



Tehipite Topics

December 2008 & Vol. 54, No. 7

www.tehipite.sierraclub.org

Tehipite Chapter Annual Awards Banquet

January 31, 2009

6:00 -10:00 P.M.

Classic Catering Banquet Hall

625 Fourth Street

Old Town Clovis

“The Volunteer Underground: research and conservation in caves of the Sequoia”

by

Bill & Peri Frantz

Get ready to follow Bill and Peri Frantz into an underground wonderland, where volunteers search out the mysteries of some of the last unexplored frontiers of our planet. Much of this work is to restore the caves from past damage and to conserve our cave resources for the future. The program will be educational as well as entertaining, giving us a first-hand look at the science of caves and the positive impact of volunteers in this realm. We will see fabulous photos from many of our local caves – Crystal Sequoia, Lilburn, Hurricane Crawl, Church Cave, and the Mineral King Caves. Don't miss this chance to witness the beauty of the underground world!

Bill and Peri are widely known in the caving community for their involvement in cave research, conservation, and outstanding cave photography. Aged in their 60s and retired from the computer industry, both have been caving since the 1960s. They are members of the Cave Research Foundation (CRF) and National Speleological Society (NSS), in which Peri serves as volunteer Secretary and Treasurer. Bill is in charge of a restoration project at Lilburn Cave in Redwood Canyon. They also operate a long-term photo-monitoring project at Lava Beds National Monument in northern California.

Tickets are \$25. Make checks payable to “Tehipite Chapter Sierra Club.” Mail by January 15th to

Marcia Rasmussen
35680 Ennis Rd.
Squaw Valley, CA 93675.

Banquet facilities are handicapped accessible.

For more information, email Marcia@BigBaldy.com.

Give banquet tickets as Christmas gifts!

Name _____ Number of tickets _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Number of each entree: Pasta Primavera _____ Beef Entree _____

We plan to have a drawing for door prizes. Can you donate a prize? _____

We need a few people to volunteer for easy duties on banquet night. Would you like to help? _____

Chapter General Meeting

Bolivia: Andes to the Amazon

A digital slide show by Helen Gigliotti

Wednesday, December 17 at 7:00 pm
University of California Center
550 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno - (across from Fashion Fair)

Join Helen as we explore Bolivia, its wonders stretching from the high Andean Altiplano to the lush and wildlife-rich lowlands of the Amazon. We begin our adventure in La Paz, which, at over 11,000 feet, is the highest capital city in the world. A jumble of architecture including many fine colonial buildings, photogenic markets including the fabled Witch Doctor's Market, local indigenous women dressed in voluminous skirts and black bowler hats will await us. We then travel to the Uyuni Salt Flats, the largest salt flats in the world with its unique landscape and salt-block hotels.



See *General Meeting*, page 7

Conservation & Executive Committees

Wednesday, December 10th, at 7:00 P.M.
University of California Center, 550 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno



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Population

. open

Conservation and Executive Committee Meetings

Thursday, December 4th
Rod Webster's home, 7:00 P.M.
345 E. 20th St., Merced

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

Merced Group General Meeting Will Be the December Banquet

Saturday, Dec. 6th

"A Visit from John Muir"

Don Baldwin of Nevada City portrays the Sierra Club's famous founder, including his triumphs, passions and near tragedies. It will be an entertaining evening with not only "John Muir" in attendance, but a wide screen panoramic slide show of Muir's beloved Sierras. Six projectors and a 24-foot screen should bring the display right into our laps. The banquet will be held at UC Merced with food provided by Lakeside Caterers. The choice of entrees are Chicken Marsala or Vegetarian Strudel with Tiramisu for desert. Doors open at 6:00, dinner will be served at 6:30, and the program begins at 7:15.

Phone Rod Webster at (209) 723-4747 for tickets. Cost is \$20/general and \$10 for students.

Excellent Sierra Club Holiday Gifts

Sierra Club calendars, day planners, Christmas cards, and note cards are available. With always exceptional Sierra Club nature photography. The calendars and day planners also come in convenient postal mailers. Purchase at Merced Group banquet or phone Annette Allsup. at (209)723-5152

Outings - Please see the Tehipite and Yokuts (Modesto area) chapter listings for outings. Phone Rod Webster at (209) 723-4747 to coordinate car-pooling.



Built by Sierra Club members in 1934, this rustic, hostel-style lodge stands atop historic Donner Pass, just an hour and a half from Sacramento.

The Lodge grooms its own cross country ski and snowshoe trails, rents equipment for these activities and offers cross country ski lessons. The unbeatable location of the Lodge provides quick and easy access to the legendary Donner Summit backcountry ski terrain or any of its downhill or cross country ski resorts.

Guests enjoy excellent family style meals, a friendly staff and a casual and communal atmosphere.

See you on Donner Summit...



For more information about the Lodge or to receive a full schedule and description of Clair Tappaan programs please visit our website at www.ctl.sierraclub.org or call (800) 679-6775.



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



Bear in mind the consequences.

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

Get grizzly and JOIN Sierra Club.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Phone (____) _____

Email _____

Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!



Check enclosed. Please make payable to Sierra Club.
Please charge my: Visa Mastercard AMEX

Cardholder Name _____

Card Number _____

Exp. Date ____/____/____

Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
Special Offer	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32

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

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968 or visit our website www.sierraclub.org

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Swearingin's Position on Air Pollution

It was a fairly close race for Fresno mayor, and Ashley Swearingin has won the title and the responsibility of helping to create a cleaner San Joaquin Valley.



Although this local chapter did not endorse Swearingin, we wholeheartedly support and congratulate her. We would like to point out to all residents of the San Joaquin Valley that Swearingin has a "Clean Air, Clean Energy" platform that you can read for yourself at her website:

"Ashley4Mayor.com"

On her website she has a commendable five-point plan for clean air and clean energy where she promises to provide regional leadership to achieve federal clean air standards; make Fresno a model city for air quality and for energy efficiency and development of clean energy; ensure that our land use and transportation decisions are consistent with good environmental practices; and make Fresno an attractive place for companies that wish to develop

and commercialize clean air and clean energy technologies.

Furthermore, our new mayor puts some time lines so to speak on her goals, another commendable commitment which we will eagerly watch unfold. During her first 100 days as Mayor, she says she will propose an ordinance to give preference to

vendors that offer the most attractive air quality benefits. She says those first 100 days will see her sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization inviting their help in drafting a "green community" ordinance, including green building standards.

In those first 100 days she promises to propose an ordinance requiring that all new light-vehicle purchases be hybrids, unless hybrids are unavailable for the specific application.

Her position paper has many more points and ideas than we can address here in this newsletter. Therefore we encourage all readers to visit the website mentioned on the left and (hopefully) watch these promises unfold into action for a cleaner, healthier and more sustainable community.

"Most of the serious environmental damage being done on the planet is the result of decisions made with a limited view of the consequences. We cannot hope to know the entire picture. But all those who make the effort to educate themselves about global change will contribute to a more positive outcome."

from Navigating the Tides of Change by David La Chapelle

Holiday Gifts : Consider These Classic Books:

A Literary Legacy of Our Wild Heritage 1

By Heather Anderson

I've asked myself, "What are my most precious gifts?" After family and friends, it is the wild places of the earth. Locally, it is our Sierra Nevada. Globally, it is our little planet, gifts of color, patterns, sounds, silence, and solitude. Rachel Carson wrote that her gift to each child in the world would be an indestructible sense of wonder that would last a lifetime, as an antidote against boredom and disenchantments of later years. Thomas Moran's 19th century painting of the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone was helped establish the Yellowstone National Park in 1872. Ansel Adams' photographs of the Kings Canyon in his 1938 book *Sierra Nevada: The John Muir Trail* were a silent but effective voice. His gift of the book to President F. D. Roosevelt was partly responsible in setting aside Kings Canyon as a national park two years later.

Works of writers from Muir to Mowatt are gifts that have evoked an emotional call-to-action as they have excited, angered, saddened, or gladdened us according to their message. Here are a few titles of books that have given me hours of vicarious adventure and vistas. I have to begin with Henry David Thoreau, who tells us in his journal about his decision to go to the woods to live simply and deliberately, to learn what the woods have to teach, and not to die without having lived.

Straddling the 20th century, the two Johns, Burroughs and Muir, were contrasting contemporaries, writing about the natural world. Burroughs wrote that he did not take readers to nature to teach them a lesson (like Thoreau), but to give them a good time. About Muir, he complained that if you ask him to tell you his famous dog story, *Stickeen*, you get the whole theory of glaciation thrown in. Teale's *Wilderness World of John Muir* is a good introduction to Muir. In Muir's *Mountains of California*, you will come across my favorite little gray bird, the water ouzel, who frequents waterfalls, flits about in the spray, dips in the shallows, dives in foamy mountain streams, and sings like a lark in spring.

Years back, while raising children, I was able to read a few classics of wild places: Aldo Leopold's *Sand County Almanac*, which introduced me to ecology, and Sigurd Olsen's books, which gave me vivid pictures of canoeing in the northeast lake country wilderness and the call of the loon. Sally Carrighar gave me a new perspective as she spoke in the voices of her animals in *A Day at Beetle Rock* and *Icebound Summer*. So did Rachel Carson in *Under the Sea Wind*. Of course, Carson's major gift was *Silent Spring* which helped alert the world to its destructive use of pesticides. John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* gave a very graphic picture of tragic lives in the Dust Bowl of the 30s, and described the effects of our careless cultivation of the land.

Don't forget a few novels of varied landscapes: Willa Cather's *O Pioneers*, George Stewart's two books *Fire* and *Storm*, Ivan Doig's *This House of Sky*, and Norman MacLean's *A River Runs Through It*. And don't leave out Annie Dillard's *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, Farley Mowatt's *Never Cry Wolf*, Wendell Berry's *The Unforeseen Wilderness*, and Gary Snyder's *The Practice of the Wild*. This is just an introduction; you will have to discover them by yourself. What gifts!

An ebullient spirit of wilderness, hiker extraordinaire, and environmental activist was Bob Marshall, who helped pioneer the Forest Service to set aside wildlands as wilderness administratively, long before Howard Zahniser wrote the Wilderness Act in 1964. With Olaus Murie, Marshall co-founded the Wilderness Society. Mostly, he exalted in his strenuous hikes, carrying packs up to 85 pounds, exploring the Central Brooks Range of the Alaskan wilderness in the 1930s and, at the same time, making maps and recording scientific data, all before his early passing at 39.

Marshall's landmark *Arctic Village* describes his stay in a remote native village of Wiseman in the Brooks Range. His *Alaska Wilderness* quietly tells us of that pristine part of our planet he so ardently cherished.

See *Gifts*, page 6

From *Gifts*, page 5

T. H. Watkins, professor, photographer, passionate wilderness advocate, and editor of the American Heritage and Wilderness magazines, was another eloquent voice telling about the subtle beauty and fragility of California's desert landscape in *Time's Island*. The struggle to protect that desert culminated in the California Desert Protection Act of 1994, and the classic history of that campaign is Frank Wheat's *California Desert Miracle*. But it is *Stone Time, Southern Utah: A Portrait* and a *Meditation* where I can lose myself in his photographs of this vast dry land of layered red rock and sky.

Watkins also wrote about that great remaining wilderness in North America, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, in *Vanishing Arctic*. Debbie Miller added to that literature with her experiences in *Midnight Wilderness, Journeys in Alaska's Arctic*

National Wildlife Refuge. Could we live in a future without wilderness? Do we care enough about our wild heritage to do something about it? Would we fight to protect the fragile arctic environment from its sacrifice for cheap oil? I share Bob Marshall's hope in "the organization of spirited people who will fight for the freedom of wilderness."

It was Wallace Stegner's books that really taught me about our West. In *Beyond the Hundredth Meridian*, I could almost see the towering canyon walls and feel what John Wesley Powell must have felt as he descended the Colorado River for the first time in a wooden dory. Stegner tells about his life in *Big Rock Candy Mountain*, but his later book, *Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs*, defines the West; its aridity, harsh beauty, and destruction at our own hands. Mark Reisner's *Cadillac Desert* tells about the desert different-

ly, in terms of water. Despite being a history of the politics of water in California, it is a page-turner. Author of *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, a strident take on conservation, Edward Abbey also wrote *Desert Solitaire, A Season in the Wilderness*, "a celebration of the beauty of that harsh and hostile land."

Barry Lopez, who gave us books about wolves and the Arctic, challenges us to adopt a conservation ethic in his thin but eloquent volume, *The Rediscovery of North America*. He wrote, "If we rise in the night, sleepless, to stand at the ship's rail and gaze at the New World under the setting moon, we know we are thousands of miles from home, and that if we mean to make this a true home, we have a monumental adjustment to make, and only our companions on the ship to look to. We must turn to each other, and sense that this is possible."

Tehipite-Mineral King Social Event

By Chip Ashley

On December 5, the Mineral King and Tehipite Executive Committees enjoyed an informal social gathering at the China Garden Restaurant in Kingsburg. The gathering was arranged by Cynthia Koval of Mineral King and Gerald Vinnard, Chair of Tehipite. Tehipite Sprawl Chair John Honnette reserved the banquet room.

Mineral King members participating were Janet Wood, Chair and Treasurer; Richard Garcia, Chapter Co-Chair; Brian Newton, Conservation Co-Chair; Beverly Garcia, Membership Chair; John Kamansky, Wetlands Chair; Kim Loeb, Political Chair; Cynthia Koval, Publicity and Wilderness Chair; and Harold Wood, Global Warming Chair and newsletter editor.

Tehipite members included Gerald Vinnard, Chapter Chair; John Flaherty, Chapter Co-Chair; Bill Fjellbo,

Political Chair; Karen Hammer, Chapter Secretary; John Honnette, Sprawl Chair; Kay Honnette; John Rasmussen, Web Site Manager; Marcia Rasmussen, Banquet Chair; and Chip Ashley, newsletter co-editor.

Among other topics, we celebrated the election of Barak Obama and discussed Kings River Conservation District's plans to build a 565 megawatt gas-fire electrical generator between Selma and Parlier; PG&E's plans to build the 500 kilovolt Central California Transmission project through the Sierra foothills of Kern, Tulare, and Fresno Counties; and the high speed rail.

The gathering was friendly and fun, and all agreed that social gatherings of bordering Sierra Club groups, where topics of interest can be discussed openly and freely, are necessary and useful. They are opportunities to compare notes and ideas on how to work together to protect the natural beauty and ecosystems of our region and our world.

Outings Schedule

Outing Ratings

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

Our Tehipite Chapter Outings Co-Chairs are Carolyn Ordway (559) 449-7780 or jbord606@yahoo.com and Richard Sloan (559) 696-2971 or RiverRich1509@aol.com. Please contact them with any questions concerning our outings program. Contact the trip leader directly if you are interested in one of the listed trips.

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

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

General Meeting, from page 2

At Potosi, we chronicle the story of the richest silver mines in the world which helped finance the Spanish crown for centuries at a cost of hundreds of thousands of native lives. At Sucre, "the white city", we stroll historic streets that wind among the white-washed buildings of Bolivia's colonial gem. We visit pre-Incan ruins and the shores of fabled Lake Titicaca, the highest navigable lake in the world. Finally, we go primitive, traveling upriver to Madidi National Park in the Bolivian Amazon, a region of great biodiversity. Don't miss this journey!

December 6 - Saturday

X-C Skiing Beginners Lesson

If condition permits.. Location to be determined

Walt Taguchi (559)435-2818

December 13 - Saturday

X-C Skiing - Intermediate

If condition permits.. Location to be determined

Walt Taguchi (559)435-2818

December 20th - Saturday

X-C Skiing - Intermediate

If condition permits.. Location to be determined

Walt Taguchi (559)435-2818



Coyote Trail Snow Shoe and X-C Ski
(from Tehipite website)



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Inside *Tehipite Topics*

Chapter Banquet Coming In JanuaryCover
 Chapter Meetings 2
 Merced Group & Banquet Info..... 3
 Swearingin’s Clean Air/Energy Platform..... 4
 Literary Gifts 5
 Tehipite/MIneral King Social Event 6
 Outings 7

Deadline for *Tehipite Topics* is the second Friday of each month. Submit material to TehipiteTopics@gmail.com

Post Election Wrap Up and Reminiscence

By Bill Fjellbo

Now that the election is over what is your Political Chair going to do with all that spare time? I will put it to good use as there is a long list of hikes that I deferred taking to work on the election. On the national and state level the Sierra Club did quite well. Barak Obama won with 52% of the popular vote to John McCain’s 47% and an even larger margin in the Electoral College. As part of the campaign members of our chapter phoned fellow club members in Nevada and asked them to volunteer their time to support now President elect Obama along with donating many hours to other tasks. As I write this it has been announced that Ted Stevens has lost his bid for reelection in Alaska. He was one of the most anti-environmental members of the Senate and his defeat was a high priority for the Club. Six other new Democrats were elected to the Senate, many of whom were endorsed by the Club. In addition the Senate race in Minnesota is too close to call and will go to a recount and a run off election will be held in Georgia. On the state level Proposition 8 passed which was opposed by the Club. Locally the Tehipite Chapter endorsed Henry Perea for Mayor of Fresno. Unfortunately he was defeated by Ashley Swearingin and we look forward to working with her when she begins her term as Mayor.