

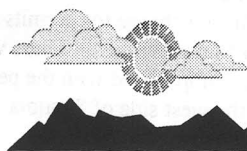
Hiking Horizons

"Taking you to new heights"

A Publication For Adventure Hikers of the San Diego Peaks Club

Vol 5, No 5 (Issue 29)

April-May 1996



Views from the Top

SWAP MEET

We're going to have a **SWAP MEET** and **POTLUCK** at Al Holden's home. It's tough to know when to have the event, not wanting to disturb any weekend plans. We scheduled it for Wednesday, April 24 from 6:00-9:00pm. I know I have some size 10.5 boots and some crosscountry skis to sell. What about you? See ya there. Al lives in Pacific Beach. 273-2494. Leave I-5 at Grand and go west. North at Fanuel. West on Tourmaline to 1134 Tourmaline. If you don't want to sell or buy, just come to eat!

Running the club sure has been fun since I started it in May, 1991. It's a kick to look back at the first few **HIKING HORIZONS** and to see how far the design and content has come. Remembering the canoe and raft trips, the new trails, the urgent issues (like the County Supervisors attack on the San Dieguito River Park), and most of all the unique adventure hikes that have been reported the past six years keeps giving me inspiration. Dues are coming due June 1 and have I got a deal for you. If you renew for two year you only pay \$28, and if you renew for three years you only pay \$38, rather than \$45. Just think, you will be getting **HIKING HORIZONS** and staying tuned into the local scene until the next century (June 1999)! Of course, if were one of the members that took advantage of the SDPC map buy that bought 882 USGS maps and saved members \$2500 over current prices; well, I don't have to explain to you how valuable the club is. I am biased, but I know how much time this takes and you guys and gals are getting a great deal.

A **CANOE TRIP** is scheduled for April 13-14. See Weekend Calendar for more details.

Welcome new members Joe Cochran, Suzanne Ray, David Willoughby and Peter Hohnemann. SDPC has 133 members.

I have reduced the font size to 9 in this issue. The previous issue was 10. Please let me know if you have a hard time reading this size print.

WHITNEY PERMIT RULES CHANGE

Wilderness reservations will be taken by the Wilderness Reservation Service for the Inyo National Forest starting April 1, 1996. All quota trails on the Inyo National Forest will be 100% reservable. Reservations will be accepted until two days before entry on the trail. Permits will be mailed to the party leader. If requested, or if the reservation is made within a week of entry, the permit will be sent to the Ranger Station chosen by the reserver. Any unreserved permits will be available starting the day before entry at the ranger station. Permits for non-quota trails will also be reservable.

Mt. Whitney hikers will be required to have a special stamp on their permit to enter the Mt. Whitney Zone no matter what their entry trail is. The zone boundaries are: to the east, just above Lone Pine Lake; to the west, at the outlet of Timberline Lake; and to the north, along the Sequoia N.P. Inyo N.F. boundary to Mt. Russell (on the west side of the boundary line). See zone map for more details. Day hikers will also need a permit to enter the zone. Hikers wishing to hike Mt. Whitney during the full moon without camping will be able to use a day hike permit with a special full moon stamp. Next year an overnight permit will be required. All Whitney permits are reservable. Reservations will be taken by phone, fax or mail (postmarked no earlier than April 1) at the following:

Wilderness Reservations

P.O. Box 430

Big Pine, CA 93513

(610) 938-1136

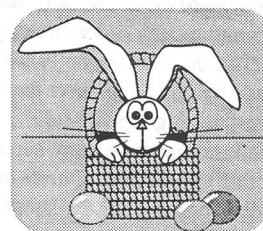
Fax & TTY: (619) 938-1137

Hours: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. 7 days a week.

There will be a toll free 800 number available April 1 for callers in the USA (That number is: 1-888-374-3773).

The reservation service will be located in Big Pine in the office of the Big Pine Chamber of Commerce and Visitor

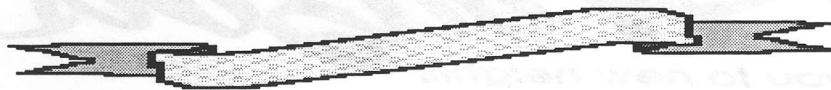
Center located at 126 S. Main St. (Hwy 395). They will be open during business hours for walk-in business. The reservation fee schedule is:



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HIKER OF THE MONTH



Who carries a tent, lantern, extra food, and 4-5 gallons of water on every backpack AND carries the whiner's pack (see Santa Rosa Traverse story on page 5) uphill 2000 feet? The human mule, **JERRY HIGGINS**, that's who. Jerry joined the club after I saw his name in the register on Dawn's Peak and gave him a call. He had done it a week before in the rain and solo. Now that's adventure hiking! This earns him the April Hiker-of-the-Month award.

MARK ADRIAN gets the May award. He has entertained you with his near-death articles. Mark finished the DPS list a few years ago amid a mountain rescue (one of his party severely broke her arm). Hopefully he won't have any bad luck as he finishes both the HPS and SDPC lists on Comb's Peak, the local highpoint of the Bucksnot Mountain range. Mark won't commit to a list finish date at press time, either April or May. Good luck, Mark.

WHITNEY continued from page 1

Overnight permit (quota trails): \$3.00 per person

Mt. Whitney Zone stamp (on overnight permits): \$1.00 per person

Mt. Whitney Day hiker: \$2.00 per person

Non-quota trails: \$3.00 per person

Payment will be accepted by credit card (Visa, Mastercard, American Express, Discover Card and EuroVisa), check or money order. Checks and money orders must be received at least seven days before entry date if reservations are made by phone. Expect the telephones to be very busy during April. Mailing or faxing applications may be a more certain way of contacting the service. Questions about trail conditions or other details should be directed to the Ranger Station.

"Attached is information about the Mt Whitney areas, signed by the superintendent. The intent is to identify a strategy to collect data, recognize resource impacts, and design a use system to mitigate the impact of very heavy visitation in the Mt Whitney area. This is a joint project between Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park and the Inyo National Forest. To help you and the visitors understand where we are going, I have listed some "talking points" that will answer some of the questions visitors may have regarding the "Mt Whitney special use zone."

' Where is the Mt. Whitney Zone?

This is the roughly a 3 square mile area from just west of Whitney Portal to the summit of Mt Whitney and west to Timberline Lake near Crabtree. This area is managed as wilderness to the east by the Inyo National Forest and to the west by Sequoia National Park

' What will this plan do?

This plan will cap use at current levels.

' When will this plan be implemented?

Summer, 1996

' Who will be required to have a special permit to hike to the summit of Mount Whitney?

Everyone. Backpackers must still obtain a wilderness permit. Entry into this zone will require a visa type stamp added to that permit. The big change is that day hikers in route to the summit of Mt Whitney will be required to have a permit. Day use around Whitney Portal and up to Lone Pine Lake, 2.5 mile beyond the Whitney Portal trailhead, will not require a permit.

' Where can we obtain a permit?

Wilderness permits for backpackers entering trails on the west side of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National parks will be issued at all of the existing stations. Permit for day users and backpackers entering from the east will be issued from a USFS contractor beginning April 1 1996.

' What about the backpacker on the PCT who is unsure of what specific date they will arrive to climb Mt Whitney?

Pacific Crest, John Muir, and High Sierra trail hikers will be able to secure a stamp from the issuing station when they obtain their backcountry permit that allow entry into the Whitney Zone. This stamp permits flexibility for these hikers in their

entry date.

' Is this meant to decrease use?

No. It is meant to determine current use levels and hold use there. Use figures over the past years indicate a substantial increase in the number of day users. Today, an estimated 40,000 users enter this area annually.

' How will quotas be established?

Existing use will be counted and quotas will be based on past use.

' Will there be extra fees?

There will be a charge for permits issued from the Inyo National Forest. There will be no charge for the stamp issued with the permit from trailheads on the west side of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks.

' Will day permits be reservable?

Yes, through the Inyo National Forest contractor.

' What happens if someone enters the special use zone without a permit?

They would be cited for a violation of regulations the same as a backpacker without a permit.

' What about foreign traveler and those unfamiliar with the system?

Not everyone who wants to spontaneously include Mt Whitney as a side trip will be able to.

' Will use be reduced in the future?

We really don't know. We will continue to monitor impacts to resources and social conditions, our ability to manage and administer use, impacts to local communities and effects on other wilderness areas before making any decisions on decreasing or increasing use.

' I don't like this. How can I influence this decision, or appeal it?

This is an administrative decision make by the Superintendent of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and the Forest Supervisor for Inyo National Forest. Since the landscape is not being altered nor are we making changes that will increase or decrease use this action is not subject to NEPA regulations or appeal. However the Park Superintendent and the forest Supervisor do want to know how the public feels about our management of the wilderness. It is our charge to be good stewards of these resources and serve the public.

- Tom Tschohl, District Ranger
Tom_Tschohl@NPS.GOV

- Ralph Moore, Wilderness Coordinator
Ralph_Moore@NPS.GOV
209-565-3708

WHITNEY continued on page 6

TRAIL TALK

•**A-16 and REI**, the two most popular backpacking stores in San Diego, have copies of the current **HIKING HORIZONS**. So, if you meet someone on the trail or want to tell a friend about the Peaks Club, you can refer them to these stores to check out the latest newsletter. I will also try to alert you to interesting slide presentations and other events at these stores.

•**USGS MAPS**. Your investigative reporter (move over, Geraldo) has unearthed the secrets of the new pricing structure. Gone are the discounts for ordering 200+ maps, now you have to order five of the same map and you get a 40% discount (ie. \$2.40 each), otherwise maps are \$4.00 each. The initial order under the new rules has to be over \$500. That's part one. Part two is you have to sign a "business partner" agreement that requires a retail or nonprofit license. Stay tuned. We may be able to have some future map buys!

•Dave Jurasevich sent me this note, "As you already know, I reported on the great **MAP STORE** in Tuscon that Mark and I discovered during our last trip there. I called them today to mail order a number of maps of interest in Arizona. They charge \$4.85/map and can ship UPS, FED EX, PRIORITY MAIL or whatever you wish. If you order 50 or more maps, they throw in a 15% discount, making each map only \$4.12. This is only 12 cents more than the USGS Denver charges, but you get them shipped the next day after ordering (no 6-8 week wait) and you do not pay sales tax! I've just placed an order for over 50 maps but will probably order more in a few months. If you'd like we could go in together on the next order to get the 15% discount. The price of 7.5 min, 1:100,000 and 1:250,000 maps are all the same."

(Sounds better than the USGS, but I have plans to go to the local merchants (A-16, REI and Sports Chalet) to see if they will give discounts to club members. I'll try and do this soon, and I'll let you know by the next newsletter.—Paul)

•Want to complete the **SDPC LIST** of peaks and benchmarks? Go with Al on Mondays! During the past six months Al sez he has bagged 40 of the list (See Footnotes).

•Learn **TRACKING, NATURE AND WILDERNESS SURVIVAL SKILLS** from the teachings of Tom Brown, Jr with Barry Martin and the Friends of Los Penasquitos. Class size is limited. Dates: March 29-31. Over 24 hours of instruction. Cost: \$50 (What a deal!) Call 484-4007 to reserve your space. (Thanks to Betty Rose.)

•**TRAIL WORK** on the Cutca Valley Trail in the Agua Tibia Wilderness will take place April 20-21 and May 18-19. Please see the Weekend Calendar section for more details. Gail Hanna 524-1699(w) or 272-5141(h).

•That movin' guy, **KEN OLSON**, has another new address. He is residing in Talmadge at 4857 Lorraine Dr, San Diego, CA 92115-1918. Phone is 583-0001. (He always gets the neat phone numbers from working for the phone company, but he is retiring in a few months. Hey, Mark, a hiking buddy!)

•Member Dan Davis reports on the Jamul Trails Association, "Some time back they were involved in the County's aquisition of Sequan Pk as some sort of preserve. They have recently been working to join sections of the CRHT which are missing (legally) between Hwy 94 and Japatul Rd. The most exciting of their endeavors is an attempt to

constuct a new and legal trail up **LYON'S PEAK**. This is in my opinion the finest chaparral peak in San Diego County. "...they have the permission of a property owner to construct a trail on land near the existing road. No one has shown me on a map, but it sound like it would be west of the road toward the west side of the mountain. A horse gate is the owner's only request. The woman who was leading the trail effort took a break due to back surgery, but she is now recovered and getting back to it. I'm very excited and will keep you informed when I have something substantial."

•The San Diego Peaks Club is on the **INTERNET!** Check sites: http://io.datasys.swri.edu/PATC/email_tc.html or <http://io.datasys.swri.edu/Hclubs.html>



Foot Notes

STOP THE PRESSES! by Al Holden

Stop the presses! Al Holden gets **GOAT** on his fourth try (with a little help from his friends)! Can I get away with saying the topo map is wrong? The Hellhole Flat hike was a classic, ten exhilarating, strenuous hours.

We began from the jeep road south of Thimble at 7:45 am and got Hob at 9:15. By noon we had tagged San Ysidro Mountain (Peak 5386) and were lunching on its false summit overlooking Borrego Springs. Now downridge and over and up to the Sirens (4401') by 2pm. What a fun scramble! Now THAT'S a worthy addition to our list! Spent some time searching for "Tuck". Found two reference markers, but the benchmark is out in the flat somewhere, probably inside a catclaw bush. Our Indian Guide, Ranchita Ted, then led us to a Native American village site and then down into the North Fork of Hellhole Canyon to a secluded campsite in the sycamores by a perennial stream. Then up and over to a ridgepoint overlooking a vast expanse of rockpiles, one of them being "Goat". I was only half jesting when I suggested that the eight of us each pick a rockpile and go for it, when Richard Whitcomb took out his binoculars and spotted the register cairn. Eureka! Bagged the Goat at 4:30 and back to the vehicles at 5:40. The other hikers in this great group were Sue Holloway, Virginia Columin, Richard Pakijian, Ron Lucas and Carl Peterson.

The Monday hikes are going great, each one a gem. By May 1 we will have visited 40 SDPC peaks since November 1.

MARK'S NEAR DEATH EXPERIENCE

by Mark Adrian

This past Saturday (2/24/96) a private trip to climb Cerro Pescadores in Baja, about 20 miles south of Mexicali, took an unexpected turn of events. Departing Calexico about 6 AM Saturday morning, our group of four trucks quickly passed through the border and caravaned south on MEX 5, following the DPS's updated 9.1 DRIVE guide (see Sage #240, pp 52). Our original plan was to climb Cerro P. and Mexican BM Puerta to its NW as an exploratory since it's not clear which is the exact range highpoint.

Near the base of "7 antennae hill" the second-in-line of our four
NEAR DEATH continued on page 11



WEEKEND OUTINGS



MAR 29-31 TRACKING CLASS. See Trail Talk for more details.

MAR 30 Sat. COYOTE CANYON AREA. Tule Canyon-Nance Canyon-PCT loop. Paul 583-0266.

MAR 30-APR 6 COPPER CANYON with Carl and Nancy Johnson 448-8542. Join them for a special Easter trip as they visit the Tarahumaras in Mexico. 8 days, 7 nights, \$835 including air.

APR 13-14 CANOE TRIP. Walter's Camp to Lake Martinez. Two 18 mile days. Cost is about \$85. Paul 583-0266.



APR 20 Sat. ORIENTEERING. West Mesa of Cuyamaca. Call Jim Lingar 437-0329 or Paul 583-0266.

APR 20-21 AGUA TIBIA BACKPACKS AND TRAIL WORK. Volunteers are needed for a moderate backpack in scenic Cutca Valley to a relaxing camp by a flowing stream. We hope to complete work on the Cutca Trail below the Palomar Divide (Forest Service provides tools). We'll clear brush, cut small limbs and make a route to Eagle Crag Peak open to hikers. Another trip is scheduled for May 18-19. For either trip call Gail Hanna 524-1699(w) or 272-5141(h). SC

APR 20-21 JOHN MUIR CELEBRATION AND SOMBRERO PEAK CLIMB. Carol Murdock's annual event honoring the founder of the Sierra Club. McCain Valley. Last year it was snowed out! Call 463-1279. SC

APR 24 Wed. SWAP MEET and POTLUCK. Pacific Beach. Al Holden 273-2494. Leave I-5 at Grand and go West to Fanuel. North on Fanuel to West on Tourmaline to 1134 Tourmaline Street. If you don't want to sell or buy, just come to eat!

APR 24-29 PCT, JAWBONE CANYON SOUTH TO TEHACHAPI. The BBBs are at it again. Odella 571-0471.

APR 27 Sat. CALIFORNIA STATE TRAILS DAY. This is a "work day" to improve trails and natural habitat at Mission Trails Regional Park. Trail work from 9am to 1pm. RSVP Maryanne at 563-5025.

MAY 1 HAPPY 3RD ANNIVERSARY, MY LOVELY EDITOR! (Vicki isn't editing this issue due to time constraints—PF)

MAY 4 MORENA BUTTE. Paul 583-0266. Join me as I lead a troop of Boy Scouts on my favorite "city" peak. Driving is one hour one-way. Hike is about 5 hours.

MAY 5 Sun. SAN DIEGUITO RIVER PARK TRAIL RUN. 8am. 6 mile run, 4 mile hike. The run begins at Kit Carson Park behind North County Fair. The course will wind through a portion of the SDRP "Coast to Crest Trail" along the north shore of Lake Hodges past streams, under trees, over bridges, and finish on the shore of beautiful Lake Hodges. This is a great event for the whole family. I went to it last year and had a great time. There is a pancake breakfast, Pizza Port micro brewed beer garden, live music and dancing, and the best thing is that the proceeds benefit San Dieguito River Park, a park that is preserving natural open space and creating trails for hikers, bikers, and horseback riders. Contact Kathy Loper Events 298-7400.

MAY 11 SAN JAC DAYHIKE. Lily Rock loop. Al 273-2494. OK people, now's your chance to hike with Al on a Saturday!

MAY 11-19 ESCALANTE CANYON. BBB members Carol Murdock (463-1279) and Terri Astle (571-0471) are leading their 3rd annual Utah adventure. This is an SC event so numbers are limited.

MAY 18-19 AGUA TIBIA BACKPACKS AND TRAIL WORK. Volunteers are needed for a moderate backpack in scenic Cutca Valley to a relaxing camp by a flowing stream. We hope to complete work on the Cutca Trail below the Palomar Divide (Forest Service provides tools). We'll clear brush, cut small limbs and make a route to Eagle Crag Peak open to hikers. Gail Hanna 524-1699(w) or 272-5141(h). SC

MAY 25 3RD ANNUAL POODLE HIKE. Al 273-2494. The group tackles Toro Peak and Santa Rosa Mountain. Strenuous.

MAY 25-27 ORIENTEER. Pacific Crest O-Fest. Wooded Hill, Laguna. This is the big three day meet of the year. I can't wait! Bill Gookin 578-9456 or Paul 583-0266.

MAY 25-27 BIG PICACHO BACKPACK. Carl Johnson 448-8542. Climb via Canon Providencia, the desert side. Extremely strenuous. This hike is best suited for those that have climbed the peak by other routes. Needed- car campers at the trailhead.

JUNE 1 NATIONAL TRAILS DAY. A full day of activities- hikes, mountain bike rides, displays, exhibits, refreshments, etc at Mission Trails Park, organized by the San Diego County Trails Council. Look for flyers and publicity. Contact the Park or call SDPC/SDCTC member Gail Hanna at 524-1699(w).

JUNE 8 SAN JAC DAYHIKE. Al 273-2494. 3rd annual trip to Tahquitz, Red Tahquitz, South Peak and Ansell Rock via the old Sam Fink trail. Excellent trip. Strenuous. All day.

JULY 20-25 ROCK CREEK CAR CAMP. Tom's Place, Sierras. BBB members Terri Sutor and Terri Astle (571-0471) are leading five days of dayhikes. This event was very well received last year.

JUNE 22 SAN JAC DAYHIKE. Al 273-2494. This hike will attempt to go crosscountry from Suicide Rock to Marion Mountain.

JULY 4-6 SAN JAC BLOWOUT BACKPACK. AL 273-2494. Get all seven peaks in the San Jacinto area on this superb trip. I went on it last year and it is a great, great hike.

WEDNESDAY WALKABOUT

HIKES with JIM SUGG

Jim leads hikes for Walkabout International every Wednesday. His hikes vary in length and time from 8-16 miles and from 5-8 hours hiking time. They cover all areas of the county within 1 1/2 hours driving time. Many of the hikes are unique to this group! Al Holden frequently leads the first and third Wednesdays. Call 224-7895. Currently, every hike divides into two groups, average pace and faster pace.

MAR 27 NEW!! MINERS ROAD/PINE VALLEY CREEK LOOP.

- APR 3 HARPER CREEK ROSEBUD HIKE. Al
10 SMUGGLERS CAVE AND VALLEY OF THE MOON.
Evan
17 CUYAMACA WEST MESA AND JAPACHA PEAK. Al
24 MT GOWER
- MAY 1 PALOMAR MOUNTAIN. Al
8 FORTUNA MOUNTAIN
15 MANZA. Lagunas
22 CORTE MADERA
29 PINE VALLEY CREEK

The Happy Wanderers

Run or Speedwalk

Call for info-- Donna and Edwin Gookin 286-7958
Gail and John Hanna 272-5141

The *Happy Wanderers* run and speedwalk each Tuesday or Wednesday from 6-7 pm. Meet at 5:45.

- APR 2 Tues Tecolote Park In Springtime. Tecolote Park and Rec Ctr, Tecolote Rd, E of Morena.
APR 10 Wed Tierrasanta Hills and Dales. Tierrasanta Rec Ctr on Clairemont Mesa Blvd, E of 15.
APR 16 Tues La Playa Yacht Clubs. Boat Launch at end of Shelter Island Dr.
APR 24 Wed Trails of Rose Canyon. Costa Verde Shopping Ctr at NE corner of Genesee and Noble.
APR 30 Tues Soledad Slopes. DeAnza Cove easternmost parking area off E Mission Bay Dr.
MAY 8 Wed Santee Lakes. Mast Park, 9125 Carlton Hills Blvd. From 52 go N on Mast, then left at Carleton Hills.
MAY 14 Tues Torrey Pines Park. N end of TP Golf Course frontage rd (take clubhouse offramp from N TP).
MAY 22 Wed Presidio Park Trails. Presidio Park and Rec Ctr off Taylor St (2811 Jackson St).
MAY 28 Tues La Jolla's Natural Park. La Jolla Cove behind lifeguard tower.
JUNE 5 Wed Mission Trails. Father Junipero Serra Trail (eastern end) off Msn Gorge Rd (at parking lot just east of the gate).

Al's Monday Madness

Al Holden's Monday hikes are winding down. The last of the series is scheduled for April 29th. He will resume the Monday hikes in November. Al's phone: 273-2494.

APR 1 GRANITE MOUNTAIN.

- 8 INDIAN CREEK CASCADES from Pine Valley. You won't find this written anywhere; it's a "Holden original."
15 STONEWALL-CUYAMACA PEAK-MIDDLE PEAK.
22 INDIAN HILL PETROGLYPHS WITH MOAN AND WINDY. Dos Cabezas.
29 LAGUNA TO CUYAMACA. Follow the Indian Creek trail. Side trips to Pine Mountain and Oakzanita Peak possible.



SANTA ROSA TRAVERSE (SALTON SEA TO ROCKHOUSE)

by Paul Freiman

Dealing with nature is unpredictable. It was only six days after Al hiked in the snow down to 2500 feet and we were climbing up to 5600 feet in the same area. Only trace snow was seen! This was a joint hike with John McCully and his DPS gang of seven. We had a gang of seven also, including a guest. I had told everyone they didn't need to bring over a quart of water because we would be following the creek most of the day. Yes, this has been a dry year, but the springs keep the creeks flowing pretty good. Five years of no whiners on my hikes was broken as a DPSer started sobbing that she was out of water after two hours of hiking. A flood of water was reached 15 minutes later. Steve Cowen was sick, so we didn't have our Indian guide, but he suggested where the trail must be and it was there! This trail, seen on the 1902 maps, was still in decent shape on the narrow-edged slopes, but couldn't be seen on the broad slopes. The trailhead was at 100 feet and we camped at 4700 feet. The contents of the whiner's backpack was distributed and carried by others for the final 1500 feet (See Hiker of the Month). People were upset with my time estimates, but the estimates were based on a reasonable pace, which we couldn't achieve. Everyone, however, was very tired at the end of the first day. I was cramping in both legs and was happy to stop. The second day was easier, but the whiner still got her pack carried. We were at the cars at 4pm. I would like to thank Lorin and Mary Mitts for providing the lodging and car shuttling. The participants were Dr Richard and Patsy Hughes and German guest Dr Christine, Lorin Mitts, Jerry Higgins, Dr Mary McLain and me.

NEW FOR 1997

Reservations for 1997 will be taken beginning six (6) months before the entry date (example: entry date is 7/14, reservations will be taken for that date starting 1/14).

RESERVATION FORM

Entry Trail Name (see list of trails): _____
 Entry Date: _____
 Alternates: _____
 Number of People in party: _____
 Type of permit (check appropriate boxes):
 ___ Overnight ___ Mt. Whitney Zone ___ Mt. Whitney Day Hiker ___ Mt. Whitney Full Moon Hiker
 Exit Trail Name: _____
 Expected Exit Date: _____
 Will any nights be spent in Sequoia, King's Canyon or Yosemite
 National Park: _____
 If so, which Park: _____
 Number of stock (if applicable): _____
 Is this a commercially guided trip?: _____
 Type of payment: Check / Money Order/ Visa / Mastercard / American Express / Discover Card / EuroVisa (circle one)
 Credit Card number _____
 Expiration date _____
 Make check or money order payable to INFWRs.
 Please have alternate dates or trails written down in case your first choice is not available.

QUOTA TRAILS ON THE INYO NATIONAL FOREST

MONO LAKE STATION - (619 647-3000)
 Rush Creek

MAMMOTH LAKES STATION - (619) 924-5500

Duck Pass - John Nuir Trail, North
 Deer Lakes - Minaret Lake
 Red Cones, JMT - South Beck Lake
 High Trail (PCT) - Fern Lake
 River Trail - Fish Creek
 Shadow Lake

WHITE MOUNTAIN STATION - (619) 873-2500

McGee Creek - Lamarck Lakes
 Hilton Lakes - Sabrina Lake
 Mono Pass - Treasure Lakes
 Little Lakes Vly. - Bishop Pass
 Pine Creek - Big Pine, No. Fork
 Piute Pass - Big Pine, So. Fork

MT. WHITNEY STATION (619) 876-6200

Taboose Pass - Mt. Whitney Trail
 Sawmill Pass - N. Fork Lone Pine Cr. (Mountaineer's Route)
 Baxter Pass

Golden Trout Lks. - Meysan Lake
 Kearsrge Pass - Cottonwood Lakes
 Shepherd Pass - Cottonwood Pass

The quota period for Mt. Whitney Trail and North Fork of Lone Pine Creek is May 22 to October 15. All other trails are the last Friday in June to September 15.

The toll free number is 1-888-374-3773. The telephones will only have a recorded message until April 1. Please add your daytime telephone number on the reservation form.

(The preceeding articles we taken off a bulletin board run by Steve Eckert for the Peaks Climbing Section of the Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter and edited by me for brevity. (This is not run by the Sierra Club). To get on the mailing list send to: LISTSERV@NETSPACE.ORG, with the subject heading: SC-PEAKS@ssc.org, then under text SC-PEAKS@ssc.org:your name. You can reach Steve at eckert@netcom.com.)

GPS continued from page 10

places that can answer technical questions about their products. They have a Web site at: <http://www.nmaa.org/navtech.com>

Trimble Navigation publishes a good primer on GPS which at one time was available free from the company. This covers the technical aspects of how GPS works rather than actual use in the field. The title is "GPS - A Guide to the Next Utility" by Jeff Hum and costs \$9.95 from Navtech. Trimble's number is (800) 827-8000 in Sunnyvale.

The February issue of Scientific American has a good article on GPS and some of the design decisions that went into it. It can be found at many grocery store news stands.

A new book which I highly recommend is: "GPS Made Easy: Using Global Positioning Systems in the Outdoors" by Lawrence Latham (The Mountaineers, Seattle, 1995). It costs \$12.95 at REI and Navtech. This book covers the use of GPS very well and shows the display of several receivers in its examples.

Another book "A Comprehensive Guide to Land Navigation with GPS" by Noel J. Hotchkiss, 1994, gives a very good explanation of the UTM grid. It is a bit pricey at \$29.95 and unfortunately only uses the Magellan Trailblazer in its examples, one of the poorest performing units on the market. Available from Navtech.

About the Author - Richard Carey is an Electronics Engineer working at a Navy Laboratory in San Diego. He has been an active hiker/mountaineer since 1970. He admits to being a "peakbagger" and enjoys exploring remote mountains usually with his GPS receiver. He would like to thank Gail Hanna for editing this article. 2/96

WE GET LETTERS

•Al Holden writes, "Glad to hear you're planning a hiking guide. I would be glad to help in any way I can."

About adding easy peaks so the average hiker can do 100 of them, no problem with that; just call 100 peaks a list finish. It can work both ways, the heartier hikers repeating the great ones and avoiding up to 17 of the scruffier ones. Or maybe we could swap peaks, trading our surplus for those we really don't want to do. Like hiring surrogates. I have extra Rosas and I will give one to anyone who will go out and and do Buckman for me.

(I'll only take your Rosa if you did it from Toro, not simply from S-22, which is the "easy" way. Hey, Richard Carey, what will you trade for Denali? See ya at the swap meet—Paul)

•Hello. I am interested in backpacking on the Pacific Crest Trail this summer but I am having a difficult time finding anybody to hike with. Do you know of anybody that I can contact? I am particularly interested in hiking in the high Sierra in California, for instance the portion between Yosemite and Mt. Whitney. In terms of experience, I have previously hiked in the Yosemite backcountry for a week and in New Mexico for 11 days.

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POSTMAN continued from page 11

drifts as we signed a rusty tin can register, then went back to a sheltering pinyon pine for lunch. The worst was over and the weather seemed to be moderating. So, on to Rosa!

Jerry Higgins showed us a misplaced peak register on elevation 5260, two bumps southeast of the summit where SDPC members had been signing in. Schad lists Mile High as 5340 on the Rabbit Peak Quad, and the SDPC list shows Mile High as 5360'. I say the register should be moved out two bumps to the ridge end at 5340 as described above. Why cut the experience short? You've already done about 25 bumps getting to 5260 and two more would be less than 40 minutes round trip.

On the ridge crossover to Rosa we were thrilled to be following the snow tracks of a large mountain lion for at least a half mile. May these deadly beautiful beasts remain forever wild and free from the trophy hunters! We were on Rosa at 1:30 and off at 2pm, tracing the HPS/DPS route all the way to the desert floor in bright sunshine with sparkling views, reaching the vehicles at 5:45.

Incidentally, the Schad route is far superior to HPS for getting on and off the main ridge. You eliminate about 10 boring lower bumps on the roller-coaster and save some good time.

The other hikers were Sue Holloway, Judy Hummerich, Richard Whitcomb and David Willoughby.

AFOOT AND AFIELD WITH GPS

by Richard L. Carey

GPS is a commonly heard acronym these days. It refers to the Global

Positioning System and the navigation receivers that make use of it. This article will attempt to describe, in laymen's terms, how the system works and what advantages it offers out on the trail. I have been using a GPS navigator extensively for about a year now and will relate my experiences and also offer opinions on current units now on the market, should you be considering a purchase.

Background and History of GPS

The concept of the Global Positioning System was proposed more than 20 years ago as a world-wide means of navigation for the US military. An early satellite navigation system known as TRANSIT, now being phased out, proved that navigation from satellites with an unlimited number of users was a workable concept and offered advantages of higher accuracy and world-wide coverage unavailable in existing systems. After years of testing, equipment refinement, and launch delays due to the Challenger disaster, the number of satellites, in late 1993, finally reached the minimum number necessary for 24 hour coverage around the globe. At that time there were 24 satellites in orbit and, after further testing, the Air Force declared the system to "have full operational capability" on April 27, 1995. Total cost, from concept to completion, has been about 12 billion dollars.

Although it was developed for the military, the advantages of such a system for civilian uses was seen early on. Also, advances in electronics have brought down the price of GPS receivers from the over \$10,000 range to a few hundred dollars today. For many years only the military could afford them and now they are affordable for commercial and recreational users. What has come about is a system run by the U.S. military, but available to anyone, although with somewhat reduced accuracy. At present the commercial market has grown to where the number of commercial units sold outnumbers the military units by 3 to 1. Even with the reduced accuracy, mandated by the military for civilian users, GPS is far better than other systems and it is on its way to becoming the primary means of navigation in most applications.

Satellites - The Heart of the GPS System

The GPS system has 24 satellites in orbit at an altitude of about 11,000 miles above the earth's surface. Each make a full revolution every 12 hours. They are spread out in six orbital planes so that from any point on earth at least five satellites are in view at all times, meaning that they are above the horizon. This high orbit, well above the earth's atmosphere, yields a very precise and stable orbit which can be measured very accurately by ground stations. The Air Force, at its master control station at Falcon AFB near Colorado Springs, Colorado, and at four other monitor stations, can check each satellite twice a day.

A coded message is continuously transmitted by each satellite on two channels which contain timing information and data about the orbit of the satellite. To maintain a very precise timing signal which the user on earth needs to calculate his position, several atomic clocks are used as a reference in the satellite. As with most satellites there are solar cells and backup batteries to maintain power for an expected 7 1/2 year lifetime.

Of the two channels transmitted, called L1 and L2, the civilian user can only make use of the L1 channel which has unencrypted information. The L2 channel is for the military with special receivers. The signal consists of a coded acquisition signal for the timing process and a message signal which gives orbital data for the satellite and also for the other 23 satellites.

The Navigation Process

Every GPS receiver has a small antenna to receive the satellite signals. To function properly the unit must be outdoors and have good visibility to most of the sky. Units will not work in caves, underwater, in buildings, or in deep canyons where sky visibility is severely restricted. Some units work better than others in jungle or dense forest; this will be discussed later. Signals are not generally affected by clouds or bad weather.

After activation the receiver will look for satellite signals and try to receive as many as its design can handle. Most receivers give an indication of the number of satellites being received or "tracked" and some have a graphic display showing the number and location of each satellite. To determine your position the receiver does a lot of calculations which are basically trigonometry problems. By using the coded timing signal the receiver measures the range to each of four satellites and calculates four equations with four unknowns. The most accurate position or "fix" is obtained from satellites widely distributed about the sky and more than 20 degrees above the horizon. If the satellites are bunched up in one direction or your view of any is blocked then the "fix" may not be as accurate. Most receivers will give an error number indicating the positional accuracy.

This whole process may sound complicated, but is done automatically by the receiver during the few minutes before a position is displayed. There is usually an error "beep" and display if the receiver cannot find enough satellites. If you have just established a fix then your next one will be fairly fast. If you have not used the unit in some time then your first fix may take up to 13 minutes as the receiver has to download all the message data about the orbits. Once it has current data subsequent fixes are much faster.

I mentioned that the receiver needs data from four satellites. This is true for it to provide a complete solution which consists of your location horizontally and your elevation. This is called a "3D" or three dimensional solution. If only three satellites are visible then the unit can provide a "2D" or two dimensional solution which gives your horizontal location but no elevation. Most receivers indicate whether a 2D or 3D answer is being provided. The receiver can also provide accurate time of day and velocity if you are travelling.

Accuracy and "Selective Availability"

The question that often comes up is "How accurately does it compute my position?" For the civilian user your horizontal position is plus or minus 100 meters for 95% of the time and your elevation is plus or minus 156 meters. In actual experience I have found that, horizontally, the accuracy is about half that amount much of the time. Military users with equipment that can decode the data on the L2 channel have an accuracy of about 16 meters in all three dimensions. The civilian user is thus denied the full accuracy of the system in a policy called "Selective Availability" or SA. (This should possibly be called selective inaccuracy!) This is accomplished by deliberately wobbling the timing. It can be stopped at any time as was done in the Gulf War when not enough military receivers were available. Current policy is that this wobble will stay on and it has caused a lot of controversy. It is ironic that \$12 billion was spent to make the best and most accurate system possible and then the system, at least for the civil user, is deliberately degraded! This policy is defended by the military as necessary to deny the benefits of GPS to an adversary.

Thus Selective Availability causes the displayed position on your receiver to slowly and continuously wander although staying well within the 100 meter limit. This is still very good because, on a 7.5 minute (1:24,000 scale) topographic map, your location will be within a circle of about 1/3 of an inch in diameter (about the diameter of a pencil eraser). Elevation is not nearly as good as you could be in error by plus or minus 511 feet! This is not very useful and a quality pocket altimeter will do better. However, if you know your horizontal position with such good accuracy you can read your

elevation from the map anyway.

Using the Position Information - Coordinate Systems

The most common coordinate system is latitude and longitude which divide the earth into lines of latitude parallel to the equator and lines (meridians) of longitude perpendicular to the equator. Zero degrees latitude is on the equator and zero degrees longitude is at the Prime Meridian in Greenwich, England. Your position is an angular measurement north or south of the equator and east or west of the Prime Meridian in Greenwich, England. This system has been in use for hundreds of years and all GPS units will give a position in these units. The display can be in degrees, minutes, and seconds or in degrees and fractional minutes. This system is fine for nautical charts, but for land navigation it is awkward to think of distance in terms of degrees and minutes when we are more used to miles and feet or meters. The degree is divided into 60 minutes which is not as easy to do compared to the division by 10 in the metric system.

Although awkward to use, we find that all topo maps are arranged with edges based on latitude and longitude. As we go north on the map the distance of one degree latitude is consistent from the equator to the pole, but not so for degrees longitude. The longitude lines all merge at the poles and so the width of one degree longitude gets progressively smaller as we travel north. This can be readily seen in maps of California where the width of a map in Del Norte county is smaller than one in San Diego county.

A better system for the land navigator is the UTM or Universal Transverse Mercator coordinate system. At the risk of oversimplification I'll say that it is a projection of the spherical surface of the earth onto a horizontal cylinder. To keep the error small this is done in zones six degrees wide and covers territory from 80 degrees south to 84 degrees north latitude. A map on a cylinder can be split and laid out flat and thus the problem of representing a round globe on a flat piece of paper is solved. There are 60 numbered zones starting with Zone 1 from 180 to 174 degrees west longitude and increasing toward the east. In California we are in two zones: zone 10, from 126 to 120 degrees, and zone 11, from 120 to 114 degrees.

All 7.5 minute topo maps (1:24,000 scale) have the UTM grid which is a metric grid of one kilometer spacing. On a lot of maps the grid is drawn in with very fine lines and on others it is shown on the margin with blue tick marks. On those maps with just the tick marks I recommend drawing in the grid if you plan to read UTM values from the map. Note that the UTM grid is usually not in alignment with the latitude and longitude lines on the map and will be slanted left or right depending on which side of the center of the zone the map is located.

The nice thing about the UTM grid is that it is a consistent 1 Km grid which does not vary with the location of the map! The vertical units are the distance in meters north from the equator and will vary from 3,602,000 along the Mexican border to 4,649,000 at the California Oregon border. For horizontal measurements the distance is also metric and is from the center of the zone. To keep the numbers positive a value of 500,000 meters is assigned to the center of the zone. On the typical California map, depending on your location, the horizontal UTM numbers will vary from about 200,000 to about 800,000 increasing from left to right. The zone is always given in the lower left corner of the map.

Most, but not all, GPS units will display a position in the UTM system. The display will show the zone and two numbers - a six digit number will be meters east and a seven digit number will be meters north. It is easy to visually divide the 1 Km grid into 10 units and place your position reading on the map, accurate to about 100 meters.

Coordinate Systems for Other Countries

Many countries have adopted their own coordinate systems which are often based on the UTM but have a different origin to optimize the grid for their territory. When using maps in these countries the GPS

receiver will display large errors of several hundred meters if not set up to use the local coordinate system. For example, in Great Britain it is called the OSGB (Ordnance Survey of Great Britain) and many receivers will have the option of selecting this. If you plan on using the GPS unit in a foreign country having the option to select the proper coordinate system is important. Some of the lower cost units are very limited and assume that use will be confined to the U.S.

Datums - Defining the Shape of the Earth

This is a subject the average user doesn't need to know a lot about other than the fact that using the right datum is important, just as is knowledge of the coordinate system. The receiver, when it calculates where you are, uses an elliptical model for the shape of the earth. This is called the ellipsoid. There are eight numbers that define its shape and origin and make up the datum. There are datums that have evolved from satellite measurements which are optimized for the entire earth and there are those set up for just a region or country. Our topo maps are based on the North American Datum of 1927 (abbreviated NAD27) and this is the one that should be used in the U.S. There are well over a hundred datums defined for various areas of the world and the more the GPS receiver has in its memory the better. The Trimble units, as an example, have a choice of 123 datums.

Other GPS Receiver Features

We have talked about taking a reading from the GPS receiver and placing yourself on the map and we can also do the reverse. This is useful for taking a point on the map such as a summit or trail junction and storing it in memory and then finding your way to that point. Saved positions are called "waypoints", shorthand for "points along the way", and most GPS units will allow at least 100 waypoints to be saved. Usually a five or six digit name can be assigned to them to aid in remembering where they are. It is quite handy if you are going to a new area to spend some time beforehand with the topo map and store waypoints for important places on your route. There are several special plastic rulers available to allow you to read UTM positions on your map to within 10 meters.

When using the GPS unit you can ask for a range and bearing to the closest waypoint you have saved or to a particular one. Bearing will be in degrees true or you can have the display be a magnetic reading by subtracting the local compass declination. (Or add the declination if in an area where the compass points west of true north). Range to the waypoint can generally be displayed in miles rather than kilometers even though the grid is metric. You will find that you need your trusty compass when using a GPS unit. GPS gives a bearing to a point, but which direction is that? To head in the right direction a compass is still essential!

Various GPS units have a variety of other features such as a small graphic display of your route and a more elaborate bearing indicator display which would be useful in a boat for navigation. This will show graphically how to steer to a waypoint without being concerned with numeric values or obstacles enroute and also your velocity will be indicated with good accuracy for judging time of arrival. There are other features and manufacturers are sure to dream up new ones to "enhance" their product. Many of these may not be needed and just add unwanted complexity.

Using GPS in the Forest or in a Car

Most all GPS units work fine out on the ocean or in the desert where there are few obstructions, but in a dense forest there are problems due to signal attenuation. Tree trunks, leaves and steep canyons weaken the satellite signal considerably and certain receivers work better than others under these conditions. We mentioned earlier that the receiver must lock onto the signal from at least four satellites to determine a 3D position. To save power some receivers use a sharing technique called "multiplexing"

where the unit switches channels among the satellites. The satellite signal thus is not continuously tracked. Other receivers have dedicated channels for each satellite and maintain a better track in marginal conditions such as in a forest. This type of receiver needs more batteries and has a shorter battery life as a result. If operation in the forest is essential then be sure to take this into account when buying a unit.

Using a GPS unit in your car can be very useful when trying to find road junctions and landmarks particularly on unmarked desert or mountain roads. The signal will penetrate through the windshield and some units work OK when placed up on the dash. A better solution is to attach an external antenna. Most manufacturers offer a magnetic mount antenna that can be plugged into the receiver and put on the roof with the cable run through a window. On some lower cost units the provision for attaching an external antenna has been deleted. In my experience performance is much improved with the outside antenna. For car use a cable with plug to connect to the cigarette lighter is a good idea to save on battery power.

Summary and Trends

Navigation using GPS is proven and reliable at this time and is here to stay. Receiver prices have come down a lot in the last few years and are still trending lower. I think their use in the backcountry will increase and a GPS unit will be regarded as another tool for navigation, along with the traditional map, compass, and altimeter. It does not replace these methods but complements them. Hiking guides and trip descriptions will start to include UTM coordinate points as standard practice to identify important trailheads, junctions, passes, road washouts and so on. GPS can help you plan a safer, more enjoyable and successful trip.

Opinions on Several GPS Receivers

These are my own opinions based on my use of several receivers, personal research and from postings on an Internet news group. These are all hand-held units, suitable for hiking or backpacking. I do not represent or sell any of these products.

Garmin GPS 40 and 45

These are popular units that are very compact and work well in open areas. The model 40 has a built-in antenna and is a little smaller than the model 45. The 45, with its external antenna performs better in marginal situations. Both can connect to an external antenna and operate about 20 hours on 4 AA batteries in a battery saver mode. The software for both units is the same so they operate identically. These units track up to eight satellites but use a multiplexing method and do not work well in a forest. Each can store up to 250 waypoints and an optional cable and

software allow transfer of data to and from a computer. The operator's manual is well written and they are easy to learn to use. The current prices are \$269 for the model 40 and \$299 for the 45. The 45 is available at West Marine and Ham Radio Outlet. Sport Chalet now has both the 40 and 45. For those of you who are Sierra Club outing leaders Sport Chalet will give a 20% discount on their prices. Show your card and ask for Group 34 discount. The model 45 is then \$263.99, one of the best prices I have seen. Garmin is now introducing a model 38 which will be similar to a model 40 but with some new software features. It will not have provision for an external antenna and is expected to sell at about \$189. Garmin will send data on its products by calling the factory at (800) 800-1020.

Eagle Accu-Nav Sport

The Eagle, while somewhat larger than the Garmin units, has a very good display which most people like. It uses the Rockwell 5-channel parallel receiver and performs very well in the forest or other marginal signal areas. It uses 6 AA batteries that will last from 3 to 8 hours depending on usage. It stores 200 waypoints, has a computer interface, and an optional cable to remotely mount the antenna. A big drawback is that it does not work in the UTM grid, only latitude and longitude. The Eagle is available from Bass Pro for \$384 and their number is (800) 227-7776.

Magellan Trailblazer, Meridian XL, GPS 2000, GPS 3000

The 2000 and 3000 are very compact units about the same size as the Garmin units. The 2000 stores 100 waypoints and has no provision for an external antenna. The 3000 can store 200 waypoints and connect to an optional external antenna. They both display in UTM grid as well as latitude and longitude. These are priced at about \$199 for the 2000 and \$249 for the 3000.

The Trailblazer and Meridian XL are older units in a larger case. The Meridian XL stores 200 waypoints and costs about \$299. There have been numerous reports of trouble with these units such as failing to find satellites or giving wild/erroneous readings. Some users have had poor response from the factory getting them fixed. I do not recommend these units and would suggest caution on purchase of the newer 2000 and 3000 also. Make sure the store has a return policy so you can return it for a full refund if it doesn't work right. These are available from Gander Mountain at (414) 862-3406; and Kmart also may sell some of these models. In San Diego the GPS2000 is available at Sport Chalet for \$199 and I believe the 20% Sierra Club outing leader discount will apply.

Silva GPS Compass XL 1000

This unit is from the same Swedish company that has made compasses for many years. It uses the Rockwell receiver, as does the Eagle, and works well in the forest and marginal conditions. It can store up to 1000 waypoints and will display in the UTM grid. It uses 6 AA batteries and has no provision for an external antenna. The Silva is unique because it has a built-in electronic compass that can be used without having the GPS receiver turned on. A British user reports that the manual is a poor translation from Swedish and is not very good. Cost is about \$700 and it is available from Silva Marine, Tampa, FL at (813) 654-1799.

Trimble Scout and Scoutmaster

Trimble is one of the older GPS receiver manufacturers having started in 1973 with military and commercial units. The Scout and Scoutmaster are a little larger than the smaller units on the market and operate similarly with extra features added to the Scoutmaster. Both units can store up to 250 waypoints and operate in UTM grid. They can be operated with one hand and use 4 AA cells which can last from 6 to 20 hours depending on the update rate. They can both be connected to an external antenna and the Scoutmaster has a computer interface with software included. Both units have several unique features including an "Up and Over" mode where the unit will show your position in centimeters from the lower right corner of the map. Thus, with a ruler, you can find your location without using any of the grid systems. They also come with a special Thomas Brothers atlas and can display positions in a Thomas Brothers grid which might be handy for extensive road trips. The Scoutmaster has a built-in list of all 53,689 U.S. 7.5 minute topo maps and will even show which map you are on! These units work well in the forest and the manuals are very detailed. Trimble units, while not having a fancy graphic display, work very well and are highly regarded. Cost for the Scout is about \$695 and the Scoutmaster is \$895. The Scout is available from REI for \$739 and both are sold by Navtech in Virginia, (800) 628-0885.

More Sources of Information on GPS

If you have a computer with access to the World Wide Web then I suggest the Web page on GPS at the University of Texas Geography Department. It is at: <http://www.utexas.edu/depts/grg/gcraft/notes/gps/gps.html>

Navtech is a company which offers training on GPS and has a very complete book list. They also sell receivers from their Arlington, VA offices and are one of the few

The Hiker of the Month Award (A Retrospective)

Once a year I like to honor the club members who have received this award by reprinting their names and achievements. For the club's many new members I will go back to the birth of the HOTM. SDPC started in May, 1991. By the first June newsletter Beth Davis had earned a few kudos. Here's what I wrote: "SD hiker of the month! Beth Davis, in three consecutive weekends did (1) a 16 hour trip from Clark Dry lake to Rabbit; (2) a 32 mile Santa Rosa ridge traverse; and (3) a self-described 'Hike from Hell' in Death Valley, a mere 15 hour day. I can't believe people think 'Wonder Woman' is fiction. I get exhausted just thinking about it!" At that point the hiker of the month became an ongoing role in the club. All it needed was a tangible symbol and a name. So, in July I asked the membership for help locating a suitable object to pass to each subsequent Hiker of the Month. Carl Johnson soon answered the call and donated a handsome chain of three interlocking rings he had carved from a single piece of wood. (For those who don't know him, Carl is a renowned wood sculptor.) Terri Astle named it and then, at last, the "Hotem Pole was born."

Well, after that I thought I'd have a hard time finding 12 people per year to acknowledge, but instead I've had difficulty restricting the choice to only one person a month. As the HOTeM Pole matures, it travels well—from McKinley in Alaska to Aconcagua in Peru, and a number of other notable continental peaks in between. Look for the HOTeM Pole on the Hiker of the Month's pack.

Here are the honorees:

June '91 Beth Davis - Superhiker
 July-Aug '91 Jim Sugg - His 10th annual 60 mile walk (in less than 20 hrs) and the county record holder for the most units of anti-venom received for a snakebite.
 Sept '91 Carl Johnson - for doing Picacho del Diablo twice a year for several years.
 Oct '91 Al Holden - for designing wonderfully new "adventure hiking" routes.
 Nov '91 John Strauch - for completing all 176 hikes in Jerry Schad's *Afoot and Afield in San Diego County*
 Dec '91 Terri Astle - for being a very active leader of Sierra Club hikes and for founding the La Jolla Swim Club in the early '70s.
 Jan '92 Paul Freiman - for finishing the SDPC list
 Feb '92 Dennis Richards - for leading Sierra Club hikes.
 Mar '92 Betty Sterrett - for designing a lovely club logo.
 Apr '92 Wes Shelberg - for being San Diego's premiere desert rat. He taught me a lot of what I know (and all my bad habits)!
 May '92 Gail Hanna - awesome orienteering

June '92 Cindy Outlaw - this was to be for climbing Denali, but she found she was pregnant one week before she was to leave and named her daughter "Molly McKinley".
 July '92 Peggy Crunican and Dave Hardy - going on the most SDPC hikes the previous year.
 Aug '92 Donna Hawkins - mountaineering feats that include Denali, Mt Mera and others.
 Sept '92 Ron Jones - editing the DPS' "The Desert Sage" and leading magnificent trips.
 Oct '92 Bob Pinsker and Laurie Jenkins - for "adventure hiking" 50 SDPC peaks in stylish fashion.
 Nov '92 Ed Sutor - for finishing the HPS list.
 Dec '92 Carol Murdock - for being the Medical Director of the Sierra club and organizing Mountain Medicine courses since 1978.
 Jan '93 Steve Spiller - being the second person to complete all 176 hikes in Schad's book.
 Feb '93 Les Hill, Richard Carey and Ken Olson - for finishing the DPS list. Richard carried the HOTM to the summit of Orizaba (18850'), the third highest peak in North America.



Mar '93 John Strauch - for being the second to finish the SDPC list
 Apr '93 The Rain - for washing out my trips.
 May '93 Victoria Cavataio-Freiman - for marrying me.
 June '93 Robin Tucker - for organizing the May raft trip and for falling overboard so much.
 July '93 Dave Jurasevich - for leading great trips, for helping me list finish the DPS, for editing the DPS Peak Guide, and for being best man at my wedding.
 Aug '93 Richard Carey - Summiting Denali
 Sept '93 Mark Adrian - for having the most exciting DPS list finish in memory, enduring earthquakes and mountain rescues.
 Oct '93 Jim Hawkins - for summiting Denali a week after Richard Carey did.
 Nov '93 Terri Sutor - for finishing the HPS list four times, and for introducing me to

adventure hiking.

Dec '93 Aconcagua group, of which Mark Adrian carried the HOTeM Pole to the summit.
 Jan '94 Al Holden - for again leading the best hikes of the year.
 Feb '94 Jim Sugg - for his leadership. Magnificent job!
 Mar '94 Mike Fry - for trailblazing a route on the north side of Mt Woodson.
 Apr '94 Gary Suttle - for his book on the California County highpoints.
 May '94 Richard Hughes - for outstanding Sierra Club leadership.
 June '94 Vicki Freiman - the new editor
 July '94 Carol Murdock - 1st woman SDPC list finisher and 3rd overall
 Aug '94 Donna and Edwin Gookin - National Champions in Orienteering
 Sept '94 John McCully - for editing the "Desert Sage", the DPS newsletter
 Oct '94 Gail Hanna - for volunteerism
 Nov '94 Lorin Mitts - for his far right rantings and car shuttles
 Dec '94 Carl Johnson - his leadership and for getting arrested by the Grand Canyon rangers
 Jan '95 Terry Flood - finishing the DPS list and his leadership
 Feb '95 Dennis Richards - finishing the DPS list and for turning 50!
 Mar '95 Mary Mitts - for her warmth and homemade soup and brownies
 Apr '95 Mary McLain - unsung hiker and cyclist
 May '95 John Strauch - National Champion at bridge
 June '95 Mark Adrian - achieving "mucho macho" status, having done 100 peaks on the SDPC list
 July '95 Chris Landa - keeper of the registers. Chris and Mark have been taking care to put new registers at all the sites, and I thank them.
 Aug '95 Voytek Najgrodzki and Paul Freiman - nobody fell out of the whitewater rafts as much as these two. The poison oak capped off a fun time.
 Sept '95 Al Holden - leading all the great hikes
 Sept '95 Malcolm Fitzurka - World Champion at OTL
 Oct '95 Patsy and Richard Hughes for surviving their vacation
 Nov '95 Jerry Schad - for his books, and CDs, and articles on hiking
 Dec '95 Tim Downey - Blasting up the Outlaw trail (from 500' to 10,800') in 7 hrs
 Jan '96 Donna and Edwin Gookin - National Champions in Orienteering, again
 Feb '96 Paul Freiman - accepting the Presidency of the 200 member San Diego Orienteering
 Mar '96 Carol Snyder - for finishing the DPS list and for calling the rangers to rescue someone who wasn't lost

Now you know the history behind the HOTM. If you have suggestions for honorees, then by all means, please write or call.

trucks became stuck in deep sand. While the lead truck worked on pulling the stuck truck out of the sand, the remainder of our group stood back watching the "rescue". I was milling about my truck staying "out of the way" when I noticed "something" moving through the brush heading towards me. I couldn't quite make it out, but then I saw another and I soon realized it was a ten-man battalion of heavily-armed Mexican Army soldiers in full uniform and ski-mask garb. A bit startled, worried and anxious, I stood still keeping my arms away from my body and making NO sudden moves. "Buenos dias, senior" were my first words, my eyes focusing on his armed-and-ready Mexican-made automatic machine gun. My hiking colleagues soon realized we had unexpected guests who were more than curious as to our intentions.

Our broken Spanish convinced them that we were "alpinistas" and we'd come to climb Cerro Pescadores (the soldiers called it Cerro Iguana, the AAA map calls it the Sierra de Los Cucapah, and the nearby Mexican benchmark is named PUERTA). Nevertheless, they surveyed the contents of our trucks and were, in general, "professional".

Now, the scary part of the story is that they were on patrol in that area to arrest (shoot at) drug traffickers who routinely air-drop shipments and then "run" them to the States or south into Baja. The commander wanted us out of "his" area by 5 (five) PM because he said is was "muy pilegro en el noche" (dangerous after dark) due to ruthless drug runners and potential crossfire. In the States, our govt. would have probably demanded we leave the area immediately. This firsthand encounter clearly manifests Mexico's (President Zedillo) attempts at combating drug trafficking and becoming a narco-state. However, this is a discussion for another forum. Unfortunately, mountaineering objectives are sometimes caught in the collateral effects of political maneuverings and military warfare.

Fortunately, we had plenty of daylight to do the climb and the Army Commander was accomodating to our now-truncated hiking plans. Our leader voluntarily decided to stay with the trucks while the rest of us hiked the peak (and not the BM), during which time, he was "babysat" by one of the soldiers. Using binoculars, they watched us climb and we figured the soldier stayed around to insure our safety as he was spooked any time a plane flew over. The commander also filed a report on our presence.

We "flashed" the peak in seven hours and were "outta there" by 3:30 PM under the watch of the Mexican Army who we noticed had a watchtower atop a nearby bumbletette.

We also learned that there were patrols stationed around the entire perimeter of the range (Sierra de Los Cucapah) on an indefinite basis. The patrol we met were on their last of a ten-day stint.

My opinion is that this is a virtual "war zone". Any climbing party traveling to this trailhead should be aware of these risks and the extreme resolution would be to temporarily delist the peak.

Later that evening, after a great Chinese dinner in Mexicali, we got in the border crossing line, which took an hour to inch through. You should be aware that there are two border crossing traffic lanes and a neighboring third lane that is CLEARLY NOT a border traffic lane as BIG signs more than indicate. If you're caught "cutting in line" via this neighboring third lane, you pay the price as I've read about in a recent Sage report. A relentless motorcycle patrol insures you'll be "arrested" for this "crime".

For some reason, maybe my grubby looks, or my wild Messner wanna-be hair, I got pulled over into secondary inspection. When I told the agent my story, he apparently had heard enough and passed me through without so much as looking into my truck despite my invitation.

Sunset Cliffs Hike/Climb/Swim

by Keith Conover

The "hike" from the Cabrillo National Monument tidepool area to Ladera St, approximately 4 miles to the north, is very different every time I do it. One is never quite sure what to expect, but it is always spectacular. On February 17 Jerry Higgins, Paul Stuverud and his friend Woody, Mike Newton, and myself set out on a cool and damp afternoon to see if we could do it. Low tide is a necessity and our trip was timed to coincide with one of the lowest tides of the year, but the surf was not as small as I had hoped. There would be some adventure ahead of us.

Walking on the polished sandstone along the waters edge is slippery in places, but the dampness in the air made it worse than I had ever seen before. I think each of us slipped at least a couple of times. When the cliff comes down to the water's edge, one has a choice of traversing the cliffs edge or swimming. I usually prefer the traverse because it's fun and the waters cold, but some of the traverses this day were treacherous. We went swimming a few more times than are normally required.

The scenery along much of the walk is very beautiful. The cliffs are colorful and intricately sculpted into spires, caves, arches, windows, and tunnels. We investigated a couple of the caves, Jerry discovered a long tunnel, and we all had fun climbing through the windows. There is also some interesting wildlife to be seen. One of the highlights of the trip was coming across a group of seals resting in a cave. We inadvertently scared them and they scrambled to the safety of the water by hopping down the beach single file, entering the water through a rocky slot just a few feet in front of us. The seals continued to watch us with great interest; not many people wander this far down the beach.

The most difficult parts of the hike are usually the short swims, but this time there were a couple of places where there were powerful waves breaking against the base of the cliff. We tried to wait for lulls, but were not always successful. I remember one place in particular where we were pounded by the waves. When the wave first hits you have to hang on to prevent yourself from being hurled into the cliff. As the wave bounces off the cliff you have to hang on tight to avoid being sucked off the rocks and out to sea. I ducked down into a deep crevice to let one of the bigger waves pass over me.

Paul Freiman, who had planned on doing the trip with us but canceled (due to injuries-ed.), had hiked south from Ladera St and met us near the end. At this point we were tired, cold, and looking forward to hot showers. We had had our fill of adventure for the day. Mike told me afterwards that he was glad to have done the hike, but probably wouldn't do it again. Too dangerous walking on the slick rocks. Jerry said he'd do it again, but only if the surf was smaller. I think this is one of the most interesting beach walks in California, so I'll be going back.

NOTHING STOPS THE POSTMAN

by Al Holden, the retired postman

This Monday hike series is just plain amazing. The group had been warned not to consider Mile High-Rosa as just another hike, but to see it as a dawn to dusk adventure. And was it ever!

Daylight presented all the surrounding peaks snow-mantled to 3000 feet. I decided we would go anyway. We won't know how bad it is on top till we get there. The weather could change either way. We complete the hike or we back off. It will be a good day either way. There were just six of us, six others were no-shows for weather related reasons.

By 6:30am we were on our way up Palo Verde wash, going to the 1900 foot elevation where we scrambled west up the main ridge trail. Mother Nature protested all the way up, hurling rain, snow, sleet and wind at us amid successive waves of black clouds with brief tantalizing clear views in between. To the east the sun was trying to shine on the Coachella Valley without much success. Onward and upward, bump after bump, slog, slog, slog through the ever deepening snow we gained the summit at 11:30am. The snow was six inches deep with one foot

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