

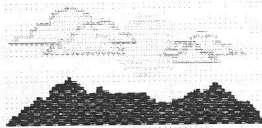
Hiking Horizons

"Taking you to new heights"

A Publication For Adventure Hikers of the San Diego Peaks Club

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February - April 1995



Views from the Top

I'm having such a good time. I love winter. I love the outdoors. I love adventure. I love hiking. As I started writing this newsletter, I reflected on how much I love desert hiking. Ten years ago I did my first desert hike. Five years ago I finished the DPS list. As Dennis Richards readies to finish the DPS list on Old Dad Mountain on his 50th birthday he says, "Finishing the list can cause a mixture of feelings; joy, pride, relief, and just a touch of depression." The depression occurs in response to an imagined ending. I felt it five years ago, but struck back by starting this club. What a good move! The camaraderie my clubmates bring me grows stronger each year. Dan Richter, the DPS chair, reports climbing recently with SDPC clubmember John McCully when he declared in a moment of reflection, "You know, Richter, I really love climbing." Yes, John, so do I.

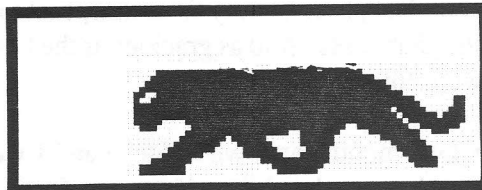


Let's welcome new members Harley Haag, Suzanne and Tim Pletcher, Wanda Zack, John and Debra Alexander and returning members, Terri and Ed Sutor. The club stands strong with 113 members.

We have terrific hikes coming up. Don't miss out. Keep the outings calendar handy and come on some hikes, I'll bet you'll feel as I do. I love hiking.

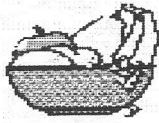
THE NEW OAKZANITA TRAIL

Grand! Splendid! Magnificent!! Vistas extraordinaire and nature at your feet! On January 2nd, AL HOLDEN led 24 hikers up the new Oakzanita trail. You have to do this one! The trailhead is just past the Thousand Trails campground on the way to Cuyamaca. There's plenty of space immediately beyond the Cuyamaca State Park sign in the parking lot and at its north end the trail starts. It'll take you to the East Mesa Fire Road where you turn right and walk 100 yards to where the road bends. Then, after counting off 20 paces, you'll find the new and clearly distinguishable trail. It stops at the meadow southeast of the crest. If you want to bag the top, go west until you hit the jeep trail and follow the normal route to the top from there. (See Schad, "Afoot and Afield in San Diego County.") • After we'd all breathlessly admired the vista from the peak, exhaled, and then returned to leave, adventurer Jim Sugg decided to explore a little on his own. Battling the brush, he proceeded to drop down the east side instead of taking the southside trail. In the process he discovered two trails in the initial stages of development! • Al took us to a wonderful lunch spot where we sat next to moteros. While researching the trip on an earlier date he had seen a red fox and a full-rack stag enter the "lunch meadow" below our perch.



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TRAIL TREATS (trailside chat)

USGS MAP BUY for Members

• I will coordinate a **MAP BUY** from the **USGS**. The maps are usually \$2.50 per, but with orders of 200 maps we can get it down to \$1.25. The deadline for letting me know is **February 15th**. Please send your map requests in alphabetical order, separated by state.

• Last issue I failed to mention the artist of our new nameplate for **Hiking Horizons**. She is **LIANNE SIMMONS**, aunt to my daughter, **ALLEGRA LIANNE SIMMONS**. Lianne (aka Motorcycle Mama) is a graphic artist for the Honda company in LA. The name and design concept of the newsletter came during a brainstorming session at a Learning Annex desktop publishing class taught by **SHERYL ROUSH**.

• We had a delicious time at the **POTLUCK**. About thirty people, including spouses of the hiker, engaged in a lot of jawing, and not just talking, if you get my pre-holiday-festivities drift. Needless to say, the food was heavenly. The Cowen home, designed by Irving Gill and built in 1898, is distinctive and a part of San Diego history. It came with a complete photo history from inception to present and of all its inhabitants. And as gracious as the house, Steve and Gail were enthusiastic hosts.

• Two months ago, when Steve and I were in Cuyamaca, a couple passed while we stopped for a break. When we caught up to them later, they showed us a video they had just filmed of a cougar which was walking on the road (Fern Flat Fire Road) about 300 yards ahead. The area was less than a quarter-mile from where Iris was slain in December. Given the habits of these creatures, we believe we saw the **MOUNTAIN LION** that killed her. Yes, I reported the sighting to the rangers. Yes, I'm cautious when hiking in Cuyamaca..

• The following article is from the Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association newsletter, "The Sand Paper", December 1994. "In early October, a **bighorn** ewe on Coyote Mountain became the fourteenth collared sheep to be killed by a **mountain lion** since November 1993. After the kill was recorded by tracking equipment, remote cameras were set up at the site and the lion was captured on film as it returned to feed. These fourteen sheep represent twenty percent of all

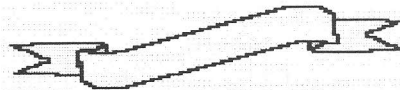
sheep that have received collars since the inception of the program." The kill total has increased by three since the article came out. This is a major problem.

• An interesting thing happened to **RHETA SCHOENEMAN** just before New Year's. (Well, since it's Rheta, I should say **ANOTHER** interesting thing happened.) The highway patrol didn't give her a speeding ticket. Nope, instead they gave her a ticket for "wasting precious resources," a \$28 fine, which doesn't go on your driving record—unless you don't pay the ticket.

• What's happened to **ROAM-O-RAMA** in the San Diego Reader? It isn't there some weeks! The answer is that **JERRY SCHAD**, that busy, busy author, asked for the column to be biweekly, not weekly, since Jerry's under the gun to finish his physical science textbook by March.

• Wanda Zack wants me tell all the members about HF Classic **WALKING HOLIDAYS**. HF, with over 80 years experience, hikes throughout Europe. They classify their walks into five grades from very easy to hard. Wanda and Jim Weinel have gone on their tours and say the highlights are sumptuous meals and very low costs. Call for a brochure 1-800-227-5550.

• "Thank you" to **Wes Shelberg, Gail Hanna, Richard Hughes and Wanda Zack** for sending me articles for this issue.



HIKER OF THE MONTH

The Hiker of the Month for March is **MARY MITTS**. Loren is so lucky to have a wife like Mary. A few months ago I made Loren **HOTM** for his hiking skills and for his assisting in car shuttling. Mary is the other half of the shuttling crew. Several times in recent months we have asked her to be the non-hiker in the shuttle and she does a stellar job. She also always has homemade soup, brownies and ice cream for our bellies when we return. Bless her heart.

The **HOTM** for April is **MARY McLAIN**. Mary was laid off from her veterinarian position last July. Rather than worry, she took a weeklong hike in the Sierras, then rode her mountain bike to Shasta County and down the California coast. Dr. McLain is an excellent vet, by the way, and I hope she doesn't mind if I slip in a few pet questions while hiking.

(READERS: PLEASE TELL ME ABOUT ANYONE YOU DEEM WORTHY OF **HOTM HONORS**).

TRIP NOTES



Dec 31 and Jan 1 — This was a great nonscheduled hike! Lorin Mitts, Mary McLain, Ranchita Ted, Jerry Higgins and I decided get together for a hike to explore some benchmarks north of the **CALCITE MINE AREA** between the Salton Sea and Borrego Springs. This was great. I had been wanting to bag these benchmarks and explore the area for the last five years and now was the time. We took off up the big wash west of Palm Peak (where the Calcite Mine is located) and cruised up as if it was a freeway, arriving at a saddle north of Palm. From there we located the Mountain of Our Desires and almost effortlessly bagged our first benchmark, High (Seventeen Palms 7.5° USGS topo). We said hallelujah! and had a bite to eat, then tried to spot where benchmark Cool should be. Bulls-eye again. More rejoicing! Then came the tough part: it was 2:30 and we had just three hours to navigate our way back across the many slot canyons of the area before dark. After seeing several rock ducks as we approached Cool BM, Lorin realized that Ol' Creosote had put them there to mark his Desert Trail. Bingo! We followed his ducks and used our knowledge of the area to successfully navigate our way back to the road and the car.

Later, at Clark Dry Lake, we arrived at the gathering for **TERRI AND ED SUTOR** who have moved to their retirement home in Minden, Nevada. We joined the party-in-progress of about 20 friends. Meanwhile, up on Villager ridgeline, we watched a helicopter rescue-in-progress of a 65-year old man who had been separated from his companions while hiking Villager. What a day!

Did you hear about the Villager res-

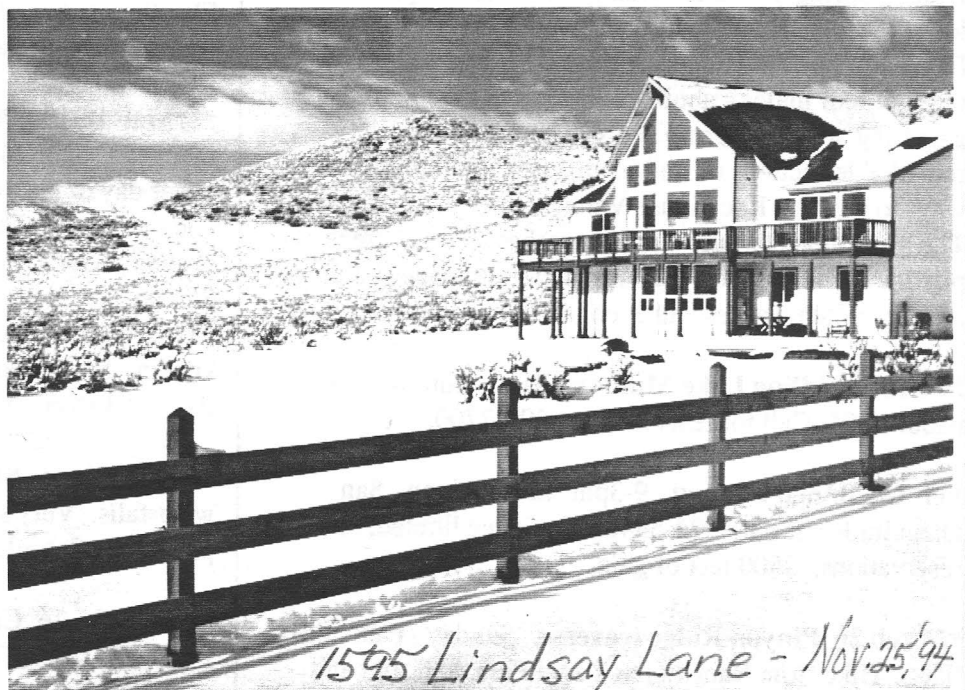
cue? Seems a 65-year old was backpacking with his son and a friend. The father fell behind and when the son noticed his dad wasn't with him, returned down the trail to look for him. Don't know how they did it on the Villager ridgeline, but they missed each other. So the father kept hiking and the son returned to the car. Everything would have been okay up on the

mountain, but the Dad dropped his pack, went scouting, and couldn't find his pack again. Result: a cold night without his food and water and sleeping bag!

NEWS FLASH--Ranchita Ted has agreed to lead this outstanding hike Sunday, March 19th!



Pictograph by North fork sheep tank at Calcite Mine on High and Cool hike.



The Sutor's retirement home in Minden, Nevada. Their backyard is BLM land.



WEEKEND OUTINGS CALENDAR



People have been clamoring for more Steve Cowen Indian hikes. We have four weekend adventures for you. Steve will limit the trips to three, excluding himself. Preference will be given to SDPC members. You must promise not to pilfer or return to pilfer Native American sites. On some trips you must agree not to disclose the locations of sites or trails. You must travel light. Steve's number is 561-8990.

San Dieguito River Park also has special hikes every weekend in areas that are generally off-limits to the public. I have included four of their trips, but call them at 235-5440 x5 for a complete schedule.

***Feb 4-5 **Borrogo Palm Canyon traverse.** Paul 583-0266. See Schad, p. 195 for details on this strenuous 5-star hike.

Feb 11 Orienteer. Mission Trails Park, Tierrasanta. This one has a "couples" theme for Valentine's Day. Bill Gookin 578-9456.

Feb 18-20 Rockhouse Canyon Area. Steve again. Hidden Spring across to Middle Willows, to Upper Willows, to Horse Canyon, to Whitewash Canyon, and down Dry Wash back to Hidden Spring. This trip will travel through four major Cahuilla villages and numerous gathering areas and camp spots. There are some very remarkable sections of trail on this trip, similar in some ways to those in Rockhouse Valley, better in other ways. The route loops through canyon washes, across serene pristine high mountain plateaus, major drainage channels, long forgotten washes and even into Pinyon-Juniper forest.

Feb 18 Paddling Lake Murray. REI is putting on a paddle—\$5. Call for reservations. 295-7700.

Feb 18 Boden Canyon. 9-3pm. 12 mile loop. San Dieguito River Park 235-5440 x 5. Space limited, call for reservations. 2500 feet of gain.

***Feb 26 **Pinyon Ridge traverse.** Sunday. Paul 583-0266. Hike from Ranchita to Yaqui Pass, half trail and half cross-country. See map.

***Mar 4-5 **Hellhole Canyon backpack.** Paul 583-

0266. I just have a sketch in mind of the goals of the trip, because the participants will help decide. We will start by bagging The Thimble, one of the SDPC emblem peaks, then head down an Indian trail to Hellhole Flat. Each hiker will be able to take it as easy or hard as they want. See map.

March 4-5 Borrogo Palm Canyon traverse. Steve. Sheep Canyon to Indian Canyon and down Borrogo Palm Canyon. Similar to Paul's trip on Feb 4-5. This trip will pass through one of the most archeologically rich areas in Southern California. At one site there are over 100 morteros and grinding areas with pottery shards so commonplace you might not even stop to look. At many sites the grinding rocks are still inside the grinding holes! See Schad, p. 195 (Also see Feb 4-5 hike).

Mar 5 Volcan Mountain. Julian. San Dieguito River Park 235-5440 x5. Call for reservations. 10-3pm. This is only a six mile hike, but it's in a very, very beautiful area. Enjoy listening to the docent explain the history of the mountain.

Mar 11 Orienteer, Agua Dulce. Wooded Hill area of Laguna. Jeff Jacobs 270-3275. One of the prettiest areas and Jeff sets excellent courses. All levels, beginning through advanced. Agua Dulce is 8 miles up the Sunrise highway. Call Paul if you are interested 583-0266.

March 11-12 Harper Canyon area. Steve. Harper Canyon to Harper Flat and explore the east side of Harper Flat, then across Harper Flat and down Pinyon Wash and back to the car. Fairly easy.

***Mar 18-19 **Palm Peak, High and Cool benchmarks.** Calcite Mine area, Borrogo. Ranchita Ted. Hike either day or both days. These are two of the finest hikes you can go on. The first day is full of "prehistoric" slot canyons with a few class 3 climbs (hands and feet needed). Sunday (see write-up in "Trip Notes") is just a fun day, not too hard or strenuous, as you venture into an area unknown. Since Ted doesn't have a phone, you can contact Paul 583-0266, but the sooner the better.

Mar 18 Upper SD River. Carl 448-8542. Three large waterfalls. Very strenuous. 11 miles, 11 hours. See Schad, page 119. Saturday. Sierra Club.

***Mar 25-26 **Cactus Spring Trail to Valerie Jean.** Paul 583-0266. This is the hike people have been begging me to led. We will backpack to the shoulder of Martinez Mountain, run up and bag it, then spend the night at Agua Alta Spring. Sunday we'll head down-canyon to Indio.

