

SAN DIEGO PEAKS CLUB

An adventure hiking club for the intermediate and advanced hiker!

Issue No. 9

July-August 92

In a month that began by celebrating, we have to end it by honoring death. My good friend Wendy Ruess McCully died June 25 at 43. More on that on page 2.

We finished the year with 77 members. Thank you, dear members. Now that we have started another year we have 39 of those members renewed, with more renewing every day. I would like to thank fellow editor Ron Jones for awarding me the honor of "best hiking newsletter". To hear that praise from Ron is indeed the highest honor I know. Ron has been active in hiking circles for over 40 years.

As I did last year, I'm taking July and August off, since it is too hot to hike in San Diego county. The newsletter will publish dayhikes and backpacks by Al Holden, Dennis Richards and Carl Johnson, plus a special once-in-a-lifetime trip by Ron Jones. In September, Oct, Nov and Dec I plan to lead Pike and Cody, Borrego Mtn West and East Butte, Palm again, Collins, Knob, Palms and Elder, Indian Creek trail from Laguna to Cuyamaca, a canoe trip in Black Canyon (below Hoover Dam), a special easy backpack to Carey's Castle and maybe an extra special trip to Havasupai Canyon in Arizona to visit Havasu and Mooney Falls. If you are interested in any of these trips, let me know and I may be able to schedule it on dates that you can attend. I also like to see which activities are the most popular.

Welcome new members Evan Koch, Suzanne Roth, T.C. Cyran and Mark Vogt. Evan is a coworker who is a strong hiker. He went to the first DPS Chili Cookoff with me and proved to be a good horseshoe player as well as a good hiker. Suzanne is another coworker who is good hiker. She is currently on a bicycle trip in Canada. T.C. has hiked and backpacked a few of the 14,000 peaks in Colorado and is an active x-c skier. I know little about Mark, just that he is a strong hiker.

Hiker of the Month

The hiker of the month for July is a couple, Peggy Crunican and Dave Hardy. They receive the honor for their active support of SDPC. They went on the most SDPC hikes last year. Thanks for your support.

The hiker of the month of August is Donna Hawkins. Her husband, Jim, sent me a letter, which I have printed on another page, detailing her achievements. Donna has gone higher and further than I ever dreamt of going. Congrats,

MEMBERSHIP

Dues are Past Due! This will be your last newsletter if you have not renewed! And what a pity that would be cause you could not join us in our fun!

Dues are \$9.00, which will put you in good standing until June, 1993. Family memberships are the same price as individuals. Send checks payable to Paul Freiman, 4421 Maryland St, San Diego, CA 92116-3902. (619)692-1367.



Wendy Ruess McCully died June 25, 1992 of a cerebral aneurysm. She was 43. The same day my dad turned 77 and we helped him celebrate continued life. The next day her lungs were given to a 29 year old with cystic fibrosis. Her eyes, kidney and heart were also donated to give new life to other people. On Memorial Day weekend John and Wendy were in Canon Diablo to make an attempt on Big Picacho. Wendy was at the stream filling her canteen when she suffered blinding pain and fainted in John's arms. They waited in camp the next day without any reoccurrence before starting back, John shouldering both packs. Upon returning home it was determined that Wendy had torn the disc between her 8th and 9th vertebra. She had been wearing a neck brace since. About 2pm on the 25th she was loading the dishwasher (she loved to cook) and had another blinding pain. John called 911, but there was nothing that could be done.

I first recall meeting Wendy on Avawatz Mtn in Nov 1986. John had his 4wd one week and almost rolled the car. In the past year I had started looking forward to seeing more of John and Wendy. The people in DPS can grow to be an extended family. I'm sure we have all had the response, "Oh Boy, they're on the trip!" I see a lot of people die. I work in the operating room. I have seen my next door neighbor pass away. Same with my beloved grandmother. They didn't hurt. This one hurts very strongly. John is current chair of the DPS. Wendy was the treasurer. John and Wendy have 5 peaks to go on the DPS list. John will carry Wendy's ashes up the last few peaks and they will list finish on an easy peak, Chuckwalla, on October 24-25.

As I have already mentioned, the members of the DPS are like an extended family. The first person I was aware of as I participated on my first DPS trip in December 1984 was 10 year old Tanya Mamedalin. She was a joy that day and a joy to watch her grow. Now she has been accepted to Cornell. Good luck, Tanya! *See photo 4-5*

Randy Danta and Doug Mantle from the LA Sierra Club summited on Mt Everest in early May. Doug looks none-the-worse, but Randy lost a lot of weight and is recovering from frostbitten toes. Doug has to bag Antartica before he finishes the "seven summits" (high points of the continents) in the year 2000 in Australia.

Rheta Schoeneman DID get elected chair of the SC Single Section, as suggested in the last newsletter. My source inside the BOD sez that Rheta is doing a terrific job (as expected)!

Cindy Outlaw didn't get to the top of North America (Mt McKinley). A few days before she was scheduled to leave she found out she was pregnant. Well, that's a good reason to get the HOTM award. Congrats, Cindy.

The mini-macho winner in the last newsletter, Bob?, is Bob Pinsker. I finally remembered his name.

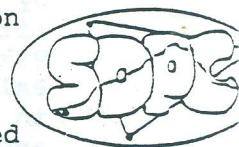
John Strauch has 90 peaks on the SDPC list. I'll lead a lot of the peaks he needs to complete the list. John also completed his DPS emblem this year.

TRIP REPORTS

May 17 Manza hike. John Strauch, Linny Sarnecki, Ranchita Ted and his friend "Basecamp" Betty King joined me on a hot, but pleasant day.

May 30 Pine Valley Creek. Jay Friedman was the only one to join me on this trip, another hot one. This was an excellent new (not yet fully functional) trail. Wonderful!

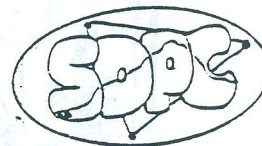
May 31 Morena Butte birthday hike. Dennis Richards, Gail Hanna, Steve Spiller Terri Sutor, Terri Astle, Carol Murdock, Mark Adrian, Peggy and Dave, and their friend Cheri were on the hike. Gail, Dave, Cheri and Paul had birthdays (along with the club's first birthday). We had a toasty hike, but a strong breeze kept us cool for our celebration at the peak. And WHAT a party! We had champagne, we had noisemakers, we had candles and cake, we had more champagne, we had sparkling cider, and we had fun fun fun!!! I want to thank everyone for a wonderful special day.



WEEKEND AND WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Al Holden is starting Monday hikes with the Sierra Club. He leads adventure hikes combining trail and offtrail in well designed routes. His trips, like Jim Sugg, last 5-6 hours and go 10-12 miles. He is also leading two backpacks. Al's phone is 273-2494. Jim Sugg leads Wednesday hikes for Walkabout International. Jim's phone is 224-7895. Dennis Richards is leading 2 backpacks for the Sierra Club. Dennis' phone is 462-3643. Paul is on vacation from leading hikes during the summer. He will resume in September with wonderful activities.

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- July 6 Monday Stonewall loop-Coldspring turnout. Al Holden leads. 9:15am.
- July 7-9 Tues-Thurs BACKPACK. San Jacinto. Al leads. 2 nights Laws camp, 17 mile dayhike of San Jac, Marion, Jean, and the new Drury peak.
- July 8 Weds. Jim leads. Descanso- Green Valley Falls loop. Cuyamaca.
- July 13 Monday Palomar south loop. Al leads. Fry Ck to Boucher Hill. 9:30am Very good hot weather hike.
- July 15 Weds. Jim leads. Laguna. Sunset-Noble Cyn loop.
- July 18-19 BACKPACK. San Jacinto. Dennis leads. Camp at Little Round Valley and dayhike San Jac, Folly, Jean and Marion. Sat-Sun
- July 20 Monday Laguna Meadows loop. New trails Laguna and Sunset AND more! Al leads. 9:15am Very good hike!!!
- July 21-24 Tues-Fri San Gorgonio BACKPACK. Al leads. 3 nights at High Meadows Spring. 5 peaks daybagged each on Wed and Thurs.
- July 22 Weds. Jim leads. Laguna lakes loop. Very lovely.
- July 26 Sunday. ORIENTEER. UCSD. Ron Grayson 598-5730 or Bill Gookin 578-9456. If you want to find out what an orienteer is about this is a great beginner's course. See you there!
- July 27 Monday Middle Peak in Cuyamaca, North loop plus Azalea Spring. 9:15am.
- July 29 Weds. Jim leads. Kelly Ditch trail!!! Cuyamaca.
- Aug 1-2 Sat-Sun San Gorgonio. Forsee Ck trail to Trail Forks Springs. Dennis leads. This is my favorite trail and camp in the Gorgonios. Daybag a few peaks if you want.
- Aug 2 Sunday ORIENTEER Los Huecos, Agua Dulce, Mt Laguna. Bill Gookin 578-9456. Terrific wooded area. Enjoy a day in the mountains.
- Aug 3 Monday Noble Cyn-Sunset trail. Al leads. This is one terrific hike, same one I lead in May. Al designed it.
- Aug 5 Weds. Jim leads. Granite Springs-Oakzanita Peak loop. Cuyamaca.
- Aug 12 Weds. Jim leads. West Mesa-Japacha Peak loop. Cuyamaca.
- Aug 19 Weds. Jim leads. Wooded Hill loop + ravines a plenty. Laguna.
- Aug 22-30 Mayan Ruins Raft trip *****
I've jumped on the chance to go on this Ron Jones/Elden Kidd raft trip and I am very excited about it. See the write-up elsewhere in the newsletter.
- Aug 26 Weds. Jim leads. Coldwater Springs-Azalea Springs loop. Cuyamaca.
- Sept 19-20 ORIENTEER. Doane Valley, Palomar Mtn. Bill Gookin 578-9456. Two day meet. Site of last year's state championships. Hard course.
- Oct 18 Sunday ORIENTEER. Laguna Meadows, Mt Laguna. Eric Lehtonen 484-4435.



Oct 24-25 DPS. Call Paul 692-1367. Wendy and John McCully's list finish.
I figure between 100-200 people will be on this trip to honor Wendy.
Chuckwalla and Black Butte in Riverside county.

Feb 27-28 DPS. 3rd Annual Chili Cookoff and Orocopia climb (north of the
Salton Sea). Ron and Leora Jones host. There were 6 chili recipes
at the 1st one, and 11 recipes at the 2nd. How many taste treats
will there be at the 3rd annual cookoff??? BeaNo will be provided.
Call Paul for info and carpool. 692-1367.

TRIP REPORTS CONT.

Death Valley- I canceled Lost Ruin (Recluse Spring) hike over Memorial week-
end to climb Death Valley peaks with my buddy Dave Jurasevich. On climbing
Wahguyhe Peak we ran across a boundary marker that was dated 1873! On the
drive out a herd of wild mustangs galloped across the road 100 feet from
us. We spent the night with fellow club members Dennis Richards, Mark Adrian
and Ken Olson. The next day we drove down Titus Canyon and hiked The Thimble.
What a beautiful trip!

I canceled my last two hikes when no one signed up for Sat, and only one
for Sunday. I joined Robin Tucker as she lead the San Diego Hiking Club on
Cutca trail (by Palomar-Dripping Springs). Had a great time. Thanks, Robin.

June 18-23 Paria River Canyon, Utah. Carl Johnson lead "the world's best
slot canyon", with Carol Murdock assisting. Carl lead a superb trip. There
were 13 of us and he did a perfect job of leading. Couldn't be better!

12 June 92

Mr. Paul Freiman
San Diego Peaks Club

Dear Mr. Freiman,

My wife and I have belonged to the club for a little over a
year, having been told of it by Beth Davis and Carl Johnson, and
have enjoyed the newsletter. Although we haven't taken part in
any of the climbs listed we have used the good ideas to go on our
own trips. We have been pleased to see women being named as
"hiker of the month", especially Gail Hanna with whom we have
hiked. You probably have no lack of worthy candidates but I have
had the inspiration to put forth my wife Donna for consideration.

Next week, while you read this, she will celebrate her
birthday on the Kahiltna Glacier while moving her 150 lb share of
the baggage uphill on an attempt to climb Denali. In getting
ready for this she has done a bit of hiking in the past year. It
included a 25 - mile cross country trip down Death Hollow on the
Escalante River in Utah, climbs of Mt Lyell and Dana in the
Sierra, two weeks of class 5.4 to 5.10 rock climbing at Tioga
Pass, numerous climbs of Mt. San Jacinto with 45 lb loads just
for conditioning, plus climbing Mts. Cornell, Marion and Jean, a
rather arctic climb of San Geronimo last December, this was
followed by climbs of Popocateptl and Orizaba, Mexico (5th and
3rd highest in N. America) and lots of just plain hiking. In
previous years her "hikes" have taken her twice on to the North
Slopes of Mt. Everest - once to 18,000 ft and once to almost
20,000. A climb of Mt. Mera (21,000 ft+) in Nepal, on and on, up
and up.

I may be biased, having been her climbing partner for 22
years, but if you need a suggestion here is a good candidate.

Donna Freiman
Adam Freiman
Tim Freiman



POETRY CORNER

'Twixt Fallen Gems

The minutes in a waltz did pass
while ceiling art in shame had froze
two copulating humanoids
and trapezoid portmanteaus.

The creases in my flaxen pinafore
twice circumambulated my personage
and twenty times the blue-jay yonder
croaked in moderato,
aching falsetto...

But all he could sing was perfect rhyme
of lovely face
and framing lace.

Is her meter so vapidly iambic,
Scanning features so curtly monosyllabic?

Has she creases halving her lid of eye
so incongruity shades moiety?
Or rapturous locks deadening
the weightlessness, the capriciousness of her heedlessness?
Stands she as Aphrodite -
effecting pangs of breathlessness?
Or melds her figure with the mold
of slender rapier exquisiteness?

But all he could sing was d.c. coda.

So I lazed amongst my menagerie
of pinafores and portmanteaus
while twice the hours a knockin' came
and twice the evening hung a deeper shade.

but nothing so limped as did his speech
staggering gait, shadow of disease
rooting gems sequentially
so fallen they were,
from her striking visage,
unto the floor.



- Tanya Mamedalin

May 10, 1992

Big Picacho Day Hike

John McCully
Tanya Mamedalin

Tanya, Igor (her father) and I got off to a brisk start at 5:10 AM, just before dawn. Igor's training for this monster hike had consisted of laying kitchen tiles the previous three weekends. I trained by doing Big Iron, Inyo and then Snow Creek as day hikes. Tanya trains by going to ballet three times a week. Igor had shown some foresight by making Tanya wear her heaviest winter boots, but still couldn't keep up. One of life's defining moments, I suppose, is having a daughter leave you in the dust. With Igor disposed of, it became my turn to have these 52 year old bones ground into the dirt by a 17 year old young woman.

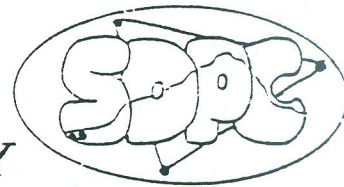
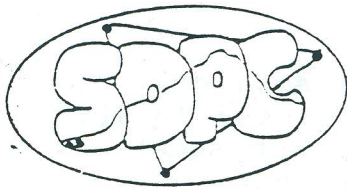
After making me promise repeatedly to not leave Tanya and warning us to avoid Gorem's Gully, Igor turned back at Blue Bottle Saddle and we dropped into the the canyon. The first water appeared just above where Gorem's Gully joins the main canyon. I discovered that the top to my iodine bottle had rusted shut and couldn't be removed despite herculean efforts. Tanya pointed out a mysterious looking foam in the stream. It turned out she was carrying two quarts of Orange County's finest tap water so I relieved her of a couple of pounds and we continued on to Campo Noche, arriving at 8:30 AM.

Tanya had done Big Picacho up Diablo Canyon a couple of years ago, contributing to the sensational "buns" photo at the 1991 DPS banquet so now we were on familiar territory. The game thus switched from my leading the way to increasingly vain attempts on my part to keep up with Tanya. Every once in a while she would pause until I heaved into sight before she went shooting on ahead. At 11:45 she submitted, 6 hours and 45 minutes after leaving the car at Los Llanitos. I arrived five minutes later. We got out the walkie talkie and spent half an hour chatting with Wendy, Igor and Suzanne, who were at the saddle North of Blue Bottle.

On the way down I began to feel nauseous. Having to wait for me to finish gagging was really cramping Tanya's style so when we got to Campo Noche at 3:00 I suggested a nap. The bugs were out in force and every time I nodded off, a nightmare vision of darkness falling while we were still a thousand feet below Blue Bottle kept bobbing into my head, so at 3:30 we started off again. I decided that a caffeine pill would be just the ticket to get me going. This experiment proved quite disastrous and the nausea got worse than ever. At 6:35 we finally made the saddle and after chatting some more over the walkie talkie with Wendy and Mom and Pop, who were having an early celebration of our triumph back at base camp, Tanya and I chugged on, returning fifteen hours and fifteen minutes after having left, just after dark. Igor met us a half mile or so from the car and was happy to carry my pack the rest of the way.

On the way out we tried to drive the road from near Meling Ranch up to Mike's Sky Ranch. It appears that it has been several years since the road has seen any maintenance, in fact there's a house on it which is partly built using old road signs. After nine miles we decided that continuing down a road where the slightest error would result in a tipped truck was not worth it. Besides we had already suffered disaster: the back window of my camper shell had broken out and the battery had come loose and broken a cable. A park attendant used a lime to clean the battery poles and then rewired the cable. He refused to take the five dollars I proffered. The woman at the glass repair shop suggested that someone shot out the back window, paranoia apparently being in style these days.

--- John McCully



MAYAN RUINS EXPLORATORY AND USUMACINTA RIVER RAFTING TRIP

Sat. August 22 - Sunday, August 30
1992



Thursday, April 23

This trip will be limited to 11 travelers and a guide. At this time we have 8 people who have inquired about this trip. We need a minimum of 10 people so if you are interested, please publicize this trip to your friends. Our week will require a sense of adventure, average reasonable physical ability, no special skills, a sense of humor, and an ability to accommodate a few changes in plans if it will better our trip or should the need arise - in other words, to be a little flexible. This will be a well-guided, safe, adventure travel camping trip conducted at the lowest price you will find. If you are interested in this trip, we need a \$250 deposit (check made out to ELDEN KIDD) for airline tickets due at on or before July 15. I'd appreciate if you could telephone me before this time so that I know how the trip is coming along. We suggest if you wish to buy travel insurance coverage do it through the Auto Club of Southern California or similar organization. The ground costs, \$750, (as well as the balance of air travel costs about \$175) will be due on or before August 3. Refunds can be made only if we find a traveler to fill your place. Send all payments to RON JONES, 119 No Helen Dr, Fullerton CA 92635.

I have not been to Chiapas but have made many trips into other parts of Mexico and the world. I have selected a friend and commercial adventure guide, Elden Kidd, to furnish ground travel and conduct this trip. Elden has guided many trips into this area of Mexico. He knows the people and towns well and has rafted the Usumacinta River many times before. He will have completed a similar trip with a group of archaeologists just the week before. In addition to these skills he is handsome (so my wife tells me), is fluent in local Spanish, is strong as an ox (and smarter), has a great sense of humor and is never without a smile. You will like him.

The only travel documents you will need for this week is proof of citizenship and a Mexican Visitors Permit, which is available free of charge at any Auto Club office, the Mexican Tourist Bureau in Century City or the Mexican Consulate. You can obtain your own plane tickets to Villahermosa in Tabasco or Elden can obtain what is probably the least expensive group fare available, probably on Aeromexico or Mexicana Air. He estimates the cost at about \$420 round trip, maybe less. Elden will let us know later.

We can expect warm, even hot days with high humidity. It may not rain at all or it may rain some afternoons for several hours. This rain is a warm

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tropical rain, similar to rains in Hawaii, and you will soon dry. During August there often is a break in the rainy season which the locals call "Canicula". We will surely encounter rain on our trip but sometimes the entire month passes completely dry. There are no mosquitos but you will want to have repellent for the low-hopping, ankle biting "no-see-ums" we will find at a few sandy locations.

We would fly from LAX to Mexico City, have a short lay-over, then a 1-1/2 hr dinner flight to Villahermosa arriving about 7pm and be met there by Elden. He will drive us to the town of Palenque, about 5 mi from the ruins, that night. Here we stay in double-occupancy air conditioned rooms with hot showers (there is a single occupancy surcharge). Our hotels will be clean and modest. We are responsible for all of our own restaurant meal costs. Meals are very inexpensive. Elden will furnish all meals while rafting or if restaurants (cafes) are not available.

You are responsible for your bedding, tents and all personal gear. Elden will furnish all transportation, cooking gear, eating utensils etc. You should manage this in one 3-4 foot duffle bag, a smaller bag and your day pack. \$100 or a little more should be enough for all meals and rooms for the week. Souvenirs would of course be additional and will depend on space available in the van or bus.

Early on Sunday we will leave for a 4-hour drive to near the trailhead for Bonampak. We will camp here for the night.

Monday will start early while it is cool on the hike into Bonampak. **BONAMPAC** is a small site well-known for its spectacular multi-colored painted murals. They have faded and oxidized since their discovery in 1945. The huge carved stelae tell of the town's relationship with nearby Yaxchilan. To reach the site you will walk along a flat trail for 5 miles in each direction through the Lacandon Rainforest, some of the last uncut jungle in this area. This night & through Thursday nite we camp out along the river.

The nearby Usumacinta River is the Mexican equivalent to the Amazon River as it contains the largest volume of water flowing in Central America! It passes through deep jungle festooned by orchids, bright bromeliads and ferns. We will see the ceiba trees sacred to the Maya. Peccarys, howler monkeys, ocelots and jaguars are native to the region as are more than 350 species of birds, including toucanets, guacamayas (scarlet macaws) and harpy eagles. Elden knows the birds well. The river is known as "The River of Ruins" as it passes by many Maya temples, cities and ruins. The Usumacinta River may not be rafted for many more years as it is being threatened by the building of several hydro-electric dams. I understand that construction will begin in 1994.

Tuesday we have an easy drive to Frontera Corozol where we will put into the river. We will float in our two rafts, each 8 ft by 18 ft, rigged together to form a stable platform, down the Usumacinta to the site of **YAXCHILAN**. This not often visited site is inaccessible by land and is located within a great bend of the river. It was a major Maya city-state when the great Jaguar family, founded by Yat-Balam, "Penis of the Jaguar" in A.D. 320, ruled until the 8th century. The stelae and carved door lintels are out-standing. There are more than 125 carved monuments including stelae, thrones, steps, walls, altars and door lintels once spanning the tops of 56 doors. We should have 1-1/2 hrs or more at this site. Just down river is where one of the hydro-electric dams has been planned; should this be built, Yaxchilan will be destroyed (just as we did to our Anasazi sites in Glen Canyon).

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Wednesday we continue our float down the river perhaps stopping briefly at *EL CAYO*, a subsidiary city to Yaxchilan. Its ruins are hidden under the forest. We will see "Chicosapote", a beautiful waterfall alongside the river.

Thursday we will continue to *PIEDRAS NEGRAS*, another major site available from the river. The carved monuments found here describe the history of the "Aac" Turtle dynasty and its temples and palaces. The ruins today lie covered by jungle and moss.

On Friday the Usumacinta changes its character. We enter a limestone canyon festooned by waterfalls along the bank and we encounter whitewater rapids. It is in this gorge that the first hydroelectric dam project on the river is to be built. We will leave the river at Tenosique and drive back to our hotel in Palenque where scalding hot water, laundry facilities and ice-filled drinks await us. This afternoon or early the next morning we will have a short visit to *PALENQUE* as time allows. We buy our dinner and the following meals.

Saturday we will have the morning to tour Palenque. Palenque is one of the most beautiful and well-studied of all the Maya centers. More of the inscriptions on its monuments have been translated than at any other site. We should visit the tomb where the great warrior-king, Pacal, lies buried. The burial chamber is occupied by the huge sarcophagus where his body was buried, after reaching 80 years of age and ruling for 67 years, in the year A.D. 683. It was opened again in 1952. If most are flying back to LAX on Sunday, we will drive to Villahermosa, check in to our hotel, after which we can visit *PARQUE LA VENTA* where we can view the stone sculpture, including the 20-ton stone heads, from the earlier Olmec culture. This park is just that though, a city park with only a few exhibits and if we miss it, it would not be a great loss. If only a few return to LAX Elden will pay for your bus ride to the airport in Villahermosa and to maximize our visit, the majority would spend another night at Palenque.

Sunday we will fly out of Villahermosa for Mexico City and LAX unless you want to join us on the optional 5-day visit to the highlands of Guatemala.

Another trip sheet with equipment list will be sent upon receipt of your deposit.

You will get a lot more enjoyment from this trip if you do some homework before you leave. Don't put it off, start NOW! Try the library or Travel book stores. College bookstores may be best. Information on the Mayans is emerging VERY VERY rapidly. It was only a few years ago that the glyphs could be deciphered and even more recently discovered that they contained a historical account. So try to read a modern account, after 1985 if possible.

John Lloyd Stephens & Fredrick Catherwood, "Incidents of Travel & Views of Ancient Monuments in Central America, Chiapas & Yucatan" - The classic account of re-discovery in the 1840's. Exciting reading and all the familiar drawings.

Michael D. Coe, "The Maya" - A paperback college text with excellent pics
Charles Gallenkamp, "Maya, the Riddle & Rediscovery of a Lost Civilization"

Chicki Mallan, "A Guide to the Yucatan Peninsula" - Very good, in paper.
Sylvanus Morley & George Brainerd, "The Ancient Maya"

Linda Schele & David Freidel, "A Forest of Kings" - The most recent & detailed account. Many parts quite readable with a minimum of skimming. Available in paperback.

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