Chairman's Corner ——— Ted Haier

A lot of us joined the Sierra Club because we liked to hike and climb. The tremendous range of the club's trips provided a wide variety of activities for our selection and enjoyment. It has been easy to forget that the club's main purpose is conservation—we know of this purpose, of course, but there seems no compelling reason to actually participate in it or do anything about it. Far easier just to hike with a group of congenial SPSerS and enjoy the wilderness. Do we fully realize that were it not for the Sierra Club, the great park-wilderness area of the Sierra Nevada might not now be available to us?

The pressure on wilderness areas is growing every year. The evidences of the population explosion may be seen even by the younger among us, the burgeoning people creating the megalopolis of Los Angeles, the mountain roadheads overflowing with fishermen and campers, even the back country becoming less and less secluded. This growth and pressure can only become worse. If wild country is to be preserved for both those who love and appreciate it now and for the greatly increased number of people in the future who will have similar appetites, then more of the present wilderness users must make their desires known. Signing a park or forest service register at a trail head is certainly helpful in establishing the use of an area (how many of us have sometimes neglected even this little act?) but this is a piddling effort if it is all we ever do. Letter writing is probably the most effective action for the individual. The writing of even an occasional letter to an appropriate state or federal office would work wonders if indulged in by all wilderness users.

The timely letters of the present moment might be on the San Gorgonio Wild Area. If you want to keep this area for backpacking and camping, make that small effort to get off a note. A short, simple statement that you want the area kept wild, i.e., no amendment to the Wilderness Bill, is all that is needed. Appropriate people to write are Senators Thomas Kuchel and Clair Engle (Senate Office Bldg., Washington, D.C.) or Edward F. Clifford (Chief U.S., Forest Service, Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.) A statement that you'd like to see the Wilderness Bill passed at long last would also be appropriate.

THE SIERRA ECHO

Published bimonthly by the Sierra Peaks Section of the Angeles Chapter of the Sierra Club. Mailed to subscribers on even numbered months.

EDITOR: Ed Ostrenga, 705-A 9th St., Santa Monica, Calif.


SUBSCRIPTIONS: $1.00 per year. Subscribing to the "ECHO" is a requirement for active membership in the Sierra Peaks Section.

REMITTANCE: Must be sent to the 1965 SPS Treasurer, Bud Bingham, 4337 El Prieto Rd., Altadena, Calif.

NEXT COPY DEADLINE: Monday, May 27, 1963. Please type articles double spaced and mail to Ed Ostrenga, 705-A 9th St., Santa Monica, Calif.
It is of paramount importance that we exercise our Constitutional privilege in opposition to the proposed exploitation of the San Gorgonio Wilderness Area by the "Slope Dope" faction of the Skiing Brotherhood. Their organization has the sinisterly clever name of "San Gorgonio Winter Recreation and Wilderness Preservation Association" and their battle cry is "You can help open Mt. San Gorgonio". Don't fall prey to this subterfuge. The legitimate conservation organization is called "Defenders of San Gorgonio Wilderness" and they have no motto per se. However, they are dedicated as we are to keeping San G. a wilderness area. The following letter written by section member John Wedberg sums up the most important points for preservation and you may feel free to use it as a guide when writing your senators and congressmen, whose names and addresses are also listed for your convenience.

Los Angeles Times
Times Mirror Square
Los Angeles 53, Calif.

Attn: LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I read with interest the letter from Mr. Glen Binford, apparently taking the skiers' rebuttal position to Mr. Benjamin Romero's comments on preserving the San Gorgonio Wild area.

It occurs to me that, when advancing the argument for the exploitation of any wilderness region, the proponents of these commercial schemes appear to lack a view toward long-range planning. In other words, what are our limits—where do we

(Cont. Page 3)

TELEPHONE CHANGE

Barbara Lilley
(days) 646-4162
effective 4/4/63

SKIING MISHAP

Monroe Levy dislocated his shoulder skiing at June Mountain on March 30—the same day there were 40 broken legs at Mammoth. Monroe will be able to ski again in about a month—meanwhile getting lots of practice in "one arm driving."
stop? If, indeed, such persons as Mr. Binford do not envision any limits to the spread of urbanization, then their position becomes very clear: urbanize, industrialize, subdivide, develop and landscape the entire United States? If this is not their desire, then let us sit down NOW and decide which areas shall be developed and which shall remain in their natural state. Such thoughtful long range planning is apparently beyond the comprehension of either Mr. Binford, as a downhill skier, or the real power behind the San G. takeover, the commercial interests with profit motives in mind.

The arguments pro and con in this fight will center around economic objectives and the proponents for development of the area will cry, "The best use is for the MOST people." This argument is a hackneyed one with which I have no patience. One could ask what percentage of the population of Manhattan Island actually USE Central Park? Yet I am sure any New Yorker would decry its destruction, even though he may have never set foot inside its boundaries. What percentage of the population of greater Los Angeles do you suppose will attend concerts, operas, and chamber music recitals at our new Music Center? The idea that the top of Mt. San Gorgonio, where few people go, does not deserve the same thoughtful consideration as the bottom of the mountain, where many people go, reflects a gap in someone's thinking processes.

But, as I said, these are merely economic concepts, and can be argued and tossed about all night without getting down to the real meat of the whole controversy; a basic difference of philosophies. Either you keep your garden intact, not withstanding a few errant footsteps, or you ruin it by allowing the entire neighborhood to tramp through it every day. I believe what we are arguing here is not whether the garden will be ruined by the trampling neighbors but whether or not we should have a garden in the first place. I believe we should. Mr. Binford obviously believes we should not. There is the substance of this debate.

Incidentally, whether Mr. Binford realizes it or not, his view most emphatically does not represent Southern California's 250,000 skier population. His statement that, "skiers love the outdoors, too" is laughable and ridiculous. Put a chair lift in, but sans blaring juke boxes, snug motel accommodations, smoke filled bars, and warming huts, and see how many customers you get.

Mr. Binford knows perfectly well that the new crop of skiing Americans go to the slopes which feature the most bizarre night life and most promising social atmosphere. Of much more importance to these cash customers than taking a breath of invigorating mountain air or the contemplation of Nature's winter scene, is whether or not they have procured the color of stretch pants which will be "In" this season, which of the bars in the area feature the most skillfully prepared martinis, and solving the problem of lighting a cigarette while riding the windy lift.

Also, I doubt seriously if the members of the Ski Mountaineers of the Sierra Club, the Ski Patrol Association of America (especially the Mt. Baldy Ski Patrolmen), or many members of the Far West Ski Association appreciate Mr. Binford referring to them as "birdwatchers and flowerpickers."

A rebuttal to this letter would be pointless, since even if we could resolve the economic factors involved in the San Gorgonio matter, Mr. Binford's philosophy and mine would remain a million miles apart.

Very truly yours,

JOHN F. WEDBERG

(Cont. Page 4)
SAN GORGONIO (Cont.)

Write to: Senators Thomas Kuchel & Clair Engle, Senate Office Bldg., Washington, D.C.
Congressman Harry Sheppard, House Office Bldg., Washington, D.C.
Secretary Orville Freeman, Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.

(For up to date information regarding the status of the San Gorgonio controversy, and for further information to use in your letters, contact "Defenders of San Gorgonio Wilderness, P. O. Box 777, San Bernardino, California" ed.)

SIERRA PEAKS SECTION - NEW MEMBER LISTING

1. Elizabeth Anderson
   107 B Richmond Street
   China Lake, Calif.

2. George J. Tauxe
   15218 Friends St.
   Pacific Palisades
   Calif.

3. Vincent D. Arp
   Fairview Estates
   Boulder, Colo.

It is with a great deal of pleasure that we welcome this worthy trio into the Section. Elizabeth qualified with Williamson, Whitney, Ritter, McHie, Bear Creek Spire, and Mt. Morrison. George's qualifiers are Whitney, Mammoth Mountain, Williamson, Thor Peak, Carillon and Kennedy Mountain. Vincent enters the Section as an Emblem Holder by listing Matterhorn, Lyell, Ritter, Goddard, Thunderbolt, North Pal, Sill, Darwin, Brewer, Williamson and Whitney as his qualifiers. A worthy accomplishment, to say the least.

And once again, welcome!

Dave Evans, Secretary

DOCTOR CLAIMS BOWLING, GOLF USELESS SPORTS
(From Santa Monica Outlook, 12-14-62)

Attention, golfers, bowlers and tennis players! Pack up your equipment in your old kit bag and walk, run, swim.

According to Thomas K. Cureton, director of the University of Illinois Physical Fitness Laboratory, golf, bowling, tennis and squash are "interesting" sports but hardly meet today's standards.

Bowling, as exercise, "is as good as nothing and golf is the best way to spoil a good walk," Cureton told a Dental Society audience Tuesday. The best kind of workouts, Cureton said, are calisthenics, walking, running, swimming and bicycling. He asserted these physical fitness programs can "virtually prevent" heart attacks.

Henri, did you find something to hold on to up there?
I gladly take up the literary gauntlet nobly thrown in the January Echo by my good friend and fellow climber Graham Stephenson. It is Graham's contention that the true purpose of the Sierra Club to explore, enjoy and preserve is not augmented in any way by the emblem list of the Sierra Peaks Section. He further suggests that possibly the list is also rather juvenile since it fosters competitiveness among members in a sport known for its non-competitiveness and feels we should take a hard look at the prospects of possibly doing away with it altogether. I for one have never felt that I was engaged in any kind of competition with any individual on a climb save that with the mountain itself. I'm sure that many will agree that in this we find a very personal type of thing that is truly competition of the most extreme and exciting sort. Mere flesh, blood and bones against everything nature wishes to put in the book and our emblem peaks are truly the finest chapters in that book. From serene and craggy Matterhorn on the north to dark and moody Olancha on the south they repose in silent grandeur, masters of all they survey, challenging any or all to try for their lofty summits. Some have striven patiently for years climbing perhaps one a year. Others have run up and down all of them in one year; and sadly some may never get their ten. But all are keeping up a tradition now almost ten years old, not so much for the gold filled pin to wear in a cap, not to outdo a friend in a race to the top but perhaps just to be true to themselves in building a quiet confidence, knowing that by surmounting these special summits they have met and conquered the best that the mountain gods have to offer. In closing, friend Graham, I will answer your opening question, "Where to we go from here?" with the only answer possible which of course is UP, my lad, UP.

P.S. My wife agrees with you, Graham, but she typed this for me anyway!

STRAWBERRY PEAK  by Miles Brubacher

The SPS tried something new on Sunday, March 5. Strawberry Peak, in the nearby San Gabriel Mountains, was climbed, and at the same time, beginning mountaineering instruction was given the group. The turnout on the one day trip was excellent. Forty-eight people started the climb and thirty made the summit. There were half as many girls as there were boys on the trip, which is much better than usual for the SPS. Lothar Kobbig and Jerry Nimz were among those who did not get to the summit although they probably could have made it.

Instruction was given in equipment, conditioning, mountain travel, and rock scrambling. The trail started 1/2 mile from the Palmdale turnoff on the Angeles Crest highway and a small portion of the trail was the most exposed part of the climb; however, no one required a rope.

We had lunch near the water tank at the saddle between Strawberry and Josephine Peak. The trail continued around the north side of Strawberry, and it was found to be pretty badly eroded away at several points. After a little more than 1/4 mile of contouring around on the trail, we made a direct upward attack on the ridge and came out on a northern spur of the main west ridge. The remainder of the route to the summit was directly on the ridge.

The last 300 vertical feet of Strawberry is 2nd & 3rd class scrambling on good, firm rock. Arrows inscribed on the (Cont. on Page 6)
rock with green paint make the route obvious. One could not fall more than a few feet, but the slopes of the mountain fell away sharply, giving one the feeling of high places.

The day was cool and windy. In fact, it was so windy that it blew all the smog away and you could see all of L.A., Palos Verdes, the ocean and Catalina very clearly. We were truly fortunate to have such a view.

After a short siesta in the sun on the broad west slope of the summit, we descended all the way to the saddle via the west ridge. I would recommend the ridge for the ascent also, rather than the trail.

Strawberry Peak is an excellent introduction for SFS trips. It entails about 7 miles of hiking, 2600 feet of elevation gain, an interesting trail, some trailless travel, and some good rock scrambling. I am still looking for some good rock scrambling at lower elevation and with less hiking for a "first day" of mountain-climbing. Strawberry Peak is excellent for a "second day."

WINTER CLIMBING IN THE SIERRA by Tom Ross
Peak 13,150+, 13,198 & 12,707, Feb. 23-25, 1963

On the morning of Feb. 23 I left Cardinal Lodge on skis and packed into Grass Lake. The afternoon was spent finding wood and digging a snow cave above the lake. At 6:15 am the next morning the temperature was 24°F inside my snow cave and 9°F outside!

I left the campsite at 7:10 am and was at Lamarck Col at 11:45 am. It was 18°F there. I then climbed Pk. 13,150 by S.W. slopes, class 2 and then ascended Pk. 13,198 by S.E. ridgeline, Class 2 and had a fabulous view of much of the Evolution area and close at hand, Mts. Darwin and Mendel and their glaciers. The skiing back to Grass Lake was very good—in places. As high winds always blow ridges almost bare of snow I left my skis at Lamarck Col to climb these peaks.

Next morning it was quite a bit warmer, 16°F in camp. I then climbed to lower Lamarck Lake and then at largest Wonder Lake I climbed Pk. 12,707 via S.E. scree slopes—class 1 with some class 2 on summit ridge. This was a first winter ascent as there was a register there. It offers a nice view of Mt. Humphreys and its basin, also Mts. Royce and Merriam. It was 22°F on the summit. After a good ski run I arrived at my car at Cardinal Lodge at 8:15 p.m.

MOUNTAIN CLIMBING FEES GO UP
(Pasadena Star News, 2/13/63)

Nepal taxes mountain climbers like other countries tax rope—by the foot. And now the tax is going up. Energetic types who used to pay only two thousand Nepali rupees for the thrill of conquering a 25,000-foot peak will now have to cough up $395 in climbing taxes under revised government regulations. Even stumpy little mountains, under 18,000 feet, will cost a thousand rupees from now on. In the good old days, you could practice on these molehills for nothing.

About the only bargain left is Mount Everest, which anyone with courage, stamina and a rich backer, can still climb for only three thousand rupees. The new tax schedule came about because of changing tastes in mountain climbing. Like wise housewives, climbers are now searching for quality instead of size. Sheer bulk is no longer in great demand. According to Dr. C. G. Eglar, who headed a 10-member team from Holland in the Nigiri Range this autumn, the latest fashion is for...
"technically difficult" mountains. Dr. Eglar says today's sophisticated mountaineer would rather be the first man up a tricky 18,000 footer than the tenth man to climb a 25,000 foot peak, on which brawn might count for more than skill. Today's mountain climber would also like to make himself useful on the way up. It is no longer enough to climb a mountain "because it is there". Now an expedition feels it has to make research on snowflakes, glaciers or the limits of their own exhaustion. Dr. Eglar's own team included five scientists for studying the rocks and fossils of the high Himalayas. The conqueror of Everest, Sir Edmund Hillary, is also going in for smaller mountains and scientific work. On his last trip he studied the effects of altitude on the human brain. This year he will tackle a smaller but tricky peak in the shadow of Everest.

These sophisticated goings-on at lower altitudes had threatened to cut into Nepal's revenue under the old tax code. The rules charged 3,000 rupees above 25,000 feet, 2,000 rupees above 21,000 feet and 1,000 rupees above 18,000 feet. Anyone who wanted to waste his time in the lowlands at 17,999 feet was ignored by the tax collector. All this has changed. The new code calls for a three thousand rupee tax above 18,000 feet and 1,000 rupees for anything below. It also sets a minimum wage for the husky Sherpas who carry the visiting mountaineers' equipment. They will no longer be permitted to risk Everest for less than 79 cents per day.

The higher labor costs will be somewhat offset by an exemption from customs duties on tinned food, medical supplies and personal clothing and climbing kit. Mechanical climbing equipment will be taxed 10 percent.

INFLATION IS EVERYWHERE!

SNOW AND ICE PRACTICE--FEB 16-17 ---Lothar Kolbig

For this annual event about 52 members and guests gathered at Harwood Lodge Saturday afternoon and were served a most delicious chicken dinner prepared by Mary Jane Maier and her assistants.

Lothar Kolbig furnished after dinner entertainment with some of his movies of a canoe and pack trip in Canada.

Sunday morning another group of eight joined us and we all gathered at the end of the road leading to the San Antonio Ski Hut. Before we started the actual snow practice Lothar explained and demonstrated numerous details of snow and ice practices gathered from his extensive Alpine background. At the snow slopes adjacent to the hut, snow travel, self arrest and roped team work was practiced and though two ice axes were broken, valuable experience was gained.

SPS SCHEDULE OF TRIPS--JULY--OCTOBER

July 4-5-6-7 Triple Divide Pk.—Long backpack and exploratory climb—John Wedberg.

July 13-14 Middle Palisade—Joint trip with Mexican climbers—3rd class ice, snow and rock climb—Bud Bingham and Graham Stephenson.


Aug 3-4 Florence Pk.—Rainbow Mtn.—Class 2 Swiss Lake Area—John Robinson—Ted Maier.

Aug 10-11 Family Trip—Duck Lake near Mammoth Lakes—Miles Brubacher—Ron Smith.

Aug 24-25 Four Cables Pk.—Humphreys area—Dick Jali.

(Cont. p.8)
SCHEDULE OF TRIPS (cont.)

Sept 28-29 Spanish Mountain—Class 2 Moderate backpack—Andy Smatko.
Oct 5-6 Mt. Silliman—Class 2 Moderate backpack.
Oct 19-20 Tree planting with Conservation Committee—Onion Valley—Climb University Peak.

CONGRATULATIONS

Andy and Shirley Smatko are the proud parents of Andy Smatko, Jr., who was in a hurry to start hiking and climbing, and arrived in the world a month before his due date.