



# *The Sierra Echo*

Volume 70 ▲ Number 3 ▲ July-September 2026

*Kelsey Almendariz ascending*

## **The North Ridge of Mt. Tom**

*Story on page 10*



**Also In this issue: The History of SPS Mascots, Passages**



## Echoes from the Chair

By Michael Chamoun

The summer season in the high mountains has already started, thanks to a paltry spring snowpack. But I won't be the one complaining about early season access into the greatest range on earth. Time has sped up or something because the management committee has already, *gulp*, found our next presenter for the 2027 banquet. I think it'll be fascinating, but we'll keep it on the QT until things are fully confirmed. Keep an eye out in your emails and our future publications. For now I want to welcome the new members to our section with one of them already submitting a trip report in which our very own Doug Mantle has the first ascent on. Check it out! We need more reports like these, so please don't hesitate; I promise Tina IS retired from teaching English and won't take a red pen to your future article. We are working on getting information out on our next quarterly Zoom presentation (it could very well be below this!), so please stop reading this and continue scrolling below. Wishing everyone happy trails and a wonderful summer!

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## Call for Nominations

It's that time of year when we're looking for members to run for the SPS management committee and to serve on the nominating and election committees. Would you like to serve on the nominating or election committees? Know someone who might be willing to serve? Please contact Michael Chamoun, chair, to make suggestions. His email is [nano.michael@gmail.com](mailto:nano.michael@gmail.com).

## Trail Tech Articles Wanted!

It's been a while since we ran a "Trail Tech" article, so we need to hear from you! Do you have a favorite piece of gear or clothing you'd like to tell others about? Something you think works better than its competition or makes life in the mountains even more enjoyable? We'd love to have your thoughts and ideas and photos, especially those that show you using the item of interest. Thanks!

## 2026 Sierra Peaks Section Management Committee



### Elected

Michael Chamoun	Chair <a href="mailto:nano.michael@gmail.com">nano.michael@gmail.com</a>
John Sheehe	Vice-chair/banquet <a href="mailto:johnsheehe@gmail.com">johnsheehe@gmail.com</a>
Phil S. Bates	Treasurer <a href="mailto:sierrapeakstreasurer@gmail.com">sierrapeakstreasurer@gmail.com</a>
Daryn Dodge	Secretary <a href="mailto:Daryn.Dodge@oehha.ca.gov">Daryn.Dodge@oehha.ca.gov</a>
Dylan Kilby	Fifth officer/outreach <a href="mailto:dylankilby@gmail.com">dylankilby@gmail.com</a>

### Appointed

Archives	Romain Wacziarg <a href="mailto:Rwacziarg@gmail.com">Rwacziarg@gmail.com</a>
Conservation Chair	Sharon Moore <a href="mailto:justslm@earthlink.net">justslm@earthlink.net</a>
Echo editors	Tina Bowman <a href="mailto:tina@bowmanchange.com">tina@bowmanchange.com</a> , Beth Epstein
Echo mailer	Tina Bowman
Emblem Committee	Daryn Dodge, Kathy Rich, Ron Bartell, Bob Pickering
IT Support	Greg Mason <a href="mailto:admin@sierrapeaks.org">admin@sierrapeaks.org</a> , Harry Lagenbacher <a href="mailto:admin2@sierrapeaks.org">admin2@sierrapeaks.org</a>
Keeper of the List	Tina Bowman
Merchandise	Patty Kline <a href="mailto:patriciakline@aol.com">patriciakline@aol.com</a>
Membership	Jason Pair <a href="mailto:jasonpair69@gmail.com">jasonpair69@gmail.com</a>
Mountain Records	Paul Garry <a href="mailto:pwgarry@gmail.com">pwgarry@gmail.com</a>
Outings	Gary Schenk <a href="mailto:gary@hbfun.org">gary@hbfun.org</a>
Safety Chair	Doug Mantle <a href="mailto:sierradoug@icloud.com">sierradoug@icloud.com</a>
Webmaster	Joe Wankum <a href="mailto:jbwankum@aol.com">jbwankum@aol.com</a>
Asst. Webmasters	Harry Lagenbacher <a href="mailto:register@summitregister.org">register@summitregister.org</a> Tina Bowman <a href="mailto:tina@bowmanchange.com">tina@bowmanchange.com</a>

### Regional Representatives

San Diego, Joe White; Central California, Daryn Dodge; Northern California, Lisa Barboza

# Welcome, New Members!

## Brian Blair

Brian has been visiting the Sierra since he was a child. Early on, there were fishing/camping trips with his parents and grandparents, then learning to ski at Mammoth Mountain. Later, as an eighteen-year-old he went to Yosemite with some friends from high school and hiked up Half Dome. They were woefully underprepared in all regards, but that trip stuck with him and set him on a path of pursuing a life spent in the mountains. Initially that time was spent rock climbing, but over the years it has shifted to backpacking, trail running, and backcountry skiing. He is excited to be part of something with a deep history in the Sierra and excited to see some peaks that he might not have sought out otherwise. He is somewhere around twenty peaks into the list at the moment, but says, "I'm not quite fifty years old yet . . . so maybe I have time."



## Uriah Ador Dionisio

Uriah is originally from the Philippines and grew up in Simi Valley. He fell in love with the Sierra after road tripping up the 395 in 2018. He enjoys peakbagging, mountain biking, climbing, and snowboarding and plans to foray into splitboarding soon. Uriah recently wrapped up his third season volunteering as a staff member for WTC West LA Group 2 ("best 2 you'll ever do!"). This summer, he has plans to summit Mount Starr King, Royce Peak, Merriam Peak, and Cloudripper. At 241 peaks left to go, he has his work cut out for him. The Sierra is one of Uriah's favorite places, and he looks forward to many more adventures and slogs with friends.



# Welcome, New Members!

## Kelsey Almendariz

Kelsey grew up in West Los Angeles and has been an on-and-off resident there for many years. This spring, however, she was ecstatic finally to make the long-dreamed-of move to the Eastern Sierra, where she now lives and works as a nurse.

Her love affair with the Eastern Sierra began in the summer of 2013, when she embarked on her first backpacking trip and summited her first 14er: Mount Whitney via the Mountaineer's Route. Although new to climbing at the time, she had been a runner since her teens and was immediately captivated by the Sierra's peaks and the many ways of experiencing them.

Since then, her passion for the range—along with climbing and trail running—has guided her through several career changes and adventures. She enjoyed a summer working for the Sierra National Forest, and she also spent seven years working for REI in both Washington and California as an Outdoor School instructor and bike mechanic. During that time, she earned her AMGA SPI certification and taught courses in climbing and mountain biking. Her years with REI not only helped her build competence and confidence in the mountains but also introduced her to the SPS peak list for the first time. She was fortunate to teach mountaineering alongside SPS member Nile Sorenson, who—unbeknownst to him—first sparked her interest in pursuing the list.

Moving to the Range of Light has been the culmination of a decades-long dream, and she hopes it will allow her to pursue the SPS peaks in earnest. Most recently, she summited Temple Crag via the Moon Goddess Arete, and she looks forward to many more Sierra adventures in the years ahead.



## Congratulations!

Ann Perkins earned her emblem on Banner Peak, July 1992.

*We also welcome new members Frank Tota and Garrett Smawley. And welcome back to returning members Dave and Ann Perkins!*

## FREE First Year's Membership or *Echo* Subscription

New subscribers and members can receive their first year's subscription for free! Download the Membership Application Form at <https://forms.gle/N3GjHJdwmQ7kP2NC6>. Please contact the chair or membership chair if you have any questions.



## around-the-web/

By Dave Sholle

*Editors' note: Dave Sholle is our correspondent for this column, sharing web links that SPS members may find interesting. If you see something you would like to share with other members, please send it to Dave at [dsholle@verizon.net](mailto:dsholle@verizon.net).*

Some of these links may be behind paywalls.

### Sierra and California

[Mount Baldy ski resort fights to survive](#) or [here](#)  
[Young Mother dies in drowning in San Gabriels](#)  
[In 1982, saved by strangers in the Sierra](#)  
[Three-day rescue near Idyllwild](#)  
[Airlift rescue after fire ants attack](#)  
[What went wrong in the Tahoe avalanche?](#)  
[Visiting Lake Tahoe avalanche site](#)  
[Los Angeles aqueduct video](#)  
[The Dark Wizard \(Dean Potter documentary\)](#)  
[Youngest to complete Yosemite triple crown](#)  
[Gridlock grips Yosemite](#)

[A letter to my climbing partner Dale Bard](#)  
[Hantavirus in Yosemite](#)  
[Norman's 13 Ski traverse in the High Sierra](#)  
[Climber rescued in Red Rock Canyon](#)  
[Quicksand warning for Arizona and Utah](#)  
[More quicksand](#)  
[Blowing snow leaves climber blind on a Colorado 14er](#)  
[Government is erasing National Park History](#)  
[How to measure snow from space](#)  
[Learning how to climb after an electrical accident](#)  
[Artemis II astronaut Christina Koch is a climber](#)  
[Jim Whittaker dies at 97](#) and [here](#)  
[Be prepared in the wild](#)  
[Guns in National Parks](#)  
[Cuts in the NPS budget](#)  
[Severe injury alone in the backcountry](#)

### Canada

[Human powered female climbing expedition to Baffin Island](#)  
[Dog used claws like crampons to climb Mt. Robson in the 1970s](#)

### Alps and Europe

[Austria climber guilty verdict](#)

*(continued on page 6)*

*News from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife*

## Black Bears & Red-Legged Frogs

Interested in black bears? If so, you might learn something new from this article, "The Secret Lives of Lake Tahoe's Black Bears": <https://tinyurl.com/yss5v4ep>. Want to learn more and see photos of tiny cubs? Check out [https://bearwise.org/january-february-is-birthday-time-for-bears/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://bearwise.org/january-february-is-birthday-time-for-bears/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery). Enjoy!

Also, after ten years of conservation work, the California red-legged frog has made a comeback after a decades-long absence from Yosemite National Park.

Read about it here: <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/CNRA/bulletins/41658a5>



*(Photo courtesy National Wildlife Federation).*

## around-the-web/ continued

### High Asian Peaks

[Everest Base camp trek poisoning scandal](#) and [here](#)

[Various stories on Everest](#)

[Training for 8000-meter peaks](#)

[She escapes the Taliban, then climbs Everest](#)

[New records on Everest](#) and [here](#)

[Polish climber/skier Bartek Ziemski climbs and skis Everest and Lhotse without supplemental oxygen or guide support](#)

[Everest's first death zone rescue in 1976](#)

[She reached summit of Makalu, then an avalanche](#)

[Huge number climb Everest](#)

[Alex Honnold interviews Jon Krakauer about Into Thin Air thirty years later](#)

### Other

[How to hike thirty miles a day](#)

[Who calls for help in the backcountry and why?](#)

[How to stay in hiking shape](#)

[SAR lifesaving advice](#)

[Backpack fit](#)

[Timeline of women's climbing history](#)

[You can't just hike into shape](#)

[Beating altitude sickness](#)

[Hiking hacks](#)

[Japan's battle with moon bears](#)

[Warm up before a hike](#)

[Five useless "popular" survival skills](#)

[How smart are bears?](#)

[Lightning safety](#)

[If you climbed Kilimanjaro decades ago, you should watch this video](#)

[British blind climber uses dynamic moves](#)

[Robotic exoskeleton review](#)

[How to handle a poop emergency in the backcountry](#)

## Get Featured on the SPS Instagram Account!

*From Dylan Kilby*

The SPS Instagram account (@sierrapeakssection) wants to feature your climbing stories in our **Climber Spotlight** series! Got a cool set of climbing photos and a trip report from a recent outing? Do you have something unique and cool from historical climbs? We'd love to hear about it! The new series will focus on highlighting our climbers' peak accomplishments and accompanying stories, and that includes you! Climbers of all experience levels and emblem status are encouraged to send in their shots so we can brag about how cool you all are.

To submit something for a Climber Spotlight, send an email to [dylanrkilby@gmail.com](mailto:dylanrkilby@gmail.com) (make sure you get that "r" in between "dylan" and "kilby") with the following contents:

- Up to ten photos in an appropriate format—PNG, JPEG, or TIFF. (Please make sure they are as close to the original size as possible.)
- A brief write-up of the trip, photo, or venture (maximum 1500 characters, no minimum)
- Names of the photographers
- Any social media handle that you would like us to tag.

If you want to send photos and/or stories for more than one post, please email them **separately**. That will make it much easier to organize for posting.

Thanks, and climb on this 2026 season!



# The SPS Mascots

By Mark Maier

My father, Ted Maier, was one of the founders of the SPS. I was a “mascot” in the 1960’s/70’s. A funny thing about that is that I only learned about it in 2018. I remember going on SPS trips as a youngster very, very well. I remember carrying an “elephant’s foot” sleeping bag in a little rucksack, crossing streams with some other kids, learning to use an ice axe at Baldy bowl as a teenager, and the sweep of the Celestial Aretes on Temple Crag seen as a kid, one of which I would climb as an adult much later. The Sierra is a key part of my childhood memories, but being a “mascot” only came up later.

In the 20-teens when we broke up my mother’s house as she moved into memory care, I inherited the large collection of slides, prints, and movies that was the product of my parents’ (and grandparents’) serious photography hobby. I had much of the collection digitized and slowly went through it with a mixture of questions and memories. At one point I reached out to Jerry Keating, a close friend of my father and whose email I found via the SPS, and sent him some photos, asking who some of the people were and if anything could be correlated to incidents I remembered hearing about from my father. I passed on that I’d climbed with the Sierra Club Rock Climbing Section (RCS) in the 1980s—when it still existed—and have since been active with other mountain clubs in the United States in the Washington, D.C., area (and now in



Utah). Jerry responded about how I’d started my climbing career as a “Mascot,” a term that honestly was new to me, and I started searching further into my father’s slide archive.

My first SPS-related memories are family backpacks. The two places that stick in my memory are Horseshoe Meadows and Treasure Lakes. These were big trips with many families. Big long hikes they were not, more like leisurely strolls with intense logistics anywhere a stream crossing came in.



This was almost certainly taken in the late 1960s on an SPS Family Backpack. My father, center frame (at left), is helping a kid across a bridge. I remember his pack looking like that with multiple pads and bags every time we went on one of these family trips.

*(Photos by Ted Maier, courtesy Mark Maier).*

On this page: more photos from the Horseshoe Meadows outing. Below right: Izzy and Janet Lieberman. (Photos by Ted Maier, courtesy Mark Maier)

This looks like Horseshoe Meadows and definitely has the Family Backpack ambience. Late 1960s.



Around the time I turned twelve, my father started taking me to rock climbing and snow climbing training trips. I did trips to Stoney Point to learn climbing, belaying, and rappelling and went up to Mt Baldy bowl by the hut in the winter and learned ice axe self-arrest and cramponing technique. My understanding is that the “Mascot” program was about more than family backpacks, but about climbing peaks. That matches how things were after I turned twelve as Sierra trips became fairly regular events, though probably more often with Boy Scouts as with something SPS associated. I know my father had it in mind that we would climb North Palisade together a few years later, a peak that had eluded him repeatedly, but he passed away from a sudden heart attack when I was fourteen.

I went on at least one other SPS trip—after I got a driver’s license and before I left for college—to Muah Mountain (another of many returns to the Horseshoe Meadows area), I guess as a Mascot without a sponsor. When I got to college, I got

That’s me in the center, apparently in charge of campfire entertainment.



much more interested in rock climbing and technical mountaineering, things I've pursued at various levels of seriousness my whole life. Shortly after I wrapped up graduate school, I left California and have not lived there since.

When I contacted Jerry Keating, he noted a trip with my father to Mt. Brewer, where a bear had absconded with their food. By interesting happenstance one of the 8mm films I found in the pile was labeled "Mt Brewer." I have it digitized, and it can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfV9wxhZR6FiVxCZzzU7Sng>. When I looked at that film, there were several scenes at the end that appear to be a mountain rescue. This really got my attention as they seem to line up with a story I'd heard many times referred to as "Dead Horse Camp," a rather macabre story my father would tell with dramatic flourishes. I was never sure if the dramatic story was the real deal and had not heard any of it from any of his friends. I've posted those scenes on their own at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfV9wxhZR6FiVxCZzzU7Sng>, and I'll write another article, probably for Halloween, but I'm very curious if "Dead Horse Camp" is long-time SPS lore or not.

We're looking forward to Mark Maier's tale of "Dead Horse Camp" to share with you in another issue. In the meantime, here is founding member Pat Meixner's report of a private outing a few months before the founding of the SPS, in which she describes a dead horse camp and dramatic rescue matching the film footage shot by Ted Maier and unearthed by his son. We reprinted Pat Meixner's article in *The Sierra Echo*, 59.2, April-June 2015, pp. 13-14, as part of our Sixtieth Anniversary celebration. The photo was previously published for the Fiftieth Anniversary issue, 39.4, August-September, 2005, p. 10. See above for the link to Ted Maier's movies.

## Seven Days in the Sierra

*By Patricia Meixner [Gentry]*

On August 20 [1955], the following people took off from Parchers Camp near South Lake for a nine-day trip in the Sierra from there to Sawmill Pass—Frank Sanborn,

Dick and Lucy Woodward, Jim McGoldrick, Ted Maier, Roger Gaefcke, Bob Smeltzer, Chuck Miller, and Pat Meixner. We hiked along a string of lovely lakes in a basin



*Part of the group is gathered here on the John Muir Trail on August, 24, 1955. L to R, Frank Sanborn, Ted Maier, Roger Gaefke, Chuck Miller, Dick Woodward, and possibly Jim McGoldrick. (Likely photographer Lucy Woodward, originally credited to Dick Woodward)*

surrounded by towering peaks and walls, up over Bishop Pass and down into the Dusy Lakes Basin, where we made camp at the lower Dusy Lake in a light rain. However, by evening we had lovely weather again.

Sunday we followed a ducked route up over Knapsack Pass, down across Palisade Basin, over a low dividing ridge into Glacier Basin. We camped that night above timberline on beautiful Glacier Lake, surrounded by impressive peaks and ridges.

Monday we awoke to a frosty morning and, leaving our packs, took off cross-country to climb Mt. Sill, 14,200 ft. The view of the Palisades peaks, glaciers, and other high rugged mountains was spectacular. We soon descended, for when we reached camp, we again put on our packs and followed a ducked route up over a pass to make a tremendous drop down into Middle Palisade Basin. We camped at the upper Palisade Lake about dark. A strange odor filled the camp that night, but it wasn't until daylight that we discovered that a dead horse had been blown up a few days before for faster decaying and we were camping right in the middle of the mess!

Tuesday we hiked the John Muir Trail up over Mather Pass, 12,050 ft., where we had a superb view northward to the Palisades and southeastward to the upper basin of the South Fork of the Kings River. We dropped down into the basin and camped that night by a lovely stream.

Wednesday we hiked up to Bench Lake arriving there at noon. From our camp on the pine-dotted shore, we could look across to beautiful pyramid-shaped Arrow Peak with snow at its base. We spent the afternoon loafing and fishing.

We were to have a layover day on Thursday and hike on again on Friday, but one of our group, Roger Gaefcke, became seriously ill Wednesday night. He passed into unconsciousness Thursday morning, so Frank Sanborn and Dick Woodward hiked out over Taboose Pass for help and got back 3:30 am Friday morning with a doctor, sheriff, and horses. The doctor told us that it was part heart trouble and pneumonia and that Roger was lucky to be alive. As soon as possible after daybreak, Roger was put on a stretcher on a mule and the whole group started out over Taboose Pass. We reached the valley floor about 4 pm, the end of a very eventful trip.



## **Dare to Lead!**

**Virtual Leadership Training Seminars Fall 2026 (Date TBD)**

Interested in becoming an Angeles Chapter outings leader? Check here for the date of the fall seminar and lots of other information: <https://www.sierraclub..rg/angeles/leadership-seminar>.



## **New Stock of SPS Tees!**

Patty Kline, our merchandiser, has a new stock of SPS tee-shirts. These are made of a 50% cotton/50% polyester blend and are available in M, L, and XL; the color is ash (gray). The graphics are the same as in the past, with North Palisade on the front and the full SPS list on the back, ready for you to check off the peaks you've climbed. In addition, we still have some 100% cotton tee-shirts, which was our original fabric over the years, in sand (M and L) and ash (S and M).

## **New Andy Smatko Explorer Emblem Patch**



The Andy Smatko Explorer Emblem patch, designed by member Donovan Pair, is now available for purchase. Why not add an SPS section patch also? Each is available from SPS merchandiser Patty Kline for \$10.00, which includes shipping. Send your order to Patty at 7409 Hermosa Ave., Yucca Valley, CA 92284.

## **... And SPS Patches for New Members**



Starting in 2025, new SPS members will be given a beautiful SPS patch.

# Mt. Tom via the North Ridge, May 11, 2026

By Kelsey Almendariz



Winuba (“Standing Tall” in Nüümü), or to most, Mount Tom, first piqued my interest in 2013. I was a young climber exploring the sea of granite that is the Eastern Sierra and couldn’t help but become enamored with the giant scalene triangle dominating the Bishop skyline. Since then, Mount Tom’s North Ridge has continually beckoned to me: an irresistible, seemingly endless highway into the world above 13,000’.

The route follows a steep line from the base of Mount Tom at 5,800’ to the summit at 13,658’, gaining roughly 8,000 feet over five miles of cross-country travel and third-class alpine scrambling. The pull of the North Ridge only grew stronger after I moved to Rovana this spring. I quickly became fixated with the beauty of the North Ridge ascending from my doorstep.

Quinn, a new friend in town, had been looking for a trail-running and climbing partner, and one day I casually mentioned wanting to do “something” on Mount Tom. “A big day on Monday,” I said. “A slog.” The kind of thing I had assumed would remain a solo mission, mostly because I didn’t want to subject anyone else to the fulfillment of my masochistic dream.

*Above: Kelsey Almendariz ascending The North Ridge of Mt. Tom (Photo courtesy Kelsey Almendariz).*

Where I expected indifference, though, Quinn seemed genuinely intrigued. I explained that most of it probably wouldn’t be runnable and that most climbers opt for the more benign southern approach via Horton Lakes. Surprisingly, none of that appeared to deter him, and before I realized it, Quinn had enlisted himself, a willing participant in the endeavor.

Sunday evening we met at my house to shuffle gear around and scheme over dinner. Route-finding seemed straightforward enough: bushwhack to the ridge, then stay on the ridge to gain the summit. Our biggest concern was water, especially given the unseasonably warm spring. In the end, we each decided to carry 3.5 liters and hoped to supplement from lingering snowfields along the crest if necessary. Alarms were set for 3 a.m.

After a short but bumpy ride in Quinn’s 4Runner, at 3:15 we started up a fire road that soon dissolved into a sea of sagebrush, scree, and boulders. It felt like for every two feet gained, one was lost, and our ankles and thighs quickly suffered the wrath of desert plants along the way. Still, in the cool predawn air, beneath a wash of moonlight and buoyed by excitement for the day ahead, the miles seemed to melt away.

Before we knew it, it was 7 a.m. and we were already at 9,500’ where sagebrush country gave way to clean granite boulders, a narrow band of pine forest, and the first lingering patches of snow.

Above 10,600’ the character of the route shifted, and the scrambling began in earnest. We worked our way over sharp granite blocks, and around 11,400’ we stopped to cram snow into our bottles, reapply sunscreen to our already-abused legs, and stare up at one of the many false summits ahead. From there on, we stayed as close to the ridge crest as possible, as the rock quality deteriorated quickly with any deviation.

After more than a mile of talus-covered ridge, weaving around short snow patches and occasional rock steps, we arrived on the summit at 10:30 a.m., both of us dressed in sun hoodies and shorts. Conditions were pleasant. We ate lunch—PB&J for me and Quinn proudly unpacking a sweet potato summit quesadilla—snapped some selfies, dug through the summit register, wolfed down caffeinated gels, and tried to summon enough psych for the long descent ahead.



The way down seemed endless. We carefully retraced our steps across the talus-covered ridge, often choosing higher-quality rock even when it meant more technical scrambling. By 2 p.m. we had descended back to around 10,000' and relaxed a little, convinced that several thousand feet of scree skiing was all that stood between us and cold drinks at the car.

Not long after, the ridge became increasingly loose and ill-defined. Seduced by the ease of moving quickly through soft sand and scree, we drifted too far right (climber's left) of the fading North Ridge and found ourselves in a drainage east of our ascent line that appeared to cliff out nearly 1,000 feet below us.

Fortunately, after some careful scouting and a brief discussion about the lowest-risk way to traverse back left, we managed to regain our original track. From there, we descended rapidly through sagebrush country, relocated the faint fire road, and finally reached lower angle terrain. With Quinn's 4Runner now visible in the distance, we rallied one last time and ran the final half mile downhill back to the car.

*Above: Pine Creek from the North Ridge of Mt. Tom at first light. At left: Kelsey Almendariz reaches the pine forest on the ridge (Photos courtesy Kelsey Almendariz).*



We completed the North Ridge car-to-car in 13 hours and 15 minutes, starting at 3:15 a.m. and returning at 4:30 p.m. Since the adventure, I often catch myself staring up at the North Ridge with a quiet sense of joy, knowing that we traveled every bit of it on foot—walking, running, post-holing, and scrambling our way from the valley floor to the summit and back again. I am overflowing with gratitude not only for being able to complete Mount Tom via this route, but for the opportunity to do so with a new friend.

*Top: Kelsey and Quinn on the summit of Mt. Tom. Middle: Kelsey Almendariz descending the ridge. Below: Mt Tom from the Owens Valley (Photos courtesy Kelsey Almendariz).*



## SPS Management Committee (MC) Meeting Minutes Tuesday, March 17, 2026, Via Zoom

**In attendance:** Michael Chamoun (Chair), John Sheehe (Vice-Chair/Banquet Chair), Phil S. Bates (Treasurer), Daryn Dodge (Secretary), Dylan Kilby (Fifth Officer/Outreach), Jason Pair (Membership), Romain Wacziarg (Archives), Tina Bowman (Keeper of the List, Assist. Webmaster, *Echo* Co-Editor), Doug Mantle (Safety Chair), Paul Garry (Mountain Records), Patty Kline (Merchandise), Kathy Rich (Emblem Committee)

Call to order by Michael at 7:02 pm

**Michael Chamoun (SPS Chair):** Michael inquired about how well the revised online membership and banquet forms had worked out. Jason replied that the membership application process has been going well with only a few exceptions due to some confusion in filling out the form by users. Some members still send checks in by mail. Phil replied that signing up for the banquet generally went well. It was noted that some had trouble donating to the Section before they joined. If they clicked on the “donate” button, donations went straight to the Sierra Club and not to the SPS. Kathy suggested that Joe Wankum (Webmaster) look into setting up a donate button for the SPS.

Jason asked how many non-SPS members went to the banquet, to inquire if they would like to become a member or subscriber. Phil stated that Jason can easily determine this in the banquet program. Phil noted that there were 89-90 guests at the banquet, 84 of which were paid tickets.

Michael asked if we should differentiate between members and non-members at the banquet, with nonmembers and SPS subscribers potentially paying a higher fee.

**John Sheehe (Vice-Chair/Banquet Chair):** The Kim Stanley Robinson (KSR) presentation at the banquet has been posted on the SPS YouTube account. Other video footage of the banquet will soon be posted there as well.

Romain suggested that the author of *Missing in the Minarets*, William Alsop, might be a good presenter for the 2027 SPS banquet. Phil suggested Daniel Arnold, author of *Early Days of the Range of Light* as a presenter. John suggested Bob Burd, but it was pointed out that he was a SPS presenter 10-15 years ago and will be a speaker at the DPS banquet in May. John responded that he would like to put a list of past presenters together, perhaps to post on the SPS website. Dylan suggested Eric Gilbertson, country/state high point mountaineer and peak elevation surveyor, as another potential banquet presenter. Kathy noted that the Desert Peak Section (DPS) was considering asking Eric to be a presenter at a future DPS banquet.

**Daryn Dodge (Secretary/Emblem Committee):** Two climbers had sent in peak lists for recognition as an Emblem finisher (SPS Emblem or Smatko Emblem), although neither were current SPS members. Daryn had sent membership forms to both and said he would ask the MC if we could waive the one-year wait period for recognition if they joined/rejoined the SPS. MC moved they

would waive the one-year wait in these cases if they join. Daryn will again contact the climber who has submitted a list for the Smatko Emblem.

**Gary Schenk (Outings):** Not present. However, Gary had e-mailed the MC and other committee members a summary of the new requirements for Sierra Club leaders and his opinion of them. Gary was particularly worried about the new statement, “Failure to comply with policy may result in action up to and including termination of employment/volunteer status and potential legal action.” He was also concerned that we will lose leaders and outings due to the additional first-aid kit and class requirements.

**Phil Bates (Treasurer):** For the banquet, expenses were roughly \$9,200 and income was \$7,200. Phil reported that the shortfall of \$2,000 is easily absorbed and SPS finances are good overall. The larger banquet room cost more. We would have been closer to breaking even with the smaller room at Almansor.

**Dylan Kilby (Outreach):** The Instagram and Facebook SPS accounts continue to grow. Lindsey Jackson, a recent SPS list finisher, will be the presenter for the fourth SPS Quarterly presentation. Phil S. Bates will be presenting at the third SPS Quarterly on March 18.

**Romain Wacziarg (Archives):** Suggested we approach non-SPS members on Peakbagger.com that are actively pursuing the SPS list to see if they would be interested in joining the SPS. The Committee members present thought this was an idea worth pursuing.

**Tina Bowman (Echo Co-Editor):** Next *Echo* deadline is May 25th. Tina is waiting for the printer to finish printing the new issue.

**Joe Wankum (Webmaster):** Not present. However, Joe sent committee members a summary of his most recent activities. Revised MC Policies & Procedures have been added to the website. Missing *Echos* have also been added to the website.

**Doug Mantle (Safety Chair):** No report.

**Patty Kline (Merchandise):** Recent requests for SPS merchandise were reported. Phil noted that there were no large SPS T-shirts for KSR at the banquet. Patty to order more large-size T-shirts if we are out of that size.

**New Business:** Kathy shared a draft of an email that she had prepared that includes short summaries of the three climbing sections (SPS, DPS, and HPS). The draft includes links to their outings calendar, website and how to join. These will be given to students at the end of the Wilderness Travel Course (WTC) to help foster interest in joining the sections and participating in trips. Dylan approved of the summary for the SPS.

Kathy also suggested emphasizing that anyone can become a subscriber to the *Echo* under the “New Member” tab on the SPS website, using the wording that mirrors what HPS and DPS have

**March Minutes cont.** on their websites. Kathy will follow up with Joe and the MC on the suggested change.

Kathy also briefly summarized actions taken for suspension of a participant from HPS and DPS outings due to inappropriate behavior on recent HPS outings. Bill Simpson is pursuing having the person suspended from all Angeles Chapter outings. Michael stated that SPS will follow suit in suspending the person from SPS outings.

Michael moved that the next MC meeting will be scheduled for Tuesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, at 7 pm. Michael adjourned the meeting at 7:52 pm.

Minutes prepared by Daryn Dodge, SPS Secretary

## SPS Management Committee (MC) Meeting Minutes Tuesday, May 20, 2026, Via Zoom

**In attendance:** Michael Chamoun (Chair), John Sheehe (Vice-Chair/Banquet Chair), Phil S. Bates (Treasurer), Daryn Dodge (Secretary), Jason Pair (Membership), Kathy Rich (Emblem Committee)

Call to order by Michael approximately 7:05 pm

**Michael Chamoun (SPS Chair):** Michael followed up on discussion from the last meeting about Eric Gilbertson as the SPS speaker in 2027. Kathy Rich reported that Eric is currently available January 31, 2027, if this will be the date of the SPS Banquet. Kathy also reported that a longtime DPS/SPS member offered to pay for his travel expenses from Seattle, WA, where he is a professor at the University of Washington.

**John Sheehe (Vice-Chair/Banquet Chair):** John will contact Eric Gilbertson to confirm him as the next speaker for the SPS banquet and set the date of the banquet as January 31, 2027. John will also offer the standard \$1000 honorarium to Eric.

**Jason Pair (Membership):** Reminders are going out to SPS members that still need to renew their membership. Jason will send this member list to the MC for assistance in contacting members.

**Daryn Dodge (Secretary/Emblem Committee):** Daryn again contacted via e-mail the previous SPS member who had submitted a list for the Smatko Emblem to encourage re-joining the SPS. No response has been received, so no further contact will be made.

**Dylan Kilby (Outreach):** Not present. Michael will contact Dylan about the status of the SPS Quarterly summer presentation with Lindsey Jackson. Daryn Dodge was discussed as a possible back-up to present his recent ascent of Pico Bolivar in Columbia.

### Treasurer's Statement Year to Date (1/1/26-4/30/26)

<b>Money In</b>		\$5530.00
Donations		495
Interest		0.00
Membership		630
Banquet Income		4375.00
Merchandise Income		30
Office Income (Opening Deposit USBank)		0.00
<b>Money Out</b>		-\$2497.26
Banquet		-1943.10
Speaker Honorarium 2026		-1000.00
Speaker Expenses 2026		-521.09
Printing 2025		-126.85
Banquet Refund 2026		-170.00
Almanson Final Payment 2026		-125.16
Echo Expense		-219.30
Merchandise Expense		0.00
Office Expenses		-251.97
PayPal Expenses		-73.85
Taxes		-6.98
	<b>Money In</b>	<b>\$5530</b>
	<b>Money Out</b>	<b>-\$2497.26</b>
	<b>Net Total:</b>	<b>\$3032.74</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>		<b>4/30/2026</b>
Paypal		\$3525.64
USBank Checking		\$6518.61
<b>NET WORTH</b>		<b>\$10,044.25</b>

**Phil Bates (Treasurer):** No major financial changes to report. Phil suggested holding the SPS banquet to a maximum of 100 people, since it is more expensive to reserve a larger room when it is unknown if there will be more than 100 attendees.

**Tina Bowman (Echo):** Not present. Next submission deadline is May 25<sup>th</sup>.

Michael moved that the next MC meeting will be scheduled for Wednesday, July 15<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm. Michael adjourned the meeting at 7:23 pm.

Minutes prepared by Daryn Dodge, SPS Secretary

# Outings



We've chosen the photo above taken by Mat Kelliher, showing climbers ascending Tower Peak on an SPS trip, to represent the outings section. Do you have a photo you would like to see here? If so, please send your submission as an email attachment to [tina@bowmanchange.com](mailto:tina@bowmanchange.com) or via USPS to Tina Bowman.

**Jun 20 | Sat**

**SPS**

**I: Mount Julius Caesar (13,200')**: Join us for an ascent of Mount Julius Caesar, a prominent Sierra summit positioned along the crest between Pine Creek and French Canyon. This outing from the Pine Creek Trailhead covers 18.5 miles round trip with 6,200 of total elevation gain, following the Pine Creek Pass trail into the high basin before a rugged Class 2 scramble over granite talus to the summit. This is a strenuous endeavor requiring exceptional physical conditioning and recent high-altitude experience. Sturdy boots and proper layers for the Sierra crest are essential. Register online to submit a waiver and medical form online, then complete your registration by emailing the Primary Leader with contact & carpool info, and recent conditioning and experience. If accepted, the leaders will contact you to confirm your spot and provide trip status and details. Leader: Jason Park, Co-Leaders: Sunny Yi, Erica Kim.

Note: Please check the bottom of the SPS home page (<https://www.sierraclub.org/angeles/sierra-peaks>) or Leadership Training Committee home page (<https://www.sierraclub.org/angeles/leadership-outings>) for more training and other outings.

**Please note:** Currently the Sierra Club requires all participants on an outing more than an hour from help to complete a medical form, and leaders for such outings must complete a safety management plan. Both are fairly simple forms, which are available at the LTC web site here: <https://www.sierraclub.org/angeles/leadership-outings/forms-resources>.

**Jun 26-28 | Fri-Sun**

**SPS**

**M: Mt. Thoreau (12,691'), Keyhole Plateau High Point (13,404')**: Join us for an extended weekend to climb two non-SPS-listed peaks: Mt. Thoreau and Keyhole Plateau. A climb of Mt. Thoreau (also given the unofficial name Mt. George Davis by the first ascenders) was inspired by Kim Stanley Robinson's presentation at this year's SPS banquet. The high point of the Keyhole Plateau is on the list of Sierra Nevada 13ers. Our trip will start at the North Lake trailhead, where we'll hike the short trail to Lower Lamarck Lake. We will continue up use trail and trailless cross-country terrain to the largest of the Wonder Lakes where we'll look for a suitable camp spot. We will then climb the class 2 scree slope on the southeast side of Mt. Thoreau and head back to camp.

On Saturday, we will ascend Keyhole Plateau by climbing a chute with some short sections of class 3 south of Wonder Lakes. This will get us on the east ridge of the Keyhole Plateau, where easy scree slopes then lead west up to the Plateau. We will then return to camp and stay one more night or possibly begin the hike out that afternoon.

On Friday, expect to hike approximately 2 miles to Wonder Lakes for camp, then another 3 miles round trip to Mt. Thoreau. Total gain for Friday will be 3500-4000 feet. Total mileage and gain for Keyhole Plateau from camp on Saturday will be five miles and 3000 feet. Send request and climb resume, and any questions, to Ldr Daryn Dodge. Co-ldrs: Gary Schenk, Kathy Rich.

**July 24-26 | Fri-Sun**

**SPS**

**I: Bloody Mtn (12,547'), Mt Baldwin (12,620')**: Join us for this trip into the John Muir Wilderness in the Sierra Nevada near Mammoth Lakes, CA. Fri

# OUTINGS

## Leaders in this issue's schedule:

Tina Bowman [tina@bowmanchange.com](mailto:tina@bowmanchange.com)  
Daryn Dodge [daryn.dodge@oehha.ca.gov](mailto:daryn.dodge@oehha.ca.gov)  
Beth Epstein [b.epstein@verizon.net](mailto:b.epstein@verizon.net)  
Mat Kelliher [mkelliher746@gmail.com](mailto:mkelliher746@gmail.com)  
Erica Kim [ericaleigh1980@yahoo.com](mailto:ericaleigh1980@yahoo.com)  
Tom McDonnell [t.mcdonnell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:t.mcdonnell@sbcglobal.net)  
Robert Myers [rmmyers@ix.netcom.com](mailto:rmmyers@ix.netcom.com)  
Jeremy Netka [jnetka@gmail.com](mailto:jnetka@gmail.com)  
Jason Park [jasonpark7100@gmail.com](mailto:jasonpark7100@gmail.com)  
Kathy Rich [kathrynrich@gmail.com](mailto:kathrynrich@gmail.com)  
Gary Schenk [gary@hbfun.org](mailto:gary@hbfun.org)  
Ann Pedreschi Shields [apedreschi@sbcglobal.net](mailto:apedreschi@sbcglobal.net)  
Sunny Yi [sunnyyi1125@gmail.com](mailto:sunnyyi1125@gmail.com)

we'll pack in on trail up into Convict Canyon for about 5.0 miles with 2,400' gain and set up camp for the weekend at Mildred Lake (9,790'). Sat we'll head NW from camp, passing as we steadily ascend first Lake Dorothy, and then Lake Genevieve, on our way to a prominent gully that we'll climb over sometimes loose, slatey scree, onto the crest of Bloody Mtn's Northeast Ridge which we'll follow to the summit. The views from the summit are profound, wildly colorful, well worth the 4.3 mi, 3,300' gain effort it takes to get up there. We'll return to camp via Bloody's slightly more solid southern face for a day's total of 8.9 miles and 3,800' gain. Back in camp we'll celebrate with a nice Happy Hour under skies brightly lit by the waxing gibbous moon. Sun we'll head south up Convict Creek and make our way over to the northwest slopes of Mt Baldwin and ascend its steep Class 2 limestone slabs and sandy plateaus all the way up to the summit. It takes 2.4 miles and 2,850' of gain to get up there, but the views are well worth it, as colorful and intense as they were from Bloody; after getting our fill, we'll head back down to camp, pack up and head back out to our vehicles for a day's total of 9.8 miles and 2,850' of gain. Our Wilderness Permit severely limits group size, and its cost (about \$15 per person) will be split among

**SPS outings can always be viewed online on the electronic Angeles Chapter Schedule of Activities:**

<http://angeles.sierraclub.org/activities>  
<https://sierraclub.org/angeles/sierra-peaks/outings-schedule>

participants. Register online to submit a waiver and medical form, then complete your registration by emailing [mkelliher746@gmail.com](mailto:mkelliher746@gmail.com) and [jnetka@gmail.com](mailto:jnetka@gmail.com) with contact and carpool info, recent conditioning and experience. If accepted, the leaders will contact you to confirm your spot, and to provide trip status and details. *Ldrs: Met Kelliher, Jeremy Netka.*

**Aug 3-7 | Mon-Fri SPS**

**I: Mt. Goddard (13,568')**: Join us on this five-day outing to climb an SPS emblem peak in the heart of the Sierra. Monday we'll backpack on the Bishop Pass Trail, over the pass, and down to LeConte Canyon the first day (12.8 mi, 2200' gain). Tuesday we will hike north on the John Muir Trail over Muir Pass and camp near Wanda Lk (c. 9.5 mi, 3200' gain). Wednesday we'll hike cross country to climb Mt. Goddard either by cl 2 Starr's Route or cl 2 east slope and return to camp (c. 6.5-7 mi, 2400-2700' gain). Thursday and Friday we will hike south on the JMT and out the Bishop Pass Trail (c. 3750' gain). Trip totals c. 51 mi, 11,650' gain. Bear resistant food container and medical form required. Send recent conditioning and experience to Ldr: Tom McDonnell. Co-ldr: Tina Bowman.

**Aug 14-16 | Fri-Sun SPS, WTC**

**Recess Pk (12,813')**: Join us to climb Recess Peak via the class 2 variation of the southwest arete route. Friday we'll backpack up the Bear Ridge Trail, which starts near the Lake Thomas A Edison spillway at 7665', 5.7 miles to its end at the John Muir Trail at 9880'. We'll cross the JMT and hike x-c to camp west of Recess Peak (up to 2+ mi and up to c. 800' gain). Saturday we'll climb Recess, c.3 mi RT with squiggle factor and 2200' gain, then retrace our steps to camp. An option of adding Volcanic Knob (cl 2 summit) this day is possible (c. 2+ mi RT and 500' gain). Sunday we'll retrace our route to the trailhead. Medical form required. Send conditioning to Ldr: Tina Bowman. Co-ldr: Beth Epstein.

**Aug 26-30 | Wed-Sun SPS**

**I: Mt. Kaweah (13,802')**: Join us for this outing to climb an SPS emblem peak in the Great Western Divide area. Wed we'll

SPS safety chair Doug Mantle notes that the INYOSAR (Inyo Search and Rescue) site on Instagram is a useful tool for determining the latest safety risks in the Sierra with related stories.

# OUTINGS

backpack from Mineral King on the Sawtooth Pass Trail and then use trails to Glacier Pass and down to Spring Lake (10,060') to camp (c 4.5 mi, 3300' gain). Thur we'll go xc to the Black Rock Pass Trail, over the pass (11,600'), and down to Big Arroyo to camp (c. 8 mi, 1600' gain). Fri we'll climb Mt Kaweah via the High Sierra Trail and the class 1 south slopes and return to camp (c. 10 mi, 4300' gain). Sat we'll backpack up over Black Rock Pass to camp at Spring Lake (c. 8 mi, 2200' gain). Sun hike out over Glacier Pass with the option of a side trip to Empire Mtn (11,550') from the pass (add 1.5 mi, 500' gain RT) (c. 4.5 mi, 1000' gain). Bear resistant food container and medical form required. Send recent conditioning and experience to Ldr: Tina Bowman. Co-ldr: Tom McDonnell.

**Sept 12-14 | Sat-Mon SPS**

**I: Mt Bago (11,870')**: Join us Sat for a jaunt over Kearsarge Pass (11,811') to camp at Charlotte Lk (10,400') for two nights (4.7 mi, 2650' gain to the pass and about 4 mi down to the lake). Sun we will take the trail back a short ways and then go x-c to cl 1-2 Mt. Bago, roughly 2 mi, 1500' gain. On the summit we'll enjoy great views into Kings Canyon and of surrounding peaks. We'll more or less retrace our steps to camp. Sun, hike out. Medical form and bear canisters required. Send conditioning to Ldr: Tina Bowman, Co-ldr: Gary Schenk.

## Time to Renew!

Subscriptions to the Echo expire on December 31st. If you haven't renewed, please do so! You can download the renewal form from the SPS web site here: <https://forms.gle/N3GjHJdwmQ7kP2NC6>.

**Sep 26 | Sat**

**LTC, WTC, HPS DPS, SPS**

**I: Navigation: Mt. Pinos Navigation Noodle:** Navigation noodle at Mt. Pinos to satisfy the basic (I/M) or advanced (E) level navigation requirements. Practice skills or checkoff. Send email with contact info (mailing address, telephone numbers), navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating to Leader: Robert Myers. Assistant: Ann Shields. (This is a backcountry outing; a medical form will be required.) Note: Early (at least two weeks prior to the event) sign-up for all navigation checkoffs and practices is recommended. These outings require substantial pre-outing preparation work, including completion of both a comprehensive written exam and a route planning assignment that will be mailed to you prior to the checkoff. See Chapter 6 of the *Leadership Reference Book* for more information.

**Nov 21-22 | Sat-Sun**

**LTC, WTC, HPS, DPS, SPS**

**I: Navigation: Mission Creek Preserve Navigation Noodle:** Navigation noodle at Mission Creek Preserve to satisfy the basic (I/M) level navigation requirements. Saturday for practice, skills refresher, altimeter, and homework. Sunday checkoff or additional practice. Send email with contact info (mailing address, phone numbers), navigation experience/training, any WTC, leader rating to Leader: Robert Myers. Assistant: Ann Shields. (This is a backcountry outing; a medical form will be required.) Note: Early (at least two weeks prior to the event) sign-up for all navigation checkoffs and practices is recommended. These outings require substantial pre-outing preparation work, including completion of both a

Wear 'em! Give 'em!

# SPS TEES



**Front: NORTH PAL  
Back: FULL SPS LIST**  
By geographic area with Mountaineer & Emblem peaks highlighted

S, M, L, XL in Ash & M, L in Sand  
\$20 includes shipping  
Send your order to:

Patty Kline, 7409 Hermosa Ave  
Yucca Valley, CA 92284  
Make check payable to SPS

CST 2087766-40

# OUTINGS

comprehensive written exam and a route planning assignment that will be mailed to you prior to the checkoff.

See Chapter 6 of the *Leadership Reference Book* for more information.

## From the Outings Chair

*Gary Schenk, SPS Outings Chair*

National Sierra Club has updated its Outings Safety Policies (OSP-2026); look for those updates in this document:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KvOpgaFBejTJF3G1pOivBFNDRbgqW6G\\_6TC4oXsJYNg/edit?tab=t.0](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KvOpgaFBejTJF3G1pOivBFNDRbgqW6G_6TC4oXsJYNg/edit?tab=t.0).

The updated policies place several new requirements on outings leaders, and unless otherwise noted, they are effective immediately. This document describes those updated policies that are applicable to trips led by SPS. The following list should be followed by leaders when planning, posting, and conducting an outing to remain compliant with OSP-2026. Per the national office: "Failure to comply with policy may result in action up to and including termination of employment/volunteer status and potential legal action."

Here is a brief summary of pertinent policy upgrades. Please note that careful study of the above document is helpful.

- Effective 1/1/2027, at least one leader on a backcountry outing must be current in Wilderness First Aid (WFA). Please note that SPS leads almost exclusively backcountry outings.
- Effective 1/1/2027, all leaders on a backcountry outing, and at least one leader on a front-country outing, must have current CPR Certification.
- Med forms and waivers are subject to an added policy. Participants must submit a medical form, which must be submitted to the trip leader. This form is to be reviewed by the leader and carried on the trip. At the end of the outing, these forms, along with waivers, must be digitally scanned (if not already e-forms in Campfire Events), and emailed to [program.safety@sierraclub.org](mailto:program.safety@sierraclub.org). These

individuals will then put them in the designated Google Drive, limited access folder, where they will be retained for ten years, or mailed to the Sierra Club office. Address: 2101 Webster St, Ste 1300, Oakland, CA 94612.

- Effective 1/1/2027, "Remote" first aid kits will be required for all Backcountry Outings, see <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1dhnov3XXk9z4I1ENaxiGZSijIqHgovAP/edit> for details.
- Prepare and submit a Safety Management Plan (SMP) to your Outings Chair appropriate to the outing; see the table on page 6 of the above document for the types of SMPs available.
- Note that "Signing Out" from an outing triggers several new requirements on the leader, most notably that an Incident Report must be filed for each participant (or leader) who signs out.
- A means to communicate with Emergency Response or the Outings Emergency Line, such as a cell phone or InReach-like device, must be carried on the outing by at least one of the leaders.
- "Report all major on-outings incidents and emergencies to Program Safety at 1-888-OUTINGS (888-688-4647) within 48 hours" added to the Emergency Response Policy. See the EMERGENCIES section below [in the updated Outings Safety Policies documented, link near the top of the page] for definitions and policies.

Angeles Chapter Safety Chair Jim Hagar has written a very thorough article on WFA requirements, training, and cost reimbursement from Angeles Chapter here:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1\\_T4xGWzJQc0OmnQ4-tud-8wtwNW1Roij/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_T4xGWzJQc0OmnQ4-tud-8wtwNW1Roij/edit).

Any questions about the new changes can be addressed to SPS Outings Chair at [gary@hbfun.org](mailto:gary@hbfun.org).

# OUTINGS

## Thinking of leading a trip or looking for info on a trip you've already decided on?

SPS Safety Chair Doug Mantle invites you to e-chat about it, get his input, flesh out your ideas—[sierradoug@icloud.com](mailto:sierradoug@icloud.com).

Most wilderness permit reservations are now made through <http://recreation.gov>. For day use permits for Desolation Wilderness, get a free permit from a local Forest Service office any time of year or at the trailhead in summer. For overnight permits year round, go to [recreation.gov](http://recreation.gov).

### INYO NATIONAL FOREST

Web site: [www.fs.usda.gov/main/inyo/home](http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/inyo/home)

All wilderness permits are reserved through <http://recreation.gov>. Follow instructions regarding permit pick up. This includes the “walk-up” permits (and you now have to pay for them!).

Eastern Sierra InterAgency Visitor Center, Lone Pine, CA  
(760) 876-6200

White Mountain Ranger Station  
Bishop, CA 93514  
(760) 873-2500

Mammoth Lakes Visitor Center  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546  
(760) 924-5500

Mono Basin Scenic Area Visitor Center, Lee Vining, CA 93541  
(760) 647-304

### KERN PLATEAU

Web site: [www.fs.usda.gov/sequoia](http://www.fs.usda.gov/sequoia)

Wilderness permits are required only for overnight stays in the Golden Trout Wilderness. For trips departing from a Sequoia National Forest trailhead, permits are free via email using the application you'll find at [https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/sequoia/passes-permits/recreation/?cid=fsbdev3\\_059517](https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/sequoia/passes-permits/recreation/?cid=fsbdev3_059517). For entry into

the Golden Trout Wilderness from Inyo NF or Sequoia/Kings Canyon NPS, make your reservation through <http://recreation.gov>.

Cannell Meadow Ranger District  
105 Whitney Road  
P.O. Box 9  
Kernville, CA 93238  
Phone: 760/376-3781  
Fax: 760/376-3795

Tule River Ranger District  
32588 Highway 190  
Springville, CA 93265  
Phone: (559) 539-2607

### YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Web site: [www.nps.gov/yose](http://www.nps.gov/yose)

Yosemite wilderness permit reservations become available by lottery twenty-four weeks in advance through <http://recreation.gov>. Any remaining reservations become available on a first-come, first-served basis after the lottery process is complete for that week's reservations up until seven days in advance. May-October walk-up unreserved permits (40% of the trailhead quota) are available on a first-come, first-served basis beginning at 11:00 a.m. on the day before the intended date at permit issuing stations. Reservations aren't needed from November through April, but permits are required. Trailhead quotas are in effect in winter. See <https://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/wildpermits.htm>. If your starting trailhead is outside Yosemite NP, obtain your permit from the land agency that manages that trailhead.

### SEQUOIA AND KINGS CANYON NP

47050 Generals Highway  
Three Rivers, CA. 93271-9599  
Phone (559) 565-3766 for permit & trail info. Fax (559) 565-4239

For general information go to [www.nps.gov/seki](http://www.nps.gov/seki). For wilderness permits go to <https://www.nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/backpacking.htm>

Up to six months in advance of your trip, permits may be reserved at <http://recreation.gov>. Permits may be self-issued outside the quota period, from roughly mid-September to mid-May.

### SIERRA NATIONAL FOREST (WESTSIDE) ENTRY

Web site: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/sierra>

Ansel Adams Wilderness—North Bass Lake Ranger District  
57003 Road 225  
North Fork, CA 93643  
Phone: (559) 887-2218

Ansel Adams Wilderness—South John Muir, Kaiser, and Dinkey Lakes Wildernesses  
Pineridge/Kings River Ranger District  
29688 Auberry Road  
Prather, CA 93651  
Phone: (559) 855-5355

See [https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/sierra/passes-permits/?cid=fsbdev7\\_018115](https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/sierra/passes-permits/?cid=fsbdev7_018115) for wilderness permit information; reservations are made at <http://recreation.gov>.

# PASSAGES

Long-time SPS member, Don Croley, died in April. Born in Denver, Colorado, Don spent portions of his childhood and youth in Denver, Indiana, and Pennsylvania (his father was from Nebraska and his mother from Denver). After undergraduate studies, he joined the U.S. Navy and later served in the reserves but did not serve in combat. While earning his doctorate in physics at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, he obtained his pilot’s license. He loved flying and proudly told stories about performing aerobatic maneuvers in small aircraft, including full loop maneuvers and stall recovery. After graduate school, he returned to Indiana for work but became unhappy and restless there.

During this period, he became involved in parachuting and earned his parachuting certification. He later took an approximately six months’ driving trip through Europe, which became one of the great adventures of his life. He rented a car and drove around solo. During that trip, especially while



## Donald Riley Croley Jr.

December 2, 1935-April 26, 2025



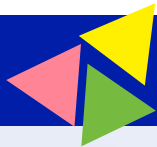
traveling through the Alps, he developed a deep love of mountain hiking and the outdoors.

A friend encouraged Don to move west, believing he would be happier there, and sometime around the late 1960s (approximately 1968–1969), Don relocated to Santa Monica, later moving to Manhattan Beach and then Hermosa Beach. He primarily worked in aerospace, ending with JPL.

Don was active in the Southern California Chamber Music Society and loved the opera and classical orchestra music. He often went to Santa Fe for the opera season there.

Flying, parachuting,  
*(Continued on p. 22)*

*Thanks to Amanda Newaira, whose father was a good friend of Don’s (he suggested that Don move to Southern California). Amanda provided most of the notes for this obituary, which have been slightly modified for our readers. Additional information was supplied by Jane Simpson and Mikki Siegel, who also provided the photos.  
-Eds*



## Mystery Peak Challenge Answer



First to try his luck was Ron Bartell (again!), but he was off a ways. He came back with the right answer: Katherine Park was on Tower Peak to take the photo, which shows Mary Lake below—but he had another miss with thinking Black Hawk Mountain was in the right background. Next to try was Daryn Dodge. After an incorrect guess, he came right back with Tower.

Then Ron had another answer: “For my final guess, I’ll say no list peaks are visible (my previous guesses assumed incorrectly that the question was “list peaks”). So, without a lot of confidence: Haystack Pk (with some snow near the top) on vertical line above the left edge of the lake: Bigelow Pk below the skyline just left of center with a little summit nipple.”

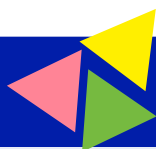
Daryn, from memory without a map, thought “Bath Lake and Slide Mountain in the back.” Then he checked a map and said Mary Lake and Saurian Crest and Keyes Peak. I nudged him about other peaks in the background, so he guessed “Bigelow Peak and Kendrick Peak are out in that direction . . . peaks I have never visited!”

Next, Ralph Wright named Tower Peak, Mary Lake, Saurian Crest, Keyes Peak, and part of Forsyth Peak.

This all was giving a co-editor a headache.

*(Continued from page 21)* hiking, and adventure remained important parts of his identity throughout his life. He briefly continued parachuting in the Long Beach area before eventually retiring from the sport. Don became SPS emblem holder #352 on June 25, 1977. He was an M-rated leader and BMTC/WTC assistant leader, as well as HPS list finisher #286 (November 10, 2010, on Frazier Mountain). Often joining the Tuesday hikes sponsored by the Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, Don was also a member of the Colorado Mountain Club, climbing with them for many years. Don hiked in Peru, after moving to So Cal. He also

ran multiple marathons and one triathlon in his life—he ran the Boulder Boulder 10K well into his seventies and then, when he could no longer run, walked as fast as he could. He was very active well into his seventies. After Don stopped hiking with HPS, he began hiking Westridge in the Santa Monica Mountains with Mikki Siegel. They had a standing date every Saturday morning before sunrise for quite a few years. With a painful back and knees, Don always showed up, no matter what, and he was already well into his 80s. He was truly an inspiration, and his motto was “you gotta keep moving.”



# Mystery Peak Challenge



This occasional just-for-fun puzzle is for you to figure out which SPS peak or peaks are featured in the image. If you have a fine mystery peak puzzle to challenge *Echo* readers, please send it to [tina@bowmanchange.com](mailto:tina@bowmanchange.com). We welcome any mountain images, including those from popular culture—imagery used and abused in film and print!

Ted Maier was a founding member of the SPS, and his son, Mark, was one of the “mascots”—see Mark’s article on page 7. Ted took this photo on an early SPS outing. Which lake is the group at, and which Sierra peak are they admiring? Other features that stand out? Thanks to Mark for providing the photo.

Send your answer to Tina Bowman at [tina@bowmanchange.com](mailto:tina@bowmanchange.com).

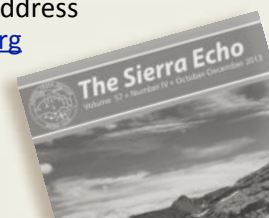
## The Sierra Echo

is a quarterly publication of the Sierra Peaks Section of the Sierra Club’s Angeles Chapter. For more information, see the back of this newsletter. All questions, copy, and photo submissions should be directed to Tina Bowman, Editor, *The Sierra Echo*, preferably via email at [tina@bowmanchange.com](mailto:tina@bowmanchange.com). The *Echo* will be available as a PDF download at the SPS website and via a link sent to all SPS members and *Echo* subscribers.



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Publication dates are Mar 15, Jun 15, Sept 15, and Dec 15. All text submissions for publication—including trip reports, articles, etc.—can be submitted in electronic format such as MS Word (preferred), Pages, email. Photos may be submitted as electronic files (jpeg, tiff, or Photoshop in a resolution high enough for print media) or submitted as prints or slides. If submissions are to be returned to you, please include a return envelope with sufficient postage. **All submissions should be sent to Tina Bowman or emailed to [tina@bowmanchange.com](mailto:tina@bowmanchange.com).**

**Deadline for all submissions is three (3) weeks prior to the publication date, i.e., Feb 22, May 25, Aug 25, and Nov 24.**

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