



# Tehipite Topics

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[www.tehipite.sierraclub.org](http://www.tehipite.sierraclub.org)

## PG&E Rate-Hikes and Defeat of Prop 16

by Chip Ashley

On May 26, Sierra Club energy-climate activist Ron Dickerson and I joined a group of TURN (The Utility Reform Network) protesters, including community organizer Kori Chen and Director of Organizing, Ana Montes, in front of the Hugh M. Burns Building where the hearing was to take place and waved my “Big Fat ‘No’ On 16” sign along with them for about half an hour before the hearing. Ana Montes was taking photos and said she would email me some of them.



Most of the seats in the hearing room were occupied when ALJ John S. Wong called the hearing to order. He explained what the hearing was about and what speakers should focus on, asking us to stay away from Prop 16. A PG&E exec from the Fresno office spoke first in very ingratiating tones.

When I spoke, I said I believed one reason for the rate hike is to pay for Prop 16. I gave some examples of how PG&E has apparently used money gained in rate hikes for purposes different from those PG&E gave for needing the hikes. In 2007, for example, PG&E got a rate hike of \$94 million to replace 15,000 utility poles (\$6300 per pole), but spent only \$29 million to replace about 3,200 poles (\$9100 per pole). What happened to the remaining \$65 million? I got a little applause and some thumbs up as I concluded. Ron Dickerson had researched these facts in an article from the

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## Channel Islands Getaway

By Chip Ashley

Thanks to quite a few Tehipite Chapter Sierrans, apparently in response to the “Island Hopping” ad that has been running for almost a year now on page 5, my wife Julie and I were complemented by trip organizers Joan Jones Holtz and Don Holtz of the Angeles Chapter with a free four-night boat trip to the northern Channel Islands. So, a big thanks to our local Sierrans, whom I’d love to hear from about their trip.

If you haven’t been to the northern Channel Islands, off the Santa Barbara Coast, you really ought to take advantage of this unique opportunity and help fund Sierra Club California at the same time.

Julie and I joined about twenty others—mostly Sierrans—and a terrific crew on this great trip. One might think being crammed on a 65 foot boat for 4 days with twenty others would try one’s patience. Not so this trip. The synergy of passengers and crew, all genuinely interested in preserving the beauty and ecology of these wonderful islands, made this an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

We embarked on the good ship Truth at the Truth Aquatics dock near the Maritime Museum on the embarcadero in Santa Barbara about 9 PM, Thursday, July 29th. We were greeted by Joan, who showed us the berth where we would sleep for the next four nights. Truth would be heading out of port for San Miguel Island at 4 AM; so we stowed our gear and nestled into our sleeping bags. At 4 we were momentarily awakened by the start-up of the Truth’s engines, but quickly returned to dreamland comfortably rocked by Truth heading out over the waves.

I am an early riser so was up and on deck by about 5:30. After a great breakfast prepared by our cook, Dennis, and his assistant, Brian (who was kind enough to let me win a few games at chess), I joined others on deck to watch for whales. As we were just able to make out San Miguel Island in the distance, we saw a blue whale surface and spout. I have seen these giant fellow mammals several times, but I am always amazed at their

## VOTE YES ON PROP 25 TO EASE BUDGET GRIDLOCK AND CURB ANTI-ENVIRONMENTAL SCHEMES

Sierra Club supports Proposition 25, which would allow state budgets to be passed by a simple majority of each house of the Legislature. The anti-democratic two-thirds requirement for passing budgets has created opportunities for anti-environmental mischief. One of the most egregious examples came in 2007, when 14 Senate Republicans held the budget hostage to their demand for non-fiscal legislation weakening the California Environmental Quality Act’s application to global warming.

In addition, the budget gridlock that is in part caused by the two-thirds requirement has damaged our air, water and resources. The empowerment of a minority of legislators has resulted in slashing funding for public transit, raiding recycling and clean-air funds, and starving important agencies like the Coastal Commission.

Prop 25 would move us closer to fiscal sanity and remove one avenue for anti-environmental legislative schemes.



Cuyler Harbor, San Miguel Island

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# Chapter Meetings

## General Meeting

September 15 at 7 p.m.

550 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno

We will share world class kayaker Charlie Center's Environmental and People's Choice Award-winning DVD movie *The last Descent*, about a year of exploring wild, untamed rivers in India, Africa, and Nepal.

The headwaters of the longest river in the world, the deepest river gorge in the world, Nepalese sherpas trekking for days with kayaks on their backs--these are the exotic and remote destinations sought out to challenge white water.

*Last Descent* explores the threat of hydro-power and dams to indigenous peoples who live along some of the world's few remaining wild rivers. For them, "the river is everything". They adamantly declare: "we will fight for water, we will fight for survival, we will fight for our children, we will fight for life!"

Please vote "No" on Prop 23,

The dirty energy, anti-AB 32 proposition

## Conservation & Executive Committee Meetings

September 8th

The Conservation Committee meets at 7 PM

The Executive Committee meets at 8 PM

University of California Center

550 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno



**SIERRA CLUB**  
FOUNDED 1892

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## Merced Group

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. . . . . open

## Conservation and Executive Committee Meeting

Thursday, Sept. 2nd, 7:00 P.M.

Rod Webster's home  
345 E. 20th St., Merced

Conservation meeting is first and can last 30-40 minutes. Anyone with an interest in local, state or national conservation issues is welcome to attend. Come just to get informed or get as involved as you wish.

## Merced Group General Meeting

September 16th 7:00 p.m, Sierra Presbyterian Church  
3603 M Street in Merced

Topic: Upcoming November Ballot Initiatives  
Protecting our Local Farmland  
State Parks Funding Initiative

For more information call Rod Webster at 723-4747.

## Book Review: *Solar*, by Ian McEwan

Ian McEwan's *Solar* is a wonderful book, very colorfully written. It is a real treat for a connoisseur of style. But style does not overwhelm the story, which flows along quite logically. McEwan is a terrific story-teller.

According to the one review I read, the story loses momentum after the first third, at the point where post doc Tom Aldous suffers his accident, and the theme of renewable energy is a mere backdrop. I do not share this view. Renewable energy is central to the development of the story, which succeeds at becoming an organic whole, with the character of Michael Beard, the Nobel laureate physicist and clever poseur, as its focus.

Beard becomes a symbol of modern science as well-paid corporate servant. He is a complex character, with a good, self-critical side, which sadly is overwhelmed by his appetites for sex, drink, and food. One of his women succeeds ironically in deceiving him into producing a baby girl with her, and Beard honestly loves his daughter. He is nevertheless unable to choose a way favorable to her and to him. He grows fatter and sicker, both physically and mentally, as the story unfolds. All the while, a psychomachia plays out in Beard—a sort of trickster or shape shifter—brilliant but self-destructive—as he seems to understand the evil he does but is unable to make the right choices. He is adept at language—a silver-tongued devil—but doesn't think much of himself because he sees through his own fakery.

He seduces his first wife, Maisie, a liberal arts student he encounters while studying at Oxford. Maisie—whom Beard first hears of at a distance as a "bad" girl of loose sexual morals—is a student of the works of John Milton. Beard doesn't think much of humanities students because he believes them lazy. But sex is involved, and laziness can be ignored as long as Beard gets what he wants. He spends a few days studying Milton's work to prepare a credible courtship dance. He doesn't much like Milton, but he finally settles on the sonnet "Light." Beard can bear to memorize the 14-line poem as long

## More Outings

October 30, Sat. Day Hike, 2B

Annual "End-of-Daylight-Savings-Time" hike (Yokuts)

Hike in Yosemite Valley on the old Big Oak Flat "Ghost Road". Bring lunch, water, appropriate clothing and footwear, \$\$ for Park fees. Contact Yokuts Leader Randy Brown at 209.632.5994 for details on time and meeting place.

as he sees a quick reward for his efforts. Besides, the poem concerns light, which Beard finds interesting because he is a student of Einstein's photoelectric effect. Quotes from "Light" win him Maisie's favors and turn her into an unwitting whore. Despite succumbing to Beard's seduction, Maisie turns out to be of higher moral caliber than Beard first thought, but he is able to use "Light" to blind her and deceive her into believing he sincerely shares her interest in Milton, that he cares for her. Oddly, he then marries her and reveals his own blindness—a brilliant touch by McEwan, playing on Milton's blindness, the real theme of the poem, which the too-clever Beard never quite gets. Since "Light" works so well to manipulate Maisie, Beard uses it again and again on ever larger audiences.

Maisie eventually "sees the light" and leaves Beard, spending the rest of her life, which ends prematurely because of cancer, in self-analysis and introspection. The human wreckage piles up around Beard as he grows fatter and fatter, finally developing a triple chin; and the imagery of sex, eating, and drinking grows increasingly grotesque.

Beard is emblematic that "green" projects are not always, or even often, done by good people for altruistic reasons.



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



### Bear in mind the consequences.

The Yellowstone grizzly bear is an irreplaceable part of America's natural heritage, a symbol of the independence that defines the American character and an icon of all that is wild and free. The Bush administration set forth a proposal that would remove federal protection for the Yellowstone grizzly bear. Help Sierra Club protect our forest friends; they prefer the woods than being on display.

#### Get grizzly and JOIN Sierra Club.

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<b>Special Offer</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>\$25</b>	
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Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32

Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1 for your Chapter newsletters.

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size; we are very fortunate to share this planet with them.

Soon we neared San Miguel and viewed the rugged cliffs of San Miguel Island and Prince Island, which rises out of the surf on the north side of San Miguel. We anchored in Cuyler Harbor on the north side of San Miguel. Skipper Graham Ashlock, who studied marine biology at U.C. Santa Barbara, outlined our day for us as he did each morning of the trip. We could take a skiff to the beach and do a seven-mile hike to Harris Point at the north tip of the island, or we could just hang out on the beach and watch the birds and the elephant seals gathered there.

Julie and I chose the hike, and soon crewmen K.G. (whom I nicknamed Neptune because of the tattoo of an octopus on his left shoulder and chest and just because he looks like Neptune with seawater draining through his curly beard) Brandon, and Peter were helping us into the inflatable skiff that would take us ashore, where we would climb the steep 500 feet up the Nidever Trail and then go on to the Cabrillo Monument and then to Harris Point. We kept our shoes off to keep them dry when we unloaded at the beach, which proved a little dicey for me on the last day when I slipped and fell in on Anacapa Island.

Once on shore, we followed trip naturalist NPS volunteer Inge Rose up the beach to the trailhead. It was a struggle to get warmed up for the hike trekking through the deep sand, and fortunately Inge stopped us to look at some shed elephant seal fur. We then continued to the trailhead, where we encountered a variety of colorful plant life, including coreopsis, red buckwheat, and a succulent called munchkin dudleya (*Dudleya gnoma*), with a cyme of yellow flowers.

The climb up to the rolling, chaparral-covered top of the wind-swept island required a few more stops, but all in all was a great cardio workout. Once at the top of the ravine the Nidever Trail follows, we took a short detour to the Cabrillo Monument, which stands in a wilderness of coreopsis atop a hill. Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, the first recorded European to visit California, arrived at San Miguel Island in 1542, where he broke his leg and died of an infection. He is probably buried somewhere on San Miguel, but no one knows where. At the Cabrillo Monument, park ranger Ian Williams met us and talked about the island and his job there, where he lives year round. What a life—to be “stranded” on such a beautiful place and

depend on goods being packed up the same trail we had just hiked. I envy this fellow, living on this least visited of the Channel Islands. It was a privilege to share a little of his experience.

The next part of the trek provided some great views of Cuyler Harbor and the elephant seals on the beach as well as the three master sailing ship that had anchored there with some students on a two-week cruise. I noticed some shiny flakes of abalone shell glistening in the trail and wondered how they had got there, some 500 feet above the ocean. Soon I noticed a pile of abalone shells near the trail, and when another hiker stooped to pick one up, naturalist Inge warned us not to touch the shells: “That is a nine thousand year old archeological site.”

Inge explained that the Chumash people, who had inhabited the Channel Islands for perhaps 10,000 years or more, harvested abalone and other shellfish on the island's rocky shore and brought them up to their camps at the higher elevations on the island to remove the shells and eat them, leaving after millennia of this practice huge midden piles of abalone, mussel, and other shells. We also found oddly shaped pipe-like lime formations called caliche, which Inge described as limestone fossils formed when lime deposits filled in spaces vacated by rotting trees and limbs left under the soil. The highlight of the hike came during our lunch at Harris Point when a tiny island fox, *Urocyon littoralis*, emerged from the chaparral to patrol its territory. This fox, native to the Channel Islands, was endangered, but a restoration program has put it on the road to recovery.

We also hiked on Santa Rosa Island among the Torrey pines and landed at Scorpion Ranch on Santa Cruz Island where some hiked to Smugglers' Cove, which got its name because it was used to smuggle alcohol during Prohibition. Santa Cruz Island boasts the tallest mountain of the northern islands with the peak of Picacho Diablo at about 2450 feet.

All the islands were used as ranches to raise sheep and cattle and as hunting preserves stocked with deer, elk, and feral pigs. The introduction of nonnative species significantly impacted the native species, both flora and fauna, particularly the island fox, which was severely impacted by nonnative golden eagles, which came to the island to hunt the feral pigs, whose tiny young provide perfectly sized prey to these eagles. When the pigs were removed and the eagles were trapped and returned to the mainland, the foxes were

able to begin to recover. Invasive plant species were inadvertently introduced. But private groups like the Nature Conservancy and the National Park Service have begun to restore the islands as much as possible to their natural state. The nonnative species are in the process of being removed. Much of the islands are now part of the Channel Islands National Park. Other parts are controlled by the Nature Conservancy. But a small part remains under private ownership.

Another interesting native species is the island jay, which looks exactly like a California scrub jay, but is at least 50% larger. Somehow the unique environment of the Channel Islands evolved a much larger version of the scrub jay, which is about as large as a Clark's nutcracker.

In addition to hiking, this trip offered scuba diving, snorkeling, skiffing and kayaking. Groups were able to kayak for several miles along the beautiful rugged shoreline. Another couple offered Julie and me the use of their two-person kayak one morning, so I had my first delightful experience paddling this little boat over the waves and near the towering cliffs of Santa Cruz Island. Crewman Brandon took several of us on a skiff ride deep into the 1200 foot deep Painted Cave. On the way in we saw cormorants, gulls, and pigeon guillemots perched on the cliffs among the hanging gardens of lichens, dudleya, and oak. Don Holtz explained that these rugged cliffs and sea caves came about because of ancient lava which flowed over these islands eons ago as they were formed under the ocean. Once the islands were pushed up to the surface by geological action, some of the lave eroded to expose softer material underneath. Sea lions and harbor seals lounged



I hope you have a chance to go on one of these trips to the northern Channel Islands arranged by the Holtzes. If so, please contact Joan Jones Holtz at the number in the ad on page 5. The ad may not reflect all the available trips because new trips are often added.

### **Giant Sequoia National Monument Fall Camp-out and Hike**

Friday evening September 24 through Sunday Noon, September 26

Sponsored by the Sierra Club/Sequoia Task Force and Tule River Conservancy

Join Carla Cloer, Sequoia Task Force Chair, Joe Fontaine, Vice-Chair, Ara Marderosian, Sequoia ForestKeeper and Rich Kangas on a weekend outing featuring a hike in one of the most magnificent Sequoia Groves in the Giant Sequoia National Monument. Meet folks who were instrumental in creating the Monument and who now fight for real protection of these forests. See why these groves need to be reunited with the rest of their ecosystem under the management of Sequoia National Park. And have a fun Fall weekend!

We will camp at Quaking Aspen at the headwaters of the South Fork of the Middle Fork of the Tule River about 1 1/2 hours east of Porterville.

Sat am: Our downhill hike will begin after a no-host breakfast. We will discuss past and planned future activities in the grove and the latest on the Forest Service's attempt to re-do their Management Plan - just released!. Bring lunch to munch at a site by the Tule River.

Sat pm: An optional afternoon trip will be offered to tour the Trail of 100 Giants, discuss the Forest Service's recent expansion and tree removal projects there, and pay tribute to the unmarked Sequoia where President Clinton created this Giant Sequoia National Monument. Sat night: Potluck supper- always a creative and delicious smorgasbord.

Sun am: A 2 hour round-trip hike down the Freeman Creek Grove Trail where the FS, with no notice, replaced every stream crossing with wooden bridges and banked the trail for bike speed. We will also see some of the world's most beautiful stands of Sequoia. For those who don't have to rush home, we will conclude the weekend with a short hike to the top of Dome Rock to see an overview of the Kern River and the site of the McNally Fire.

You MUST contact Carla at 559 781-8445 or at cac@ocsnet.net by September 15th to reserve your place as space is limited.

Membership in the Sierra Club, Sequoia ForestKeeper, or Tule River Conservancy is NOT required. There is no fee for the outing:

To receive Alerts and Newsletters by mail, send your name and address to "Sequoia Task Force," or "Tule River Conservancy," P.O. Box 723, Porterville CA 93257.

## **Great**

### **San Joaquin River Clean-up**

Please contact Richard Sloan at 559-696-2971, riverrich1509@aol.com, Steve Starcher, 559-289-8874, sastarcher@gmail.com or Steve Haze, 559-970-6320 re opportunities to help clean up the San Joaquin River.

## **Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park**

**New Dates:  
Sept 10-12 and Oct 17-19**

CA's Channel Islands are Galapagos USA! Marvel at the sight of whales, seals, sea lions, rare birds & blazing wildflowers. Hike the wild, windswept trails. Kayak the rugged coastline. Snorkel in pristine waters. Discover remnants of the Chumash people who lived on these islands for thousands of years. Or just relax at sea. These 3 & 4-day "live aboard" fundraiser cruises benefit Sierra Club's political program in California & depart from Santa Barbara aboard the 68' Truth.

The fee (\$590 for Sept and Oct) includes an assigned bunk, all meals, snacks & beverages, plus the services of a ranger/naturalist who will travel with us to lead hikes on each island and point out interesting features. To make a reservation mail a \$100 check payable to Sierra Club to leaders: Joan Jones Holtz & Don Holtz, 11826 The Wye St, El Monte, CA 91732. Contact leaders for more information (626-443-0706; jholtzhln@aol.com)



Manteca Bulletin, which has published lots of great articles on PG&E corporate abuse.

The next few speakers were PG&E sock puppets--representatives from non-profits PG&E has donated money to. None of these speakers came close to mentioning rate hikes, but several came close to crying (no kidding) as they voiced their PG&E panegyrics. (I kept thinking of Al Capone, who was a big contributor to Chicago charities.) One fellow from a veterans' association noted PG&E's contributions helped them put on the biggest Veterans' Day parade west of the Mississippi and said he represents 300,000 vets from the San Joaquin Valley, all of whom support PG&E because of their charity to his organization.

At this point I was criticizing myself for not anticipating these emotional red herrings by saying something like, "Lots of people will tell you tonight about how PG&E spreads a little money around for good PR. Charity work is great, and PG&E should be commended, but should PG&E be donating profits gained from ratepayers?"

So I was happy to hear the next speaker answer the Veterans' Day speaker, saying "I'm a veteran too, and you don't speak for me." This disabled vet went on to do a great job of explaining PG&E's motives in donating to charities and telling about how this rate hike would put pressure on him and his wife, both pensioners. He and several others pointed out the conflict of a monopoly like PG&E donating money gained from captive ratepayers who have no say about the contributions.

One speaker--a woman who came with the vice superintendent of Fresno City Schools (who did not introduce himself)--went on at some length about PG&E's contributions to Fresno schools. She was not "angry," she said, quoting a previous speaker. She was "very, very grateful" to PG&E for their charitable work. As an aside, it troubles me that schools have to take corporate money, and I have to ask how much influence the corporation then may have over school board and administrative decisions?

As more and more speakers opposed the hike, there was more and more applause for them, and only silence for those who supported PG&E.

Most of the supporters of the hike provided only off-message boilerplate kiss-up. Those opposing were truly quite eloquent (what, me biased?). The final speaker, a union man

working for ATT compared ATT's corporate tactics with PG&E's, explaining the constant war against employees to squeeze them for more and more work. He was quite an eloquent speaker--clear, direct, specific, with great examples.

Ratepayers need to be aware that PG&E spends millions every year on charities. In 2009, California's biggest utility spent \$9 million on charities. And don't take me wrong, charity is great. But are PG&E's motives altruistic? Hardly. This money should be going back to ratepayers in the form of lower rates on electricity, not to charities to influence political issues like Prop 16, whose real goal was not to give voters a choice on forming local community utilities like the Marin Energy Authority, but to make such a choice virtually impossible by requiring a two-thirds vote to establish a community utility.

On election night, June 8th, the returns on Prop 16 were neck and neck until early morning, when the "No on 16" vote achieved a significant and sustainable lead. By sunrise, June 9th, it was clear that Prop 16 had been defeated; and Sierra Club California, along with other grassroots organizations, such as TURN, The Feed-In Tariff Coalition, Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility, Women's Energy Matters, Save the Foothills Coalition, The Coastal Alliance, Mothers for Peace, and many others played a serious part in organizing to defeat the deceptive measure. Sierra Club California sponsored a victory celebration in San Francisco on August 5th. Analysis of the vote on Prop 16 proves that it was defeated in PG&E's service area, where counties voted an average of about 60% "No." Counties outside PG&E's service area actually favored the measure. Statewide, the measure was defeated 52.5%-47.5%. This sends a strong message to PG&E CEO Peter Darbee and PG&E's corporate board that voters are onto their devious tactics and are generally unhappy with PG&E service, which charges about 30% more for electricity than publicly owned utilities like the Sacramento Municipal Utility District.

The defeat of Prop 16 made the rate-hike hearing in San Luis Obispo somewhat anticlimactic, but Save the Foothills activist Kathryn Biacindo and Sierra Club Kern-Kaweah activist Cynthia Koval drove with me to SLO on June 15th to attend and speak. We were able to use the fact that PG&E spent nearly \$50 million in ratepayer money in an attempt to limit consumer choice. With this kind of mad-money lying around to influ-

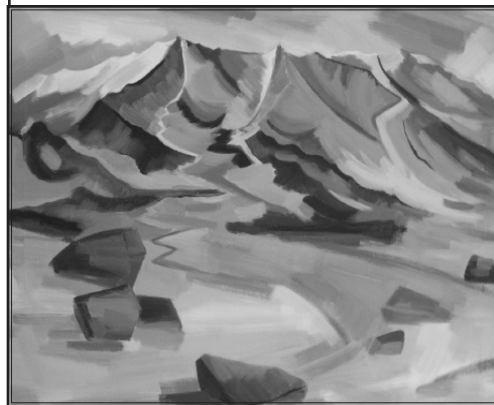
ence politics, why did PG&E need \$4 billion in rate hikes? We also used the opportunity to network with energy activists in the SLO area.

The PG&E rate case remains unresolved and ongoing at the California Public Utilities Commission, but one hopes that the attention brought to bear on PG&E by the smart-meter and Prop 16 will put the decision makers on notice that the public is paying attention.

## CLIMBING KILIMANJARO

by Heather Anderson

A conference was announced in Lagos, Nigeria for The International Society for Education in Art. I had always wanted to climb Kilimanjaro and saw this as a good excuse for a Safari, and for the climb to 19,565 feet, despite the fact that the mountain was on the opposite side of the African continent from Lagos.



*Kilimanjaro* by Heather Anderson

Landing in Nairobi, not knowing a soul, I was directed by a fellow traveler to an inn largely frequented by missionaries coming and going from their various ministries. I spent some time scouting arts and crafts in the colorful local market, then took the local bus to the border between Kenya and Tanzania. It didn't cross over the line. Corruption is rampant in Africa, as evidenced by the man in the little border immigration hut who tried to extract a huge sum from me for crossing. After bargaining, I was allowed to cross. (I don't recommend traveling in Africa as a solo white woman.) Now in Tanzania, I looked for the mountain, but it was hidden in the clouds. Taking a van to Arusha, I transferred twice to busses, and finally arrived at the Marangu Hotel, a few wooden buildings at 7,500 feet, the base of the mountain.

Continued page 8

## Outing Ratings

Distance	Elevation Gain
1) up to 6 miles	A) under 1,000 feet
2) 6 to 10 miles	B) 1,000 to 2,000 feet
3) 10 to 15 miles	C) 2,000 to 3,000 feet
4) 15 to 20 miles	D) 3,000 to 4,000 feet
5) over 20 miles	E) over 4,000 feet

Our Tehipite Chapter Outings Chair is Marcia Rasmussen, Marcia@BigBaldy.com, 559-332-2419. Please contact Marcia with any questions concerning our outings program. Contact the trip leader directly if you are interested in one of the listed trips.

Tehipite Chapter outings are free and open to the public. All leaders are unpaid volunteers assuming responsibility for a good trip, and your cooperation is mandatory. Please review additional trip and participant requirements at [www.tehipite.sierraclub.org/outings](http://www.tehipite.sierraclub.org/outings).

Steve Cosner (559) 281-5983, email: [stevec@sfsu.edu](mailto:stevec@sfsu.edu) maintains this webpage.

CST #2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California. California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund (TCRF) under the California Seller of Travel Act. The TCRF is not applicable to these Outings. The law requires us to advise you that you would not be eligible to make any claim from the TCRF in the unlikely event of default by the Sierra Club. California law also requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. The Sierra Club has such a trust account.



## Sierra Club California Needs Your Help

You have great people in Sacramento lobbying to protect the Sierra and on other critical issues like climate change. Bill Magavern, Jim Metropoulous, and Annie Pham do a terrific job, and they need our help. Please go to the terrific Sierra Club California web site at [www.sierraclubcalifornia.org](http://www.sierraclubcalifornia.org) and donate generously.

## Required Liability Waiver

All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read the Liability Waiver before you choose to participate on an outing, please go to: <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/>, or contact the Outings Department at (415) 977-5528 for a printed version.

## Backpack Trip: Kings/Kern Divide, Sequoia & Kings Canyon Natl Parks

August 28 - September 6 (exact dates pending permit availability)

If you're interested in going off the beaten path, into one of the more remote and breathtakingly beautiful regions of the High Sierra, this is your trip! Our entry point is in Kings Canyon, near Cedar Grove. We hike up Bubbs Creek and turn south for a short distance along the John Muir Trail. After crossing Forester Pass we travel cross country into the headwaters of the Kern. We spend 2-3 days in that area, visiting Lake South America and other alpine lakes. We may scramble to some of the nearby 12-13'er summits. We continue west cross-country to the base of Triple Divide Peak and cross over Pants Pass into Nine Lakes Basin. There we join the High Sierra Trail and pass through Kaweah Gap. Then we descend the Golden Staircase through Valhalla, past soaring granite formations, waterfalls, and beautiful craggy lakes. Exit at Giant Forest.

This is an adventure trip with quite a bit of cross-country travel, including some rock scrambling. Participants must have some previous backpacking experience and possess appropriate fitness. You don't have to be superman/woman, but understand that this is a strenuous trip with elevations up to 13,000 ft. Group will be no more than six, including leaders.

Marcia Rasmussen 559-332-2419, Marcia@BigBaldy.com

## Fall Hike Along the Tuolumne River (Yokuts)

Saturday, September 18

4 miles, 1A hike along the Tuolumne River from Legion Park. Meet at the parking lot by American Legion Hall (1001 S. Santa Cruz Ave., Modesto) at 9 AM. Dogs and children welcome.

Info: Dorothy, 209.549.9155.

## Giant Sequoia National Monument Fall Camp-out and Hike

Friday evening September 24 through Sunday Noon, September 26

Sponsored by the Sierra Club/Sequoia Task Force and Tule River Conservancy

Join Carla Cloer, Sequoia Task Force Chair, Joe Fontaine, Vice-Chair, Ara Marderosian, Sequoia ForestKeeper and Rich Kangas on a weekend outing featuring a hike in one of the most magnificent Sequoia Groves in the Giant Sequoia National Monument. Meet folks who were instrumental in creating the Monument and who now fight for real protection of these forests. See why these groves need to be reunited with the rest of their ecosystem under the management of Sequoia National Park. And have a fun Fall weekend!

You MUST contact Carla at 559 781-8445 or at [cac@ocsnet.net](mailto:cac@ocsnet.net) by September 15th to reserve your place as space is limited.

**See full description on page 5.**

## Annual hike to Twin Lakes and George Lake, 2A

October 3rd - Sunday

Last year we hiked during a snow storm, but this year we hope to enjoy fall colors among the aspens and spectacular mountain vistas.

Karen Hammer (559) 298-5272

Email: Karen Hammer <[ecuagirl45@yahoo.com](mailto:ecuagirl45@yahoo.com)>



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## Inside *Tehipite Topics*

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Deadline for *Tehipite Topics* is the second Friday of each month. Please submit material to [TehipiteTopics@gmail.com](mailto:TehipiteTopics@gmail.com).

I enjoyed walking around the rambling garden, set in the midst of a coffee orchard, blooming with a cornucopia of tropical plants: morning glory, poinsettia, bougainvillea, hibiscus, and bird-of-paradise. At our evening dinner, I became acquainted with our climbing group of a woman realtor and four men--an attorney, a professor, a former mayor, and a hotel owner. Mrs. Laney, the British hotel and tour manager, hired the porters, packed the food, and organized groups for the climb. Her father had come to the area in the nineteenth century as a construction worker for missionaries, then purchased the coffee farm and built the hotel.

Next morning, after our British breakfast, briefing session, and ride to the park gate, we started hiking slowly up a muddy trail. As we climbed higher, we experienced the first of various plant stages that we would see, a beautiful jungle of tall trees with hanging vines, which then broke out into a waist-high heath before we reached the many small A-frame huts at 9,000 feet, where we would spend the first night.

Ten hours in the sack is too much for me, but cold water on the face and a good breakfast helped restore my eagerness for the trail.

The heath of yesterday gave way to ferns, trees, vines, then low shrubs, heather, red hot poker, daisies, and lobelia. Hikers coming down said it was the hardest thing they had ever done. Kilimanjaro is called a walk-up, meaning there is no technical climbing with ropes and pitons. So, for me it was a luxury hike: no pack to carry, tea served at intervals, delicious vegetable dinners, and good conversation with climbers at the huts, the next one at 12,000 feet.

On day three, the expanse of lobelia turned into rocky terrain without vegetation. About noon we came to Horombo, a whole city of A-frame huts. As we continued, the air became thinner, the going steeper and harder. I was taking one step at a time and breathing in rhythm until we reached Kibo at 15,520 feet, where there were two stone huts, one each for porters and guests. Sitting in the waning sun against a stone wall, we enjoyed being served tea with lunch. I sacked out early in preparation for the one a.m. tea prior to the final climb.

I didn't sleep well and woke with altitude sickness; it had happened many times before so I wasn't surprised. Reminding myself that I had come half way around the world to do this mountain, I wasn't going back now. Putting on all the clothes I had brought, and turning

on my flashlight, we started out. My light went out immediately. I could barely see, but the guide was very encouraging. Someone's idea was to be on top for sunrise. It was beautiful, but quite cold and I was still sick so I took only a few photos. Downhill on scree was easy; I practically ran, then climbed into my bunk bed when I arrived at the hut we had left much earlier that morning. A bit later they called us to continue on to the next hut. With great effort I packed my bag, tied my boots and was literally propelled downhill to Horombo. A porter brought me three inches of bath water in a small pan. Grateful, I washed, rested in the sun, and this time enjoyed a long night.

The descent in altitude and a good breakfast found me in good shape to traverse through the vegetation in reverse, including the muddy trail, slippery roots, and tropical vegetation, taking photos of textures, colors, flowers, and local people. At the gate, we were transported back to the hotel in a Tanzanian taxi-pickup truck. That afternoon, two young boys took me on a trail, overhung with a kaleidoscope of colors, to their primary school of four grades. We walked through and around small huts and gardens of coffee, bananas, and beans to a splashing waterfall, a splendid conclusion to a Kilimanjaro climb.