ECHOES FROM THE CHAIR

It is a pleasure to report to you, that the Management Committee is conducting the Section so well that the Section is operating without any known problems or difficulties. The membership seems to be content as I have not received any complaints or suggestions. It could be, however, that everyone is out climbing and do not have the time or desire to fool with administrative matters. Therefore, I will not waste any more paper, because I have to get ready for one of my "death marches".

Happy and safe climbing!  

!! ! ! THIS IS YOUR LAST ISSUE ! ! ! !

The Sierra Echo depends on and needs input from the membership: photographs, trip reports, letters, skill development articles, and announcements of interest. Without your input there will be no Echo. With the printing of this issue, a thin one, we have exhausted our supply and backlog of trip reports and photographs. If you do not contribute your input soon, we will not be able to publish the Sep-Oct issue. It's up to you. Also, perhaps you will notice that this issue lacks the "Mystery Peak" section; due to the tepid response from the readers to the questions posed in this section, we are dropping this section until we receive a positive message from ye'all.

-- Editor.

Swiss Peak to Grow to Lure Climbers

From Reuters

ZURICH, Switzerland—Local officials plan to add a few feet to a Swiss mountain spurned by climbers because it is not high enough, the Sonntagszeitung newspaper reported.

"This is not a joke at all, we are absolutely serious about this," village council president German Anthamatten told the paper.

At 3,998 meters (13,119 feet), the Flattichorn just fails to make the exclusive club of a string of higher peaks in the Valais region known as "4,000ers," such as the 4,478-meter (14,691-foot) Matterhorn.

A surprising number of mountain climbers decide against attempting the Flattichorn because it is just a few meters short of 4,000," Anthamatten told the newspaper.

He was quoted as saying his council aimed to rectify that with a $72,000 plan to add some rocks to the top to take it up those few crucial meters.

Vending machines of the Serengeti

COVER PHOTO CREDIT: Jeff Solomon took this fine picture of the Devil's Crag, a mountaineer's peak, on September 27, 1987 from North Palisade, an emblem peak. Four photograph of Sierra scenery or climbing activities can appear on the cover of the Sierra Echo! Our supply is running low! Send your photographs for consideration to Associate Editor: Jeff Solomon, 16 Silver Fir, Irvine CA 92714.
In the last few decades incredible climbs have been done on the highest mountains. All the 8000 meter summits have been reached without oxygen. "Alpine style" has become more than trendy, it is here to stay. Something may be lost by rushing a great mountain, but much may be gained, for testing limits in any field of endeavor is a heroic human characteristic. But assuming that super-climbers are no more suicidal than the rest of us, they should be aware of some of the troubles that can — but need not — befall them, and how these potentially fatal forces interact.

The story of the 1986 tragedies on K-2, where the amount of oxygen in air is very close to the limit even well acclimatized persons can survive has been told ad nauseam. Twenty-five persons reached the top; thirteen persons (seven of the summitters — and six others) died. Three were killed by rockfall or avalanche, but eleven others died from a combination of horrors. Why?

The fifty or so climbers were members of nine expeditions from as many countries. Many spoke only their native language. Most were experienced mountaineers, with a wealth of altitude experience, good supplies and equipment. They were highly skilled and very competitive. Much of the climb up and down was done unroped, often alone, using jumars on ropes fixed by their party or by someone else. They spent many weeks acclimatizing at and above 17,000 feet.

The general pattern of ascent was to make repeated sorties, higher and higher, fixing ropes and leaving supply depots: some waited at base for good weather and then 'rushed' the summit in two to five days. Others inched up from camp to camp, in conventional siege tactics. Only one summit party used oxygen; they suffered no casualties.

But all were exposed to stresses which compound each other to a degree we have only recently begun to appreciate. Leaving aside the questionable actions of some climbers, how did these stresses contribute to the tragedies?

The weather was often severe: 100 mph winds, blinding snow, and very low temperatures. No clothing, sleeping bag or tent can protect fully against such conditions. There is no water above base camp: liquids were obtained by tediously melting snow. Much of the food was dehydrated, and the rest highly concentrated. Even under the best conditions climbers are likely to be tired, cold, thirsty, and energy depleted, and on K-2 in 1986 they were, much of the time, very cold, very thirsty, and near exhaustion.

Details of each death are, and are likely to remain, unclear, but an objective review of the available data suggests that four factors affected outcomes: hypothermia (cold), hypoglycemia (hunger), dehydration (lack of water), and hypoxia (lack of oxygen). These are common, cumulative, insidious and subtle. They have disabled and killed even the experts. At great altitude they are particularly synergistic and dangerous. A fifth potential factor is altitude deterioration — from having been too long above 20,000 feet, but this is less important in an alpine style climb.

b) Hypothermia: We keep warm by 'burning' food, body stores and ultimately body tissue. When heat production cannot keep up with heat loss, hypothermia results. Extreme cold plus wind sucks heat from the body. Inhaling cold dry air, and exhaling warm wet air increases heat loss by evaporation. The higher the altitude the greater the volume of air the climber breathes and the greater the heat lost simply from breathing. Hypothermia is often called exposure and can occur even when air temperature is as high as 50°F, if there's wind and if the individual is poorly dressed or wet. This is a risk on even small mountains in rigorous weather.
As we lose heat, the body automatically decreases non-essential circulation, conserving heat for the core. Blood flow to arms and legs is reduced, thus increasing the risk of frostbite. Blood to large muscles is decreased, making them sluggish, stiff and slow to respond. Reflexes are slowed. As temperature falls, brain function is disturbed and perception, judgment, and will are impaired. When body temperature falls below 91°F shivering becomes feeble, and soon stops, thus halting an important heat-generating activity. The victim doesn’t appreciate what’s happening, doesn’t think the situation is serious, and wants only to be left alone. At this point he or she will die unless energetically treated, because he can no longer warm himself. Heat from an outside source is essential.

Because of the cold, muscles work badly, and the victim is clumsy with hands and feet. He’s more likely to fall on an easy pitch. Cool blood releases oxygen less easily, thus aggravating lack of oxygen due to altitude. Cold takes away the incentive to eat or drink, worsening dehydration and hypoglycemia.

Available evidence suggests that hypothermia was a major contributor to the death of three of the K-2 victims who halted, exhausted and unable to go on, and died. A fourth died during rescue because a rush of cold, high potassium blood from muscles to heart apparently caused irregular heart action and arrest.

**Hypoglycemia (low blood sugar).** We are all familiar with the fatigue, irritability, headache, and difficulty with complex thoughts when we are hungry. We eat to live, literally. Food fuels every activity; when we get no food we burn body sugars; when these are exhausted we burn muscle and fat. As sources of energy are depleted, everything falters and fails. The victim begins to stumble and becomes clumsy and careless. It becomes an effort to think or act coherently, and judgment is impaired. Hypoglycemia aggravates hypothermia because when the body doesn’t have enough fuel to burn, temperature falls. So we face the compounding or synergistic effect of cold plus starvation.

The scanty supplies available during the repeated storms at the high camps on K-2, together with lack of appetite which is so typical at high altitude, and reluctance to make the effort necessary to find and prepare food — all contributed to disaster. Hypoglycemia was probably a factor in the death of three of the victims and in the accidents which killed two others.

**Dehydration:** Because it’s heavy, we tend to carry too little water; it may freeze in the pack. We don’t drink enough; it takes time and effort to melt snow. As a result the blood gets thicker and moves more sluggishly. In thicker blood the red cells tend to stack up like a pile of dishes and can take up less oxygen. In the tissues they release oxygen less easily, aggravating the lack of oxygen due to altitude.

Sluggish circulation increases the risk of blood clots or thrombophlebitis and embolism, and of frostbite. If there’s too little circulating blood, then blood pressure may fall, causing fatigue, light-headedness and reluctance to make much effort. Urine becomes scanty and excretion of bicarbonate, important for acclimatization, decreases.

In short, dehydration compounds the effects of cold and hypoxia. It was definitely a major factor in the death of one man and probably played a part in the deaths of several others on K-2.

**Hypoxia:** Altitude has been blamed for many illnesses and deaths on high mountains, but even the person without obvious symptoms isn’t thinking as well as at sea level. Judgment, perception and the higher mental functions are characteristically impaired.

Though they are part of a spectrum rather than separate entities, we usually think of three forms: Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) with headache, fatigue, insomnia, shortness of breath; High Altitude Pulmonary Edema (HAPE) characterized by increasing shortness of breath, cough with pink sputum, coma and sometimes death; and High Altitude Cerebral Edema (HACE) with staggering walk, hallucinations, severe headache (usually), coma and death. These patterns of altitude illness have been well publicized and are the best known, though still not fully understood, hazards of high mountaineering.

Lack of oxygen spares no one, but some are more vulnerable than others. A person may be affected on one climb and not on another, and hypoxia alone may be the cause of disability or death. However, on the highest mountains, the synergism of hypothermia, hypoglycemia, dehydration, and hypoxia makes it difficult to determine which is most important in a given situation. Altitude hypoxia is a killer, but it seldom strikes alone.

The K-2 tragedy involved the largest number of deaths on a big mountain since 1934 when Pasang Kikuli, a great Sherpa, was one of the few survivors of the Nanga Parbat disaster which resulted from climactic events similar to those on K-2 in 1986. Scores of other climbers have died in similar circumstances. We tend to blame their deaths on altitude, because we usually don’t realize that “altitude” involves these other stresses as well.

The compounding effects are also important for the individuals working or being studied on high mountains because they often cannot avoid exposure to these multiple stresses. This makes it difficult to decide what abnormal physiology is due to what stresses, not only in well subjects, but especially in victims of altitude illnesses.

Another problem is that on high mountains, the observers are themselves affected: above 18-20,000 feet even a well acclimatized person is not fully aware of his own condition, his reflexes are a bit slowed, judgment is slightly impaired, the fine edge is off everything. Above 22,000 feet virtually everyone is affected.

No one can say with assurance how well or how impaired a climber is on the highest mountains. We have only their recollections, and most recall that they were at their limit of performance.

At about the same time as and in sharp contrast to the tragedies on K-2, two splendidly acclimatized Swiss guides, who had waited for and were blessed with calm clear weather, climbed from base to the summit of Everest in forty hours, carrying only light clothing, a handful of food, and a small stove to melt water: they got down in three hours, unscathed. This was “alpine style” at its best. They were lucky rather than wise, but their accomplishment only emphasizes what may happen when the elements are unfavorable.

K-2 1986 emphasizes more than any words how the stresses experienced on high mountains act together to cause tragedies often attributed to other causes.
MY SYMPATHETIC HEART

(A Private Trip)

by Stan Icen

It's amazing how a person's entire life can change in a split second. We can go into the wilderness for 20 years without incident, bicycle thousands of miles, and walk the streets and trails, happily unaware of our destiny.

My "split second" of destiny didn't occur on a peak, a trail, or a city street on my bicycle. It came in a doctor's office when I had just completed my first stress EKG. I thought I had done fine. I stayed on for a full 10 minutes. I was rather proud of myself. Then, the doctor, a highly recommended cardiologist, asked, "When did you have your heart attack?" My lifestyle flashed in front of my eyes. Right away, I suspected a way of life was coming to an end.

I was stunned. "What heart attack? I don't recall ever having had a heart attack." He described the symptoms for me and I honestly did not ever recall feeling them. Then he told me that 25% of all heart attacks go undetected. It was a blow to my ego. I had climbed over 400 peaks, bicycled thousands of miles, and, didn't even have high blood pressure. I was overweight and the cholesterol level could have been better.

He recommended that I have an angiogram as soon as possible. This is a procedure that requires two days of hospitalization. I went, with the attitude that there must be some mistake. Maybe, it was a faulty EKG. Maybe, they're going to find nothing wrong.

During the angiogram a dye is injected into an artery using a local anesthetic. They view the progress of the dye through X-rays, and the patient has to be awake during the whole show. They told me I had to cough at various times. The coughing helps to move the dye move, apparently. So, when they said cough, I coughed and I tried not to look at all the "living color" TV screens showing my insides. (I DID say that this was a private trip!)

Everything went fine until I was told to roll over on my left side and cough. I did and I coughed. They said cough harder. Instead, I went bye, bye. I went into a beautiful deep sleep, with beautiful dreams, and beautiful feelings. But, I don't remember what the dreams were about. I remember that I dreamed, that it was wonderful, that there was nothing to fear, that I was in good hands!
When I woke up, I saw all these friendly faces, and said, "Hi, everybody!" Then I realized where I was and saw a nurse with defibrillator paddles standing over me. I found out that I had been zapped four times with the paddles. I had only been "gone" for 30 seconds. They, then removed the catheter, put a binding on the "wound" along with a 10 pound sandbag to keep the artery from opening up. Then, they moved me to the Coronary Care Unit. I wore an oxygen mask, an intravenous tube, and about 8 electrodes taped to various parts of my chest. Somehow, I had the feeling that I wouldn't be going home the next day.

Indeed, I would be there for 5 days.

The second day my cardiologist visited me with the results of my anglogram. I had two completely blocked major arteries. Luckily, their function had been taken over by two smaller "sympathetic" arteries. Nature's bypass? I was stunned and almost passed out. Sometime in the past I had had a heart attack. It was impossible to tell when. It could have been last month or years ago. He told me that all of the peak bagging and exercising had prevented it from being a major, fatal heart attack. He also told me that the aspirin I had been taking everyday had probably saved my life! Luckily, at this point, he feels that my cholesterol problem can be treated with medicines. It was important to keep the "sympathetic" arteries from blocking.

Before I left the hospital, I was given another stress EKG. This time, after 5 days of medication, diet, and close supervision, I did better. I went 12 minutes. I also had a thallium procedure done, which takes radiation photos of the heart. This showed a large scar on the surface of the heart and that it appeared to be about a year old.

When I went home, it was Easter Vacation and, as a result, I had some time off from my teaching job. It took a while to get used to the medications. At first, I had terrifying headaches and sleepless nights. I started moderate walking and bicycling right away and this helped. And everyday, I take 10 pills in the morning, 3 at noon, 3 at dinnertime, and 2 before bed. I'm grateful. They seem to be working and the headaches have gone away.

I'm not writing this to make you feel bad. I don't want to frighten you. I don't feel frightened at all. But, I know that most peakbaggers engage in a terribly strenuous activity. I know most of us are professionals, with sometimes stressful occupations, and that we tend to be middle-aged. I also know that my doctor listened to my heart for years and said everything was fine. I didn't even have high blood pressure. I had given up drinking and smoking decades ago. There are only two ways my condition
could have become known, a stress EKG or, eventually, a
massive, possibly fatal heart attack.

In a way, it explains something I've always wondered
about. I was always a slow hiker. Regardless of
conditioning, I tended to bring up the rear. I really
believe that I have been hiking a long time with my
condition. The "sympathetic" arteries are only 1/2 to 1/4
the size of the main arteries. That means that regardless
of how hard I worked, my heart only pumped 1/2 to 1/4 the
amount of blood that I needed to my muscles, lungs, and
cells. It was like a car engine running on only a few of
its' cylinders. I find myself marveling at this and
realizing that all of those peaks made my heart stronger and
made the "sympathetic" arteries stronger also.

I still intend to hike. But, my cardiologist says that
the strenuous climbs are out of the question for now. So, I
shall limit myself to the easy to moderate local peaks until
I'm running on all cylinders. To all my friends, if you see
me on the trails, say "Hi." I feel that's where I belong.
To everyone, a stress EKG should be a mandatory part of your
yearly physical, especially if you are exercising as hard as
mountaineers must. It's been quite a trip. It's not over
yet, but my heart is sympathetic.

Mt. Goethe 9/26-27/87; Leaders:
Gerry Dunie, Scot Jamison
by Gerry Dunie

Alpine Col: everyone should climb it once -- but only once. Unfortunately
our group did it twice -- in one day!!
Saturday, we backpacked to our camp on the northeast side of Muriel Lake.
We enjoyed an afternoon of relaxing and acclimatizing, followed by a
gourmet happy hour.
Sunday, at 6:30 am, twelve climbers proceeded along the northwest side of
Muriel Lake, the west side of little Goethe Lake and the east side of
Goethe Lake to Alpine Col (12,350'). We dropped down to the south end of
Lake 11,900', then headed northwest toward Mt. Goethe by the easiest
approach possible. (Although the SPS list shows Mt. Goethe as class 1, a
significant amount of class 2 cannot be avoided.) Eleven of us reached the
top in time for lunch. Although the views are magnificent, this peak is not
frequently climbed, as evidenced by the fact that the register placed in
1963 is only two thirds full.
After lunch, with Scot leading, we generally retraced our steps to Alpine
Col. Hoping to find a less arduous way around Goethe Lake, we tried the
west side of the lake. It definitely was a case of "the grass is greener..." because it proved to be no easier and somewhat longer than the east side.
We were pelted by graupel during our last mile to our base camp. We
packed up our wet gear and headed for our cars, getting there shortly after
dark.
Round trip from Muriel Lake, the climb of Mt. Goethe involved about 7
miles and 2900' gross gain. These numbers do not reflect the true physical
effort expended. About three fourths of our journey was over "inordinate
amounts of talus." I recommend that this peak be done while in the Darwin
bench area as part of a longer trip, so that going over Alpine Col twice in
one day can be avoided.

Delores Holladay, Dan Sherman and I planned to pack in Saturday and do Goodale and Striped Sunday. We left Taboose Pass trailhead (elevation 5400) at 10:30 am, walked slowly up for five hours, eating lunch on the way. Of the several stream crossings, only the 1st one about halfway up posed problems. The trail switchbacks at the top more than shown on the map. We camped at about 9200 to 9400 (Dan’s altimeter said one thing going up, another after resetting it on Goodale) in some fine sites beneath trees just above a 300 foot waterfall.

Delores wanted us to go on to a higher campsite she’d stayed at when she did Striped and Cardinal, but she also said we didn’t need to go to the Pass (11,600) to do Goodale and Striped so Dan and I thought where we stopped was just fine. We did look at the next clump of trees up but there were no good campsites there; it would have meant another 1000 feet to go beyond that and we decided to stick with the good sites. (Actually it would be better to go on to the next sites at about 10,400, especially if a fast SPS group wanted to do Cardinal on Saturday and started backpacking in earlier than we did!) But our site was a good one, and soon there were clouds coming in and a light sprinkle of rain began about 5:30, so Dan and I were glad we had resisted Delores’ urging to go up the scree slope nearby and up the ridge to Cardinal......we went into our tents for a night of cold wind and intermittent sprinkles.

We underestimated our day and set off just after 7 a.m. When we did reach the upper campsite area, still below the pass, we looked south and could see the unnamed peak 12905 in front of Striped; heading south up the couloir, we then moved southeast, left, around the small lakes, and finally Striped came into view beyond 12905 (but the real Striped was just west of that, when we got over there later!). Now we could see a rounded bump (12,320) between Striped and Goodale, the pinnacle of Goodale (12,790) looking very third class, and to the north dark clouds were enveloping Cardinal and rolling south. Delores needed only Goodale so we headed for that first, going southeast to the lowest point between Goodale and the round bump and then heading up the southern ridge to the summit block. We found a register can on two tempting pinnacles but in typical SPS fashion it informed us that the real summit was a few feet to our left, northwest, as had been obvious anyway......we scrunched through those pinnacles and went up the rear of the summit block, which had lots of good hand and footholds. We signed in by 11 a.m. and the weather passed over.

Dan and I headed for Striped while Delores returned to camp to start packing our gear. We left Goodale at 11:20, went over the top of the round bump, got up there and spied the true summit (13,120) just beyond the majestic striped triangle peak we were heading for; it took us about two hours from Goodale. We started down again at 1:40 or so after lunch on the peak, moving cautiously down the rocks and not venturing across the snow much (we had not brought ice axes) although in fact it was too soft and we sank through when we did go on it; the couloir took much longer to go down. We reached camp and Delores at 4:00, left by 4:30 and reached the cars at 7:15. The last bit across the desert seemed endless and we never could see the car from the trail at all.......home very late after dropping Dan off in Ridgecrest.
Trip Report
Birch Mountain
May 20-21, 1988

The Birch trail roadhead is reached by turning left or west on to Crocker Street (Glacier Lodge Road) at the flashing yellow light in Big Pine. After driving 2 1/2 miles, a turn left or south onto the McMurry Meadows Road starts you on the way to the roadhead. At the left turn on to McMurry Meadows Road be sure to make a full 180 degree turn to the correct route. For a very short distance you will be driving east before turning south on the roadhead road. The roadhead road is in good condition for the first 6.1 miles (approximate) and can be traveled at 20-30 miles per hour. The last mile, reached by a right turn off the good road is a slow run featuring boulders and brush. However, a standard American passenger car handled with care can be driven to the cattle gate at approximately .9 mile. Beyond the cattle gate there is a rough spot passable only for four wheelers. Since that is only a .1 of a mile from the trailhead sign, there is no great loss of distance. However, there is very limited parking at the cattle gate. At the trailhead sign, there is parking for perhaps 6 vehicles. Since the trail follows a four wheel drive trace for nearly a mile, it would be possible to shuttle equipment to the end of the trace if a skilled driver with a four wheeler was willing. The wilderness boundary (unmarked) is at least a mile to the west of the end of the four wheel trace and presents no problem to driving to the end of the trace.

Seven of us left the trailhead (at approximately 6,800 feet) at about seven am Saturday. The day was quite nice and we struggled into camp into Birch Lake about 12:30 pm. The upper part of the trail is very accurately shown on the Split Mtn 7 1/2 metric topographic map. The map is necessary since the last mile of the trail is rather difficult to follow due to snow cover and lack of use; however, it can be followed with care to within a 1/2 mile of Birch Lake. Since it climbs above Birch Lake to get over a small bouldery ridge, you may be tempted to go cross county once you reach a level with Birch Lake. The cross country route leaves something to be desired if your party is tired. The roadhead and lower portion of the trail is shown on the Fish Springs 7 1/2 metric topographic map.

After resting in camp (camping spaces are limited, a party of eight or less is recommended), 3 of our group climbed the Thumb. Since it took five to six hours to climb, depending on when the last person returned, it is strongly recommended that only the very strongest party members attempt such a feat on the afternoon of the backpack in to base camp.

Unfortunately, a west wind came up about six pm and the evening and night until 1 am was quite uncomfortable.

We arose and began the climb of Birch at 6 am. We followed the usual route up the broad major chute on the west face which leads directly to the top. You must resist any desire to move to the right or left out the chute as the

(continued on next page)
chute will take you virtually directly to the summit. The footing in the chute was good and the climb was made on rock and loose stone. The top was reached by the 7 party members. The descent was on scree and snow. We returned to camp about 11:15 and began the backpack out at noon. The cars were reached about 3 pm. The weather was quite nice on Sunday and not too hot.

The trail could be very punishing in hot weather as it is steep in places, there is no shade whatsoever, and there is no usable water on the lower 85 percent of the trail. There is no water at the road-head, and it is very primitive.

There were three no shows:
John C. Gibba - Lancaster
Jim Hammerle - Lomita
Michelle Nuttal - not provided

The trip was led by Larry Hoak. Bruce Gubersky did an excellent job as assistant leader.

NORTH/WARREN

OCTOBER 24/25, 1987

MURPHY/GORDON

This trip was successfully carried out from its original date of two weeks earlier. Despite heavy clouds in town (LA Basin), rain, and a forecast of more, eighteen participants showed up for Warren; this being at the 9,000 foot level of the Tioga Pass road. The hiking starts at a trail about a quarter mile in-from the Tioga road. We proceeded up Warren Canyon for a half mile on trail, then set off cross country, eventually criss crossing the second stream as shown on the 15' topo. This topped out where the stream levels out and led to some meadows where two coyotes were howling loudly. From the meadow we side hilled, South, up a steep sandy slope to the obvious ridge line, then North, over and down peak 11,952'. There were a few inches of new snow here but the jaunt to the summit was easy. We lunched and had reasonable views as large white clouds billowed about in a non-threatening fashion and added a positive dimension to our day. Shortly after leaving the summit, a light, dry snow fell for awhile but that to seemed to add to the day’s enjoyment. The run down the sandy slope is one of those long fast descents that rates with the best of them. Dan Popper and Will Dargie chose not to stay for the remainder of the weekend, an available choice since this is a day hike trip. We were then joined by another person for Saturday night and Sunday. The Saturday night social turned into a huge success as we opted for the comforts of Lee Vining vs the threat of a stormy night in a campground. The party was the crown jewel of a splendid weekend and rivals the best I've had in a wilderness setting. The participants who willingly submitted themselves were: Rose Certini, Dave Dykeman, Bob Ferguson, Martha Flores, Isabell Gat, Roger Hadow, Mary Sue Miller, Tom Sexton, Hoda Shalaby, Dan Skaglund, Janet Scott, Keith Tillman, Steve (Polar Bear) Thaw, and Ray Wolfe.

The mutiny to have an earlier starting time on Sunday, lead by Asst. Leader, Nancy Gordon, was partially successful. We started for North Peak around the West side of Saddlebag Lake, then, although inadvertently, cross country to the Western and upper end of the series of lakes called Connex Lakes. (On the return, we followed a trail around the shores of the lower lakes). It takes some guesswork to determine where to go up the slope to the low point West of the peak (we started at the outlet of a lake). Upon arrival at the snow covered summit, the clouds parted and we had exceptionally clear views North and West.

JIM MURPHY
CIRQUE PEAK  June 11-12, 1988  Jerry Keating/Nancy Keating/Walt Whisman

This joint SPS-Backpacking trip offered an oft-climbed summit but, thanks to a new roadhead and route variation to camp, considerable new scenery.

Now 1 1/2 miles farther up the road, the Cottonwood Lakes roadhead is embellished with one-night camp sites for hikers, tables, modern pit toilets, a water faucet and nearby pack station. Opened in 1987, these facilities are located just above 10,000′, placing them among the Sierra’s highest developed sites.

The 16 participants followed a new trail along a gentle ridge for about a mile, then crossed the ridge and descended northerly to the South Fork of Cottonwood Creek. The new trail crosses the fork on a log, contours over a slight rise, then joins the old trail on the way to Cottonwood Lakes.

Although we didn’t find it immediately, there is an unmarked, lightly used side trail on the far side of the South Fork. It starts 100 yards past the log crossing at an obscure junction. We followed this excellent side trail for less than a mile, then climbed cross country past a tarn before rejoining the trail shortly before reaching South Forks Lakes. From there we continued on trail to Cirque Lake, which was unoccupied.

Camp was established on flat ground in the trees (11,120′) just south of the lake. The site was clean and provided an excellent panorama of Cirque Peak, New Army Pass and the tip of Mt. Langley. Although the wood supply was ample, campfires no longer are permitted in the Cottonwood Basin.

Seven participants, encouraged on by Dick Agnos, Harold McFadden and Ralph Gabiner, climbed Cirque (12,900′) Saturday afternoon via the slopes W of camp, then the peak’s S ridge.

On Sunday, Walt Whisman took three participants to the Cottonwood Lakes to see Fish and Game’s golden trout egg operation. Meanwhile, the main party descended the Cirque Lake outflow to a beautiful meadow, then continued on cross country to a section of the unmarked South Fork trail we had bypassed Saturday, thereby adding more new scenery to our itinerary. We followed the segment through meadow and forest county before finally meeting our day-old footsteps and speedily returning to the cars.

Everyone was back at the roadhead by noon, allowing time to drive to the other new roadhead in the area. It is just short of Horseshoe Meadow and also at virtually 10,000′. This roadhead also had one-night hiker campsites ($3), tables, pit toilets and faucet water. All of the roads in the area are paved, but the gain from Lone Pine is 6,300′ in 23 miles.

--Jerry Keating

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NOV 9  WED  SIERRA PEAKS

HIGH SIERRA: "RANGE OF LIGHT" by NATHAN WONG. A multi-media 3-D slide and music presentation depicting a decade of mountaineering, backpacking, skiing, including Sierra peakbagging and a journey through the seasons. Glendale Federal, Studio City. 7:30 p.m. Refreshments.
Fourteen of us met Thursday, June 23, at 0700 at the trailhead in Mineral King for a twelve hour hike (5100', 13 mi) to Big Arroyo via Glacier Pass and Black Rock Pass. Wednesday night it rained somewhat so some people got damp while others were glad to have vehicles to sleep in.

A rain shower hit us at one hour of hiking and the weather looked threatening but we decided to push on. We had four or five more showers during the day that were big enough to force us into rain clothes. At Big Arroyo we met David Russell and Don and Ursula Slager who had come in seperately several days earlier.

On Friday, we climbed Mt Kaweah via the High Sierra Trail and the forest cover on the south ridge, starting a little to the SE of the lakelet at 10640'. Two people stayed in camp, Eric climbed Lippincott and one person tuned back making thirteen to the summit. This day we also had rain showers and strong gusts of wind that made balance moves on talus blocks a bit spooky.

Saturday started bright and clear as thirteen of us started for Black Kaweah. Each hour brought more and lower clouds and by 1100 when we were at 12,900' and part way up the 3rd class chute, it started to snow. Thunder was heard, the rocks and lichen were getting slippery and all signs said turn back, which we did with unanimity. An hour later the drizzle stopped but still later the summit of Black Kaweah was in clouds. The other four members of our party attempted Lippincott and they also turned back from near the summit because of the weather. Sunday morning was clear and stayed clear for our ten hour hike back to Mineral King.

Mineral King and especially the parking lot at the trailhead has had trouble with marmots crawling into engine compartments and chewing on radiator hoses and electrical wiring. I placed a chicken wire screen beneath my car to close the engine compartment and came through ok. Others parked in other lots or were lucky. David had a radiator hose and two engine control cables chewed off. After two hours of work and some help, he was able to make sufficient repairs to drive home.

It was an interesting trip with fine people but substandard weather.

Participants were:

Jim Adler
Craig Estes
John Fisanotti
Bill Gray
Greg Gerlach
Gary Guenther

Patty Kline
Donna O'Shaughnessy
Kathy Price
Bill T Russell
Pat Russell
David Russell

Eric Shumacher
Don Slager
Ursula Slager
Brian Smith
Bob Wyka
An important grass roots effectiveness weekend at Harwood Lodge is scheduled for Fri Nov 11 evening through the afternoon of Sunday Nov 13. This event is for officers of Activity Committees and Sections.

Workshops on specific topics are being designed to help you improve your effectiveness as a Sierra Club volunteer. The program will allow for sufficient discussion time to produce meaningful results on these topics:

- Needs assessment
- Problem brainstorming
- Membership development
- Section/Committee goal setting
- Leadership development
- Section/Committee activities
- Community outreach
- Communication development
- Conservation effectiveness
- Fundraising

Our goal is to provide you with the tools for success in building your organization. Ron Mayhew, National Sierra Club grassroots effectiveness program chair is coming from Atlanta, Georgia to lead an inspirational team of workshop facilitators. Angeles Chapter team talent includes Elden Hughes, Bob Kanne, Susan Jones, Ken Horner, Steve Zetch and Alan Weaver from Sierra Club Books is coming from San Francisco.

Our hosts, the Harwood Lodge Committee is planning a gourmet menu and will take care of meals and cleanup to provide you with maximum time for attending workshops and interaction with other participants. There will be some free time and music in the evening with guitars and singalong, as well as great food and the many lodge improvements to enjoy.

The cost of $42.50 per person includes lodging for two nights at beautiful Harwood Lodge, nestled in the pines above Mt. Baldy Village, six excellent home cooked meals beginning with Friday dinner, and the reference materials for the workshops, materials that will be useful beyond the weekend experience.

Where possible, the treasury of your Section or Committee could help to pay some or all of the costs. It will be a valuable investment in your most important asset: your active people.

This will be a very positive experience for Section and Committee leadership. Your comments on the design of the program are welcome. We strongly encourage you to plan now to attend. To reserve, send check payable to Sierra Club-Angesles Chapter with two large SASE to 1610 Scott Road, Burbank, 91504.

Don Tidwell
Grassroots Effectiveness

Doug Roger
Harwood Lodge Committee
Published seven times a year by the Sierra Peaks Section (SPS) of the Sierra Club Angeles Chapter.

EDITOR: Igor Mamedalin, 24 Almond Tree Lane, Irvine CA 92715. Associate Editor: Jeff Solomon. Echo copy deadlines are the 20th day of odd numbered months and June. Priority is given to legible, typed, single spaced copy. Mail copy to Editor.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: $8.00 per year due by March 31st. Subscribing to the Echo is a requirement for active membership in the SPS. Sustaining membership is $20.00 per year. Submit new subscription applications to the section Secretary and include your Sierra Club membership number. New applications received after October 1st are credited for the subsequent year subscription. Submit renewal applications to the section Treasurer. Only one Echo subscription is necessary for multiple members of a family residing at one address.

ADVERTISEMENT: Private activity announcements and advertisements are accepted at the following rates. Private trip announcements: $1.00 for the first 4 lines and $1.00 per additional line. Other advertisements: $1.00 per line or $25.00 for a half page space.

ADDRESS CHANGES: Send address change notices and new subscription applications to the section Secretary: Ruth Armentrout, 23262 Haynes St., Canoga Park, CA 91307. The Echo is mailed via 3rd class and will not be forwarded by the post office.

MISSING ISSUES: Inquiries regarding missing issues should be addressed to the section Mailer: Carolyn West, 5000 Centinela Ave., #302, Los Angeles, CA 90066. Extra copies of the 30th Anniversary Echo are available by sending $4.50 per copy to the section Mailer.

AWARDS: Emblem and senior emblem pins ($8.50), list finisher pins ($10.00), and section patches ($2.00) are available from the section Treasurer: Al Conrad, 2311 Pickens Canyon Road, La Crescenta, CA 91214.