s *Cosmos: a Spacetime Odyssey*” in the episode titled *The Clean Room*.



Treasurer's Report

By Laura Newman

DPS Account Summary from
January 1, 2017 to
September 30, 2017

INCOME

Advertising	\$25.00
Banquet Silent Auction	\$296.00
Banquet Ticket Sales	\$2,730.00
Donations	\$189.00
Membership/Subscriptions	\$1,673.00
Merchandise	<u>\$294.00</u>

TOTAL INCOME **\$5,207.00**

EXPENSES

Administrative and Office Expenses	\$26.00
Banquet Expenses	\$4,051.27
Merchandise Expenses	\$19.63
Sage Mailing	\$484.73
Sage Printing	\$767.95
Sales Tax	<u>\$33.27</u>

TOTAL EXPENSES **\$5,382.85**

PAY PAL BALANCE **\$9.41**

CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE **\$3,134.88**



Cholla bloom (photo taken by Sandy Lara on the way to Indianhead on April 8, 2017).

Trip Reports

Griffith Peak (11,060') and Charleston Peak (11,916')

By: Greg Gerlach
August 20, 2017

Kelley Laxamana and I drove up to Las Vegas the day before our day hike, staying at a local hotel rather than deal with trying to find a legal and safe campsite on a weekend. The next day, we were up early and driving to the trailhead for the two peaks, stopping at McDonald's along the way. We parked the car, got ready, and were hiking up the South Loop trail (DPS Route A) at about 7:00 a.m. The trail starts off very steep, gaining about 3,000' in the first 5 miles or so, finally letting up once we reached a saddle located along the ridge. We made the saddle at about 10:00 a.m., and I headed south up the trail to the top of Griffith Peak while Kelley waited

an hour. From the saddle, Kelley and I plugged along the up and down trail along the ridge to another saddle located about ¾ miles from the top of Charleston, passing a badly burnt forest along the way. Kelley felt that she was too slow and didn't want to descend the peak in the dark, so she decided to wait for me at the saddle while I continued onto



Griffith Peak from the north.

for me. Griffith Peak is on the Las Vegas Mountaineers Club list of peaks, and I'm casually working on this obscure list. After signing the summit register, I returned to the saddle and took a short break; the round trip to the peak is about 0.8 miles and 600' of elevation gain and takes less than



Charleston Peak from the upper
South Loop Trail.

the top. The last part of the trail is very steep, but I just put one foot in front of the other until I reached the summit, where I arrived at about 12:30 p.m. The summit had about 10 or so climbers on it, which didn't seem that many for a Sunday afternoon in mid-summer. I signed the summit register, then headed back down the trail to meet up with Kelley, then we both hiked out to the car, arriving at about 5:30. We were both tired from the hike, and still had to deal with the drive home from Las Vegas to southern Riverside county on a Sunday evening; the traffic was bad as usual, and we didn't arrive home until 11:00 p.m.

Trip statistics, according to the GPS: 18.7 miles and 5,840 feet of elevation gain for the two summits.

Trip Reports - continued

Gone to the Devil...

By Jim Morehouse

Photo Credits: Jim Morehouse and Peter Lara

A trip to El Picacho del Diablo with Mat Kelliher, Jim Morehouse, Sandy Lara, Peter Lara, and Kevin Kingma from September 30 through October 4, 2017.

"Headed way down into Baja California, about 225 km south of the border and about 100 km east of Punta Colonet, to El Parque Nacional Sierra de San Pedro Martir this past weekend to spend a few days in pursuit of El Picacho Del Diablo (10,154'). Sandy Sperling Lara, Peter Lara, and Jim Morehouse all made it to the summit successfully, but our friend Kevin got sick and spent summit day at Campo Noche, and I hurt my foot just before getting to camp so I spent summit day rehabbing it in icy cold spring water for the 3,000' climb back up out of the Gorge of Despair." Guess I'm gonna have to go back and give it another shot next year!" – Mat Kelliher

"Brutal trip to this classic peak. ...Exhausted. I didn't eat or drink enough and hit the wall on summit day but forced myself to keep going. Hardest 3 days of my life." – Sandy Lara

"First time it tried to kill me with the heat, then the second time, with a descent in the dark. My favorite peak on the DPS list, and possibly ever." – Jim Morehouse

This was my second trip to the Devil, and I was pleased to be going with such a strong group. I drove down to El Cajon on Friday to meet up with Sandy and Peter Lara at her brother's house. Kevin Kingma came in that day, and we both slept in our trucks. Mat came in Saturday morning, and then we headed for the border.

Last year the office where tourist visas have to be stamped was just across the border and was easily accessible. We all filled out the application online and printed it out. All we needed was the stamp. However, it wasn't easily accomplished. It seems that the whole entrance area has changed and we missed it, and spent over an hour trying to find it. No one seemed to know where it was, neither American personnel, nor even the Mexican police, who were parked no more than a block from the building! We finally found it, got our stamps, and headed south. (Peter writes: *"We found the parking for the Mexican tourist visa building behind a tall fence to the right immediately before the gate arm lanes to enter Mexico. Enter around the north end of the fence for parking"*). Just before Ensenada we

ran into dense traffic. It seems there was an annual Rosarito to Ensenada Bike Ride in progress. We lost well over another hour sitting in traffic.

Finally, we made the turn to the park just south of Colonet and got to the park entrance station a little before nine p.m., I believe. Luckily there were still rangers there, including one who spoke English. So we paid our fees (\$15 per person for the four nights in the park), signed in, and headed for the camp ground. Note: camping at the trail head is not allowed and the ranger was adamant that we not do that. There are multiple low density camp grounds near the ranger station, and we spent the night there. Kevin and I threw our sleeping bags on the ground, Mat was in his truck, and the Laras set up a tent.



From left to right, Mat Kelliher, Kevin Kingma, Jim Morehouse, Sandy Lara, and Peter Lara.

The next morning we headed down the road to Vallecitos Meadows, first turning too soon and had to back track to find the correct dirt road in. It is approximately 6.25 miles to the road from the entrance station, which is a sharp right turn through the meadow into the trees. The trail head was about 2.3 miles from the pavement, and the road was in good shape. Most cars could probably make it without too much difficulty. We then quickly donned our packs and headed out at approximately 8:30 a.m. I will add a map, along with directions, to the DPS Road and Peak Guide shortly.

The initial trail is easy to find and wanders in and out of a sandy wash, initially passing through some lovely aspen trees in full fall bloom. We made the Blue Bottle Saddle without too much trouble, and we all agreed that climbing the extra 400' to tag Blue Bottle Peak (aka Cerro Botella

Trip Reports - continued

Azul) was not to be this time. We still had over 3,000' of elevation loss over rough and tumble terrain to negotiate and wanted some daylight to set up camp and collect water. So down we went. The upper part of the traverse below Cerro Botella Azul, where there is still some semblance of a trail, soon disappears, and the descent becomes more severe. Along the way we came across some amaz-



ing water falls (please see cover photo). But we weren't down yet. Eventually we made Campo Noche and set up camp, ate dinner, and got ready for the summit attempt the next day.

As I was getting myself out of my tent, Mat came up and told me he'd hurt his foot the day before, and it still felt bad, so he wasn't going. Moments later Kevin stuck his head out of his tent and said he was coming down with a cold, so he was out too. So it was just the Laras and myself. We got going about 6:35 a.m., when it was just light enough to see.

We got off route fairly early, (ducks and foot paths lead in more than one direction from camp) and had to bush whack some to get back into the correct starting gully. Someone had put up a set of bright tape that turned out to be mostly useful, and we tended to follow those whenever we could, and before long we were below the dihedral slabs that for me, anyway, mark the upper part of the climb and route finding becomes much easier. At this point we're just a bit below 9,000' and "only" have about 1,100' feet to go! We made the summit around two p.m. and



From left to right, Jim Morehouse, Sandy Lara, and Peter Lara on the summit of "Big P".

knew we'd be likely coming out in the dark, so our time on the summit was brief.

So, after some pictures, we headed back down, knowing that every minute not moving will be another minute in the dark. There was one place I wanted to have

daylight for: a creepy traverse and down climb with poor holds and wet, slimy streaks. We all managed it without mishap, and continued on down into the canyon. We continued to find the route opening up for us, even after it got dark. Of course, it slowed us down some, but we made it back to camp just before ten o'clock. A long day by anyone's standards. We were "treated" to a visit by the notorious ring tailed cat said to live in the area. He managed to steal Sandy's first aid kit, but not much to eat.



Sandy and Peter Lara nearing Blue Bottle Saddle.

We slept in some the next day, and started hiking out fairly late in the morning. Once we were at Blue Bottle Saddle again, it was still 4.5 miles back to the cars, but the hardest part of the trip was behind us. The Devil took its toll once again, and although it didn't kill any of us, it beat us up. Both times I've been up this peak have pushed me past any limits I originally was willing to set! This one is a classic for many reasons and many people. I have to say it's my favorite peak on the DPS list. Even the unpleasantness of crossing the border back into the U.S. can't diminish the feeling I get from a trip down here. Speaking of crossing the border, we came back on a Wednesday in the middle of the day, and the wait at the border was two hours.

Proposed DPS Bylaw Changes

Proposed DPS Bylaws Changes

The DPS management committee is proposing two changes in the section's bylaws to be on the ballot at the next election. Here are the proposed changes.

In Article IV: Management Committee, section 1, we would like to allow the treasurer to be either one of the elected committee members or an appointed volunteer because of the special expertise needed to carry out the responsibilities of this position. This is the current text for Article IV.1 with the proposed deletion with a strike-through line and new text in bold:

1. Subject to the powers of the members as provided by these Bylaws, the management of the affairs and activities of the Section shall be in the hands of a Management Committee of five members, elected by the members of the Section for alternating terms of two years. The Management Committee shall consist of the Chair, the Vice-Chair, the Secretary, ~~the Treasurer,~~ and the Program Chair, and **Treasurer (if an elected member) or Fifth Officer (if the Treasurer is an appointed member)**. Three Management Committee members shall be elected on odd numbered years and two members shall be elected on even numbered years.

The other proposed change is in Article V: Elections, section 3, where we would like to provide officially for an electronic ballot by adding these words in bold to the beginning of the section:

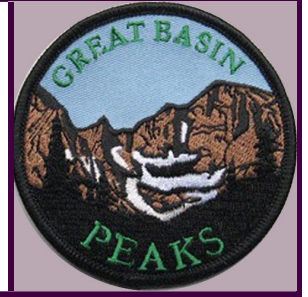
3. Names of nominees shall be placed on **an electronic and/or written** ballot and mailed to all members of the Section within two weeks after the March regular meeting.

Please send any counterarguments by December 10, 2017 to Greg Gerlach, *Sage* editor, (gregrg1955@verizon.net) for publishing in the next issue and to Tina Bowman, DPS chair, (tina@bowmanchange.com) for management committee discussion.

Special Offer to New 2018 DPS Members and Subscribers

Beginning in 2018 the DPS would like to welcome new members and subscribers (who don't yet meet the criteria for membership) with a year's free subscription to *The Desert Sage*. New members as well as new subscribers should send the membership application form to the Membership Chair, Ron Bartell, by email (desertpeakssection@gmail.com) or USPS (the form with the address may be downloaded in Word or Adobe Acrobat format at <http://desertpeaks.org/aboutus.htm>), or may be found in this issue of the *Sage*. Although the *Sage* is available to all on the web site, members and subscribers receive an email with a link as soon as a new issue is published.

Great Basin Peaks Section News



Great Basin Peaks News Exploring Nevada P2K Peaks By Sharon Marie Wilcox

First, congratulations to Bob Sumner for finishing the Nevada P2K list July 14, 2017 on Beaver Peak in Elko County. This list has many notable peaks that are scattered throughout Nevada. Since two sit within the Nevada Test site, Bald Mountain and Belted Range HP, a finish can't include their summits.

The access to some of these peaks requires miles of driving on rough dirt roads that can be more grueling than the peak climb. Moody Peak requires one of these long drives.

In June, Ken Jones invited Ron Moe, John Ide, and myself, to hike Moody and Shingle Peaks, both on the Nevada P2K list. We met at Moody Springs to camp the evening before our Moody Peak (8,883') hike located in Nye County's Pancake Range. The spring near an old cabin had a pond amply tramped by wild horses, but otherwise a nice area for camp. Our night sky never darkened with the light from the full moon.

Our 6:00am start followed horse trails and a jeep road to a location named "Collins Hotel" on the map. Remnants of a structure marked this spot and we headed up from here bushwhacking through a pinyon-juniper forest interspersed with Mountain Mahogany. Happy to beat the heat on our climb, we took a

leisurely break on top to enjoy the views and sign the register.

Next we drove to Shingle Springs in Lincoln County's Far South Egan Wilderness to camp in position for our hike up Shingle Peak (9,823'). Our camp near the corral had a flurry of hummingbird activity as we set up camp.

We started early again to beat the heat, meandering up a dry wash until we found a ridge that led to the summit. Yellow blooms on Cliffrose shrubs provided a colorful display along our route. Today we took another leisurely summit break to absorb surrounding views and enjoy the cool temperature before we descended.



From left to right, Ron Moe, Ken Jones, and Sharon Marie Wilcox heading up Moody Peak (photo by John Ide).

These Nevada P2K peaks provided yet another Great Basin adventure to experience Nevada's public land treasures.

SAGE PHOTOS AND REPORTS NEEDED !

The SAGE needs articles and photographs, including cover photos, that pertain to outdoor activities of interest to Desert Peak Sections members and subscribers. Please note that 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 gregg1955@verizon.net no later than the second Sunday of even numbered months.



DESERT BOOKS

By Burton Falk

DESERT BOOKS

SUGGESTED (TO ME) READS, 2017

GRAND OBSESSION: Harvey Butchart and the Exploration of Grand Canyon (2007), Elias Butler and Tom Myers

My thanks to Ron Jones, veteran climber, past president of the Desert Peaks Section, and desert book enthusiast, for suggesting that I might enjoy Elias Butler and Tom Myers' excellent biography, *Grand Obsession*, the story of Harvey Butchart, a man possessed with getting to know the Grand Canyon on an intimate basis.

The book is of interest for two reasons: first and foremost because it describes Butchart's forty-two years of explorations in the vast gorge. Because many of his exploits were firsts, he can be considered the canyon's equivalent to the Sierra Nevada's legendary Norman Clyde.

On another, even more fascinating level, the 455-page volume describes how a person can become obsessed with achieving personal goals--a passion that many list-driven mountaineers may share.

Harvey Butchart (pronounced "butt-chart") was born to devout missionary parents in Hefei, southwestern China, in 1907. Unfortunately, when Harvey was nine, his father, James, a doctor practicing at the Disciples of Christ Church hospital in Nanking, died. Following James' death, Harvey's mother, Nellie, and her three children, took up residence in the mountain town of Kuling, a Christian enclave, where she earned a small salary as a teacher and supervisor of a new school there. Co-authors, Butler and Myers, note that young Harvey "spent a good deal of his childhood living upon a mountain in Asia where hiking and climbing formed the main diversions for children."

In 1920, Nellie moved her family to a small town in Illinois where they were taken in by grandparents and other relatives. Although short of funds, thanks to financial help from a missionary society, Nellie was able to enroll her two sons, Baird and Harvey, at the highly regarded prep school, Mercersburg, in southeastern Pennsylvania.

Returning to Illinois in the fall of 1923, Harvey matriculated at Eureka College, a small Disciples of Christ institution from which Nellie had graduated with a teaching degree in 1894--and from which President-to-be Ronald Reagan graduated in 1932.

During his four years at Eureka, two significant events took place for Harvey. First, he met his wife-to-be, classmate Roma Wilson, the daughter of the president of the college, and, also, he graduated at the top of his class in math, earning a scholarship for his Master's degree at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Harvey and Roma married in July 1929, and in 1932--with a thesis titled *Helices in Euclidean N-Space*--Harvey earned his Ph.D., also at the University of Illinois.

When Harvey graduated, however, the country was mired in the Great Depression and, in spite of his new degree, the Butcharts spent a year unemployed, living with Roma's parents. In 1933, Harvey finally secured a part time job at Butler University in Indianapolis, and in 1935 the Butcharts' first child, Anne, was born. Harvey then moved on to a full time position at William Woods College in Fulton, Missouri, and there, in 1939, Roma gave birth to their second child, James.

In 1942, Harvey was offered and accepted a position teaching advanced mathematics at Grinnell College in Iowa, a stint during which, while vacationing in Colorado, he became interested in mountain climbing. Butler and Myers note that,

Desert Books - continued

“Numerous mathematicians of all kinds, engineers, and physicists happen to be rock climbers, mountaineers or serious hikers. The evidence implies that these apparently disparate activities appeal to those with a talent for pattern recognition, with a strong urge for discovery and achievement.”

In 1945, because the Butcharts daughter, Anne, was suffering from asthma, Harvey accepted a position at Arizona State College in Flagstaff, Arizona, (at \$3,600 per year), where locals boasted that the air was the cleanest in America. In fact, Anne's asthma improved dramatically almost immediately upon the family's arrival.

Harvey, too, flourished in Northern Arizona. Within a week of his arrival, he completed a 20-mile trek from his new home “to the 12,356' summit of Agassiz Peak (one of the San Francisco Peaks).” Two weeks after their arrival, the Butchart family made their first visit to the Grand Canyon. It was then--while the rest of his family visited Indian Garden, four or five miles down the Bright Angel Trail--that Harvey hiked the 18.5 mile, Kaibab-to Phantom Ranch-to Bright Angel loop. His passion for exploring the great gorge was just beginning.

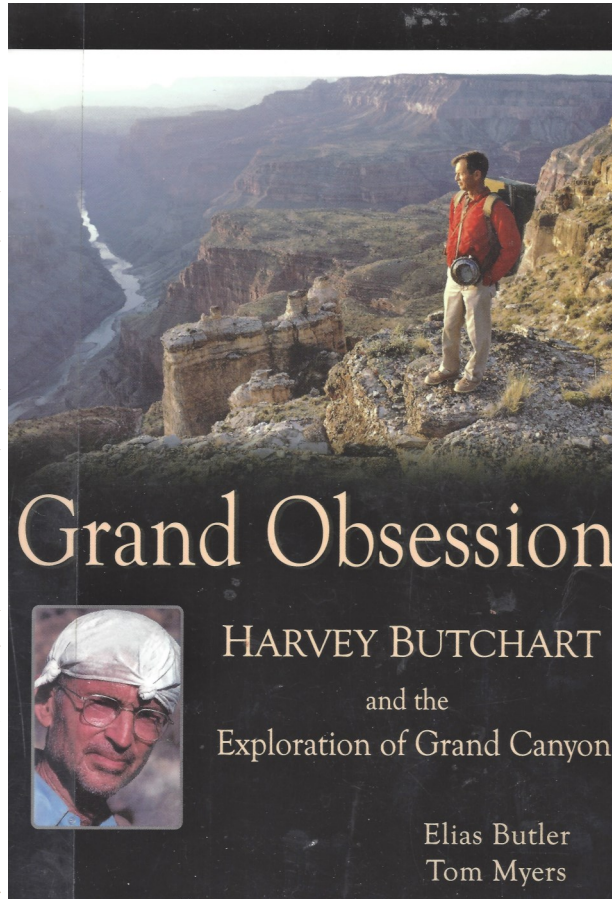
The co-authors point out that when Harvey arrived on the canyon scene in 1945, “outside the handful of tourist trails and the Havasupai Indian village of Supai, only the river (itself) could be considered well known...” And although occasional float trips had been made on the river since John Wesley Powell's first and second expeditions (1869 and 1872), the river itself was distraction enough, and the boatmen “contributed but a smattering of knowledge about the backcountry.”

By the early 1950s, in spite of his fascination with the canyon, Harvey was bored with hiking the gorge's established trails. In a letter to a friend, he commented, “I have never really lost my sense of wonder, but one time when I was coming up to the top of the Bright Angel Trail, and was asked by a tourist whether the trip to the bottom was worth the effort, I was tempted to reply, It was better the first 25 times.”

Harvey was frustrated because “over one hundred side canyons begged for exploration...but he had no idea how to reach most of these tributary gorges.” In 1954, “only to stop and stare wistfully at the Colorado, eager to cross to the other side or continue lengthwise along the bank,” he realized he could float across or down the river on an air mattress. This was prior to the completion of the Glen Canyon Dam, however, after which the river's water temperature dropped to a hypothermia-inducing 46°.

For a few years, however, Harvey's new mode of travel opened vast areas of the canyon for exploration.

During forty-two years of exploration, Harvey, a 5'7", 135 lb., non-smoking, non-drinking dynamo, forged 116 rim-to-river routes (many following routes of the indigenous people), hiked some 12,000 miles in the great gorge, became the first man to walk the canyon end to end--beating Colin Fletcher, author of *The Man Who Walked Through Time* by a matter of weeks--and, thanks to keeping a 1,079 page typewritten chronicle of his feats, became the first to publish backcountry guidebooks for the area: *Grand Canyon Treks* (1970), *Grand Canyon Treks II* (1975), and *Grand Canyon Treks III* (1984). In addition, Harvey made 83 climbs of the canyon's buttes, temples and shrines--including the seldom-ascended Wotans Throne--twenty-eight of which were first



Desert Books - continued

ascents.

As might be expected, Harvey's obsession with exploring the canyon placed a severe strain on his marriage. Butler and Myers note: "Such single-mindedness is required for great accomplishments, but it is also a quality that tends to make it difficult to balance the obligations of being a good father and husband...Roma endured many a lonely day and night because of his frequent absences, even frightening nights when Harvey suffered broken bones or accidents and failed to return as promised. He was at least partly aware of the anguish he caused. Still he kept going."

In 1976, at the age of 69, Harvey retired at Northern Arizona State University, after which he and Roma moved to Sun City, Phoenix. Although he continued to visit the canyon, his ability to hike was ebbing. On May 12, 1987, due to a bad hip and weakness in general, he made his last hike in the canyon.

As the twenty-first century dawned, Harvey and Roma were "sliding into seriously poor health. For Harvey the problems were arthritis, failing eyesight, irregular heart rhythm, and an increasing loss of motor control." For Roma, "Dementia had begun to unlatch her formidable mind." Nevertheless, while living in a nursing home in Tucson, Harvey and Roma began "to renew a physical closeness that neither had experienced in decades."

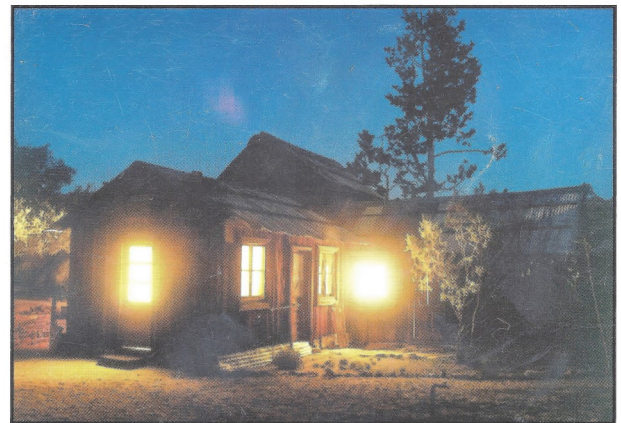
On April 3, 2002, Roma died of complications of a stroke, and less than two months later, on May 29, 95-year-old Harvey Butchart, legendary explorer of the Grand Canyon, died in his sleep.

Elias Butler, a professional photographer and free lance writer, and Tom Myers, a doctor who practices in Arizona and who is the author of *Over the Edge: Death in the Grand Canyon*, have conspired to craft *Grand Obsession: Harvey Butchart and the Exploration of the Grand Canyon* into an excellent read. Although currently out of print, used copies are available on web sites such as amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com.

GROWING UP AT THE DESERT QUEEN RANCH (1997), Willis Keys and Art Kidwell

A Sun City Palm Desert hiking friend of mine, knowing of my interest in Joshua Tree history, suggested I might be interested in a book about the legendary Bill Keys (1879-1969) and his family as coauthored by one of his five offspring, Willis Keys (1921-2015).

Growing Up At The Desert Queen Ranch



By
**Willis Keys
and
Art Kidwell**

And my friend was correct. It was fascinating to read of the family who for decades lived on the hard-scrabble Desert Queen Ranch in a remote section of today's Joshua Tree National Park. In spite of having no electricity, no telephone, a limited water supply, no nearby school, plenty of snakes, and, for years, their nearest source of supplies being Banning, they survived quite nicely.

Desert Books - continued

In the introduction to the 118-page *Growing Up at the Desert Queen Ranch*, Art Kidwell, author of *Ambush* (the story of Keys in 1943 shooting and killing a neighbor rancher in self-defense) and *In the Shadow of the Palms* (regarding the history of Twentynine Palms) notes that the book was a collaborative effort, “the result of the co-authors' close friendship...The stories selected for (the) book were taken from 15 taped conversations, interviews, and walks through the ranch between the co-authors over a 22-year period.”

The forty-one vignettes related by Willis Keys are simply told without bells or whistles, e.g., “(Dad) worked long hours to keep the ranch going. He watered the garden and orchard and took care of the animals. ...There was also mining work to do. Dad had as many as thirty mining claims at one time.”

Indeed, Bill Keys was ingenious and industrious. “He had a great knowledge of how to do things. Having to work alone most of the time, he devised ways to move heavy machinery (including relocating a stamp mill by building and using a rail line) and other things (including transporting large rocks and cement, via a jury-rigged cable tram, while building a dam).”

As for Willis' mother, Frances, who married Bill in 1918, she seemed to be a perfect fit for remote family life. “She worked hard and always tried to keep things clean. She did all the housework, washed by hand, and canned during the canning season. She hardly ever had a spare moment...When we didn't have beef because the stock wasn't ready to butcher, she'd fix cottontail or jackrabbit or chicken...My mother could really make some good meals out of those.”

Regarding the manner in which he and his siblings grew up, Willis remembers that in their younger years they “played outside climbing rocks. Our toys were usually pieces of iron or wood or something that was imagined to be something else.” As they grew older, however, they were expected to do chores, including keeping the water bucket in the kitchen full, bringing in wood for the stove, feeding the chickens and gathering the eggs. Eventually, “there was no time for play. There were too many chores to do. I'd get up in

the morning before sun up with my dad.”

As a teen-ager, Willis attended Chaffee High School in Ontario, where for four years he roomed and boarded with various families. After graduation, according to his obituary in the *Carbon County News* of Red Lodge, Montana, he earned a living primarily engaged in jobs that were familiar to him because of his upbringing, i.e., working as a mechanic, a miner, a heavy-duty equipment operator, and as owner of his own gas station and garage.

The obituary concluded that Willis Keys was “always a man with a kind and gentle heart, as well as the ability to remember past events in meticulous detail. (He) was always happy to describe the unique ways his family lived at their beloved Desert Queen Ranch. National Park Service and future historians benefitted from interviews with him, as he related the early history of the Park's homesteading families as well as his own.”



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

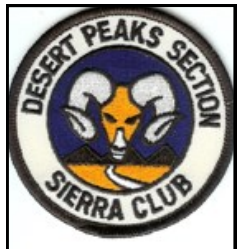


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Ron Bartell
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For your convenience, you may use the Subscription/Membership form at the bottom of this page.

It costs ten dollars a year to subscribe to the SAGE. Anyone can subscribe to the SAGE, even if not a member of the DPS or the Sierra Club. To become a member of the DPS, you must (1) belong to the Sierra Club, (2) have climbed 6 of the 96 peaks on the DPS peaks list, and (3) subscribe to the SAGE. Non-members who subscribe to the SAGE are not allowed to vote in our elections. The subscription/membership year is for 6 issues, regardless of when payment is received. Only 1 subscription is required per household. When renewing your membership, please list all other DPS members who reside at your address to update their status. Subscriptions and donations are not tax deductible.

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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.

SUBSCRIPTION/MEMBERSHIP: It costs ten dollars a year to subscribe to the Sage. Anyone can subscribe to the Sage, even if not a member of the DPS or the Sierra Club, by sending \$10 to the Membership Records Chair (see below). Please note that a Sustaining membership/subscription is also available for \$20. To become a member of the DPS, you must (1) belong to the Sierra Club, (2) have climbed 6 of the 96 peaks on the DPS peaks list, and (3) send \$10 to the Membership Records Chair (see below) for a Sage subscription (\$20 for Sustaining). Non-members who subscribe to the Sage are not allowed to vote in the DPS elections. Renewals, subscriptions, and address changes also should be sent to Membership Records Chair **Ron Bartell, 1556 21st Street, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266, or ronbartell@yahoo.com**; the membership/subscription form can be found in this issue of the Sage. The subscription/membership year is for six issues, regardless of when payment is received.

EMBLEM AND LIST COMPLETION STATUS: Emblem status is awarded to DPS members who have been a member for one year, who have climbed 15 peaks on the DPS Peak list, including five of the seven emblem peaks, and who send a list of peaks and dates climbed to Membership Records Chair **Ron Bartell, 1556 21st Street, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266, or ronbartell@yahoo.com**. Recognition is also given for completion of the DPS list by notifying Ron of peaks and dates climbed. Please see the DPS website for additional Emblem recognition categories.

DPS MERCHANDISE: DPS T-shirts, the DPS Road and Peak Guide, the DPS Peak List, Emblem, Explorer and List Finish pins, and other merchandise is available for purchase from the DPS Merchandiser (see the Merchandise page in this issue of the Sage for more information). Please note that the DPS Peak List is also available as a free download on the DPS Website. In addition, individual peak guides may be downloaded from the DPS website for free by DPS members and subscribers; please contact Ron Bartell at ronbartell@yahoo.com for further information.

SAGE SUBMISSIONS: The Sage editor welcomes all articles, trip reports and photographs pertaining to outdoor activities of interest to DPS members. Trip participants are encouraged to submit a trip report if the participant knows that the trip leaders are not going to submit a trip write-up. The editor may modify submittals in an attempt to increase clarity, decrease length, or correct typos, but hopefully will not modify 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; the next submission deadline for the Sage is **December 10, 2017**.

ADVERTISEMENTS: You can advertise private trips that are of interest to DPS members in the Sage for free. Other announcements/ads are \$1 per line or \$25 for a half-page space.

EDITOR: Greg Gerlach, 23933 Via Astuto, Murrieta, CA 92562, email: gregrg1955@verizon.net.