

# Hundred Peaks Lookout

BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE 100 PEAKS SECTION



VOLUME XXV, NUMBER TWO

MARCH - APRIL 1988

## TOP AWARDS TO BACKUS, COLES, & KANNE



Bob Kanne, our Angeles Chapter Exec. Comm. Chair and recipient of the 1988 R. S. Fink Award.

by Patty Kline

The Hundred Peaks Section 20th Annual Awards Banquet was held on Friday evening, January 29, 1988 at Les Frères Taix Restaurant. Over one hundred and twenty people came.

This year we dedicated the banquet to Simone de Miguel, who has helped us out in so many ways over the years. She will be moving to France this Spring.

After I had a couple of Corona's, I checked out our speaker's books on the San Gabriel Mountains, and mingled during the social hour. Dinner began to be served at about 8PM.

When all the Emblem Holders and List Finishers had been acknowledged (by asking everyone to stand, and then requesting that we sit when a level we hadn't yet done was called), John Backus was the last one standing. He was the only one to have completed "The List" more than five times. But he thinks "six times is enough".



Frank Dobos got his Past-Chair pin awarded to him, according to tradition, by the incoming Chair. Then Frank announced the three top award winners.

Please see BANQUET, Page 11

### CONGRATULATIONS



### 100 PEAKS EMBLEM

Minor White	Oakzanita Pt	11/29/87	761
Anne Brende	Buckhorn Pt	10/26/87	762
Karl Brende	Buckhorn Pt	10/26/87	763
Ezra Krendel	Iron#3	12/05/87	764
Michael Kelley	Mt Hillyer	10/18/87	765
Karen Nikisher	Occidental Pk	01/03/88	766
Charles Knapke	Monument Pk	01/01/88	767
Nancy Keating	Chuckwalla	01/16/88	768

### 200 PEAKS BAR

W. Louis Breechen	White Mtn#2	11/14/87	241
Austin Stirratt	Rock Pt	12/12/87	242
Ron Jones	Bald Eagle	12/12/87	243

### LIST COMPLETION

Charlotte Bourne	Garnet Mtn	12/13/87	123
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### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



Allen Holden  
Robert Ham  
James Kilberg  
Bill Lien  
Jeremy Milne  
Kathy Price  
Dan Skaglund



### JOHN MUIR DAY

April 21, 1988 has just been designated John Muir Day. This will be the 150th Anniversary of the man the California Historical Society considers to be the "Greatest of all Californians".

Author, explorer, naturalist and agitator for the preservation of our natural treasures. Muir had a direct hand in the establishment of Yosemite, Sequoia, the Grand Canyon and many other National Parks, Forests and Monuments.

In 1892, Muir helped found and was President for life of the Sierra Club.

Helen Graziano, Environmental Education Chair, is asking us all to write to Sacramento to thank them for the passage of ACR 96, introduced by Assemblyman Robert Campbell. And to suggest that we make this observance a permanent event. It could happen with their support of companion legislation.

### HPS SOCIAL MEETINGS

#### PROGRAMS:

March 10:  
"Out of Africa"  
by Edna Erspamer

April 14:  
"The Desert, Cross-country  
Skiing and Peak Camping"  
by Dave Wyman

May 12:  
"Identifying Stars in the  
Spring-Summer Sky"  
by John Mosley

June 9:  
"The Kingdom of the  
Friendly Dragon"  
by Patty Kline

July 14:  
"Hundred Peaks Potluck"


August 11:  
"Climbing the Grand Tetons"  
by Bryce Wheeler

MEET SECOND THURSDAYS AT 7:30PM  
GRIFFITH PARK RANGER STATION  
4730 CRYSTAL SPRINGS DRIVE  
Refreshments Served

## HIKING SHORTS

### Desert Song

"come there dear with me, I'm waiting to  
show you life's sweet mystery" -ROMBERG

 Political prophets predict that 1988 will be the year of the California Desert. Three years ago, when U.S. Senator Alan Cranston first introduced his 11.5 million acre park and wilderness protection plan for the California Desert, S.7, the end looked a long way off. But there has been real progress—

✓ Representative Mel Levine introduced a House companion bill, HR 371, and enlisted 18 fellow California Representatives to co-sponsor the Desert Protection Act.

✓ Proponents of the Cranston/ Levine bill built a strong record of support during the hearings conducted by the Senate Energy Committee's Public Lands Subcommittee.

✓ Over 70 organizations joined the California Desert Protection League, and more than 200 scientists and university professors have endorsed the Cranston/ Levine bill.

✓ More than a dozen California newspapers have published favorable editorials about this bill.


During hearings last July, Subcommittee Chairman, Senator Dale Bumpers, warned opponents that he planned to move this legislation in the near future, because he believed that real harm could come to the lands if Congress delayed too long.

Bumpers is, unfortunately, all too correct. The California desert is fragile, vulnerable and exposed to continual, incremental damage every day from careless mining, use of motorcycles and dune-buggies in inappropriate areas, cattle grazing and other expanding development activities. Comprehensive, protection legislation must be enacted soon to ensure that a portion of this irreplaceable piece of America will remain forever wild and pristine.


Senator Cranston will ask the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to take up the bill very soon. This makes gaining Senator Pete Wilson's support critically important.

Senator Wilson has still not taken a position on the bill. Now is the time for us to write, call or visit Senator Wilson and urge him to support S.7. Senator Wilson needs to hear from his constituents that they support the California Desert Protection Act, that they consider this bill one of the most important conservation issues in California and that they are disappointed he has not come out in support of the bill.

### Happy Peaks

 Gee gosh! Am I embarrassed. Your Editor has just realized that he has forgotten to renew his membership in the HPS. Unless it's renewed by March 31, it will be delinquent! Ooo-nooo! Miss the really good stuff membership brings? Heroic peaks! Historic paths! Heart-pounding panoramas! Not to mention the High-tone parties! Such a deal for only \$6. To be happy peakbaggers: renew today!

### Happy Trails

 The Angeles Chapter has requested that each of its sections "Adopt a Trail" and maintain it. But your Management Committee is uncertain which path is nearest and dearest to HPS hearts (and their happy feet). We're open to any suggestions (except Interstate-5). Please call Patty Kline at 213/455-1956.

## LETTERS

### Chalk Peak

Regarding the report on Chalk Peak being unsafe due to plinkers: Yes, it is unsafe! It is in the center of a county designated plinking area. No one who values their life should hike in that area. This is a sore spot for our San Geronimo Chapter and the local residents. However, we do recognize that the Forest Service and the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department do attempt to contain plinking to that sacrifice area and prevent it in other parts of the forest. For now, until we can eliminate the plinkers, the best course is simply to avoid the area. Even cars just driving up Lytle Creek Road have had bullet holes shot through them. Wasn't Chalk Peak removed from the list fairly recently for this reason?

-LOUISE M. FRENCH

As the "great communicator", Ronald McDonald would say, "here we go again". When we got Chalk delisted seven years ago, nay sayers claimed there were safe routes up this smoggy, lethal bushwhack. A year ago, it was re-listed after a couple of trips on which everyone survived. Curiously no opposing argument was submitted. There will always be "Rambos" who get off on pouring lead into the brush on Lytle Creek. Come on, gang, let's take this turkey off the list and leave it off!

-DALE W. VAN DALSEM

### Mileage

Technically speaking: Oversized tires can cause false mileage readings. If your traveling distance does not match up with the mileage given by your peak guide don't blame John Backus...yet.

It could be the oversized tires that you installed on your vehicle for high clearance or better steering or whatever. If the periphery of your tire moves with the same revolution as the axle shaft, your odometer reading becomes less than the actual distance. Since there is not much that you can do about this, your best bet is to compare your new reading with one of the mileage check signs placed on the freeway. Your oversized tires will give you a lower reading and you will have to compensate for this. If you have any questions please don't call me.

-FRANK DOBOS

### Leadership Training

Angeles Chapter Leadership Training Lectures will take place the weekend of April 16-17 (not on April 9-10 as mentioned in the schedule). The program is open to any Sierra Club member who has participated on five hikes or weekend trips with the Sierra Club. Graduation from BMTC is not a requirement. The cost of the program is \$15.00 and includes: two days of lectures which cover all aspects of leadership training from navigation to snow and rock climbing, one copy of the informative Leader's Reference Book (which set the standard for Sierra Club leadership training programs nationwide) and an official Leader's patch for the first rating achieved by any candidate. The program will be held in Griffith Park. Scheduled speakers include: Randy Danta (LTC Chairman); Bob Kanne on Conservation (Chair of the Los Angeles Chapter Executive Committee); Bob Hicks (Safety and Administration Chair, Angeles Chapter); Bob Bradshaw on Navigation (MTC); Chuck Wilson on Rock Climbing (MTC); and Joy Faggert on First Aid (Ski Mountaineers). For information on the program, including an enrollment form and a Leadership Training Program events calendar (listing 1988 check-offs for navigation, rock and snow), please send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the LTC Registrar, Wynne Benti. The deadline for the receipt of all applications is April 1, 1988.

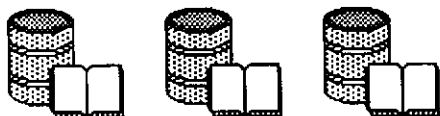
-WYNNE BENTI

### Ron Jones

One veteran club member, and very competent leader, has made his mind up to finish the HPS list. I'm talking about Ron Jones who has become our busiest outings leader. He and Lou Breechen lead great HPS weekend trips with DPS type carcampers. With the speed that they conquer peaks, the great list finishing celebration should not be too far away.

-FRANK DOBOS

## FEATURES



### THE REGISTER BOX

by Jim Adler

#### REGISTERS NEEDED:

**Antimony/ 4D:** decrepit  
**Lizard Head/ 6E:** half missing  
**Pacifico Mtn/10C:** missing  
**Roundtop/ 10H:** crummy  
**Mt. Hillyer/ 10I:** missing  
**Vetter Mtn/ 11F:** missing  
**Mt. Mooney/ 11G:** missing  
**Mt. Markham/ 12D:** missing  
**Mt. Lowe/ 12E:** missing  
**Smith Mtn/ 15B:** missing  
**Chalk Pk/ 16H:** decrepit  
**Sugarpine/ 19C:** missing  
**Hawes/ 20I:** missing  
**Delamar/ 21E:** decrepit  
**Gold/ 21H:** decrepit  
**Silver/ 21I:** beer can  
**Onyx#1/ 23G:** missing  
**Constance/ 24A:** half missing  
**Birch/ 25B:** half missing  
**Cedar/ 25C:** decrepit  
**Kitching/ 25I:** shot  
**Ryan Mtn/ 26D:** missing  
**San Ysidro Mtn/ 31I:** missing

If you are climbing any of the above peaks, please consider bringing a new register can and book. If you discover a peak which needs a new register can, please let me know by mail addressed to Jim Adler, 10726 Woodbine Street #3, Los Angeles, CA 90034, or by phone at (213) 838-0524. Also, please advise if you have replaced any of the missing or deficient registers or discover that any of the above reports are erroneous or out of date. (Since register books and pencils are so easy to carry all the time, peaks where only these are needed will not be listed.)

During the last month, two deficient registers have been reported missing and one new deficient register has been found. I also received confirmation of previous reports of relocated or replaced cans.



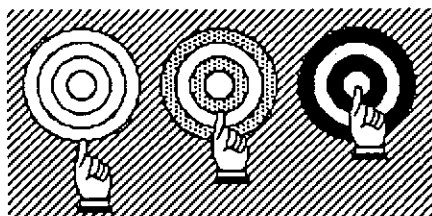
#### NEW REWARD:

No one has claimed the reward for information on the Kitching Peak register molester. I am thus raising it to two shiny new registers.

### MONEY

by Mike Sandford

BALANCE	Savings	Checking	Total
12/31/87	\$1977.03	\$ 718.33	\$2695.36
RECEIPTS			
Inventory Sales		161.50	
Banquet-1988		1440.00	
Subs/ Members		456.00	
Banquet Raffle		170.00	
Meetings		0.00	
Peak Guides		0.00	
Postage		0.00	
Interest		0.00	
TOTAL RECEIPTS	0.00	2227.50	2227.50
DISBURSEMENTS:			
Office expense		0.00	
Refunds		1162.60	
Banquet-1988		65.23	
Printing		25.00	
Banquet speaker		6.20	
Bank charges		0.00	
TOTAL RECEIPTS	0.00	1294.43	1294.43
BALANCE			
1/31/88	\$1977.03	\$1651.03	\$3628.43



### GUIDES

by John Backus

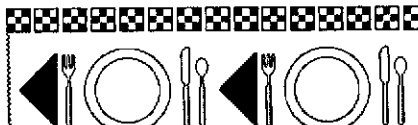
The following guides have been revised; the latest revision dates are listed.

#### Minor revisions:

**30B Sheep Mtn** C:11/29/87  
**30C Martinez Mtn** C:11/29/87  
**32D Middle Pk** C:12/23/87  
**32E Oakzanita Pk** C:12/23/87  
**32H Garnet Mtn** C:12/23/87

I expect to be doing somewhat less peak climbing from now on, so input from other climbers will be helpful to keep the guides up to date. However if you decide to send in a correction to a guide, please be sure that it is a correction to the most recent edition, not to an earlier one.

A listing of the most recent editions is given in the January-February Lookout. There is no point to making a correction to an already obsolete guide.



### PEAK AND CHEWS

#### AN HPS RESTAURANT REVIEW

When you come across a restaurant that you feel is worth comment, during your peakbagging travels, please write to us that your review may be included.

■ **VILLA BASQUE:** Take the Edwards-Rosamond exit from Highway 14, three miles west. This great Basque "all-you-can-eat" restaurant was deftly selected by Ron Jones and Lou Brecheen for a day after 200 peak dining, on their Lightner, etc. trip. A choice of entrees is offered from \$9-\$12. These include roast beef, lamb chops, chicken, sole, and veal cutlet. The roast beef, lamb chops and veal cutlet all were tried and found to be good. One diner declared the veal cutlet to be "out of sight." All the side dishes are provided family style—all you can eat. The "vegetarian" (which is not for real vegetarians as most items contain meat stocks) and costs \$6.50. The side dishes include: bread and butter (excellent), soup, pink beans (tasty, especially with hot sauce), hot sauce (very), spaghetti (ordinary), iceberg lettuce-salad (nice), pickled tongue (interesting and delicious), peas (very overcooked), and french fries. The desert choices included ice cream, sherbet or blue cheese.

—JIM ADLER

■ **RINCON NORTEÑO CAFE:** 83-011 Indio Boulevard, Indio, CA (I-10 business loop). This is a good Mexican restaurant, though it is not at all fancy. Things started with an excellent hot (both spicy and temperature wise) salsa and chips. The usual combinations (served with rice and beans) are available and run from about \$4.20 to \$4.50. The tacos (very fresh greens), burrito, relleno, and enchilada were all very good. This restaurant is definitely worth seeking out but you had better finish Rabbit early because it closes at 8:00PM Monday-Thursday and at 9:00PM Friday-Saturday.

—JIM ADLER

## As if we didn't care

I believe that some "lost" causes are the only ones worth fighting for. Once in a great while we win one. Here is one cause that must never be surrendered. The local mountains that we love include the sublime coastal range known as the Santa Monicas. They are suddenly faced with destruction— again.

The highest point of the range is the peak of magnificent Boney Ridge. It is known to us as Sandstone. It was "Satwiwa" to the Chumash and was their holy mountain. These mountains have been hallowed with the blood of Angeleno patriots in the Battles of Encino and Cahuenga Pass. Here resides much of our history, as well as most of our remaining undisturbed natural treasures. Here we first created and filmed our dreams for the world. Here hovers the soul of our city. These Santa Monicas are, and have always been, our most sacred lands.

Since 1971 when Sierra Club leader Jill Swift led the first walk on Mulholland that became the spark for the movement to "Save the Santa Monicas"— now the Santa Monicas Mountains Task Force— the Sierra Club has been the unpublicized mainstay behind the establishment (in 1978) and steady growth of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area .

Herculean efforts on the part of Jill, Margot Feuer, Dave Brown, Ron Webster, Bob Mark, Jo Kitz, Lou Levy, Milt McAuley, Jane Lewis, Sam Lutz, and so many others have kept the park alive: books have been written; trails built; and countless hikes led. Seventeen years of thankless lobbying efforts and courageous testimony before hostile boards of review have resulted in three large State Parks and many National Park Service parcels available for public use, presumably forever.

Recently the Santa Monicas have suffered badly due to the destructive anti-environmental bias of the Reagan and Deukmejian Administrations. The only real support had come from Congress. This has apparently just been withdrawn. Last minute "cost-saving" efforts have slashed the appropriations for the year. But even worse, the meddling of politically connected land speculators\* have all but killed the noble plan of a great greenbelt from Griffith Park to the sea. With it may go the dream of saving our city by lifting up its eyes to the hills.

This situation (see page five) cannot be borne. It must be rectified. But so far, very few letters of protest have been received by our local Congressmen. This silence must be but a lull before the storm of wrath. On this issue we must act together and decisively. Ask your representative to see to it that all budget language referring to the SMMNRA be repealed. Ask for an apology to the NPS staff. Ask for a supplemental appropriation of at least ten million dollars to *Save the Santa Monicas*.

We're HPS. We care. We can do no less.

—LOUIS QUIRARTE

\*see: LA Times 1/22/88 Editorial: "A Stain on the Santa Monicas"

### FROM THE CHAIR

by Patty Kline



It was a great HPS Banquet on January 29 with 120 in attendance.

John Backus was the only one standing for six list completions. At the other end of the spectrum I have yet to get my hundredth peak.

On January 17th it was supposed to happen on Santa Rosa. Remember that rainy day? I am going to wait until Spring and get my emblem on May 1st.

It will be on a trip in the Schedule led by Bridget O'Sullivan and Don Lum called "Pacífico, Granite#1 and Roundtop". Roundtop is a drive-up and it will be my Emblem Peak, along with a party. There'll be plenty of champagne and food. You're all welcome to come and make it a very large party.

A lot of us use the Santa Monicas as a conditioning area to prepare ourselves for HPS hikes. This year there has only been one million dollars appropriated for land acquisition.

This means that it will be virtually impossible to buy land. There are those ready to move in to develop wilderness areas which are much needed for inclusion in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

Please write to our Senators Pete Wilson and Alan Cranston, at the U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510. Also write to your Representative in the House. Ask them for much more in funding. It's extremely important.

## Congressional high jinks

"such fantastic tricks before high heaven as make the angels weep" - MACBETH V, III

**1** CONGRESS HAS ORDERED THE LOCAL NPS TO CEASE A "POLICY AND PRACTICE OF HARASSMENT OF LANDOWNERS". No charges of harassment had been filed and no hearings were held to determine whether harassment was actually taking place. Congress didn't even notify the local NPS before enacting the charges into law.

*This was the final blow for Deputy Superintendent Nancy Ehorn, a 14 year veteran of the NPS. She announced her resignation from the Park Service on January 21st.*

**2** CONGRESS ORDERED THE NPS TO "ADJUST" ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH LOCAL JURISDICTIONS. This has been defined to mean that the NPS should not attempt to purchase any property that local government has approved for development

*But local government cannot deny a development just on grounds that it ought to be part of a park.*

**3** CONGRESS HAS CHANGED THE MEANING OF THE LEGISLATION ESTABLISHING THE SMMNRA. Instead of permitting owners of homes existing at the time the park was established to rebuild after a fire if their house burned, now any owner of land that ever had a structure on it (even if it ceased to exist before 1978), may "rebuild" (a 4000 square foot house).

*Even if the house (or shack) belonged to an owner (or squatter) several generations back, without the park service being able to acquire the property by condemnation. We could lose critical trail connections, key portions of sensitive natural areas, and natural ridgelines.*

**4** CONGRESS HAS PROHIBITED THE NPS FROM CONDEMNING THE MURPHY DUNNE PROPERTY (it is at the crest of a 2500' peak rising 1700' above the west wall of middle Zuma canyon in the heart of the 7000 acre wilderness being acquired by the NPS in Zuma and Trancas Canyons).

*As a result one politically influential individual will get to build a house on a peak dominating lands purchased with millions of dollars of our money.*

**5** CONGRESS HAS SLASHED THE LAND ACQUISITION BUDGET TO ONE MILLION DOLLARS FOR FISCAL 1988, at a time when several major properties- including the Renaissance Faire site- are under immediate threat of devel-

opment. Some Congressmen tried to portray this cut as an economy measure. Evidence indicates otherwise. Conference committee staff were talking about \$6 million for the Santa Monicas until a few days before final adoption of the budget.

*The funding cut came at the same time as the adoption of the punitive language. No other park was cut in this way.*

**6** MOST SERIOUS OF ALL IS THE IMPRESSION THAT CONGRESS HAS WITHDRAWN ITS SUPPORT FOR THE SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS.

✓This can only reactivate and embolden the opponents of this park who came so close to getting it deauthorized in the James Watt years.

✓The Santa Monica Mountains have suddenly lost momentum. The crippling restrictions on land acquisitions, the drastically reduced funding, and the Congressional rebuke to Dan Kuehn and his staff all mean this park has lost "clout" or a sense of inevitability.

✓Willing sellers will tire of waiting and sell to subdividers.

✓Local officials will tire of "taking the heat" for special planning and zoning restrictions designed to protect a resource of national significance that Congress has apparently lost interest in protecting.

✓Restoring our position in Congress and recovering lost momentum will take time and the efforts of many people. But it won't happen unless there is a strong public outcry at what Congress has done.

✓Everyone must do their part, including each of us. Please write, wire, or phone your Congressman and both Senators.

See: March-July 1987 Chapter Schedule 244 for a complete listing of representatives per each zip code. The following are local telephones for district offices (where election year decisions are made).

### SENATORS:

Alan Cranston: 213/ 215-2186  
Pete Wilson: 213/ 209-6765

### CONGRESSMEN:

Tony Beilenson: 213/ 209-7801  
Howard Berman: 213/ 891-0543  
Mel Levine: 213/ 215-2035  
Elton Gallegly: 818/ 341-2121  
Henry Waxman: 213/ 651-1040  
Julian Dixon: 213/ 678-5424  
Carlos Moorhead: 818/ 247-8445  
Edward Roybal: 213/ 688-4870  
Matthew Martinez: 213/ 722-7731  
Glenn Anderson: 213/ 548-2251  
Augustus Hawkins: 213/ 750-0260  
Mervyn Dymally: 213/ 536-6930  
Dan Lungren: 213/ 436-9133  
Esteban Torres: 213/ 929-2711  
David Dreier: 818/ 339-9078  
Robert Dornan: 714/ 971-9292

Abstracted from the SMMTF Newsletter

## CONSERVATION

by Ruth Lee Brown

Please write letters in support of the Desert Protection Act today, even if you have already written. Write, call or visit Senator Pete Wilson and your member of Congress.

### SAMPLE LETTERS

Honorable Pete Wilson  
Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510



OR

111 Santa Monica Boulevard, #915  
Los Angeles, CA 90025

Dear Senator Wilson:

*Please support S.7, we need desert wilderness & the Desert National Park.*

OR

*Please support S.7. I support the proposed Mojave National Park and the elevation of Death Valley and Joshua Tree to National Park status*

ALSO

Be certain to mention your support for:

A 1.5 MILLION ACRE MOJAVE NATIONAL PARK

EXPANSION OF DEATH VALLEY

BY 1.3 MILLION ACRES

EXPANSION OF JOSHUA TREE

BY 245,000 ACRES

4.5 MILLION ACRES OF BLM WILDERNESS  
IN 81 AREAS

FEDERAL PROTECTION FOR  
THE INDIAN CANYONS

20,000 ACRE ADDITION TO  
RED ROCK CANYON STATE PARK

send the same letter to your Congressman,  
but call the bill H.R. 371.

Honorable ( )  
House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

### MORE MOUNTAIN LION HEARINGS

Again the Fish & Game Commission and the Department of Fish & Game are proposing sport hunting of mountain lions. A lawsuit filed by the California Mountain Coalition and the Sierra Club prevented this from happening in 1987. Please attend Commission hearings to help make sure that mountain lions are not hunted for "sport" in 1988.

April 8, 1988 at 8:00AM

City Council Chambers  
333 West Ocean Boulevard  
Long Beach, CA

WINE COOLER BOTTLE BILL, AB 612, passed the full Assembly in January. This is a bill to close the wine cooler bottle loophole in the state container recycling law. The Assembly passed it by 56 to 20, while delaying implementation until 1990. This bill, is supported by the Sierra Club.

*Support the Santa Monica Mountains!*

## Whale Pk and Granite Mtn#2

11/21-22/87

Leaders: Luella Martin,  
Carlton Shay

by Luella Martin

*"It's green, green, it's green they say  
on the far side of the hill..."*

I'd heard second hand that Alan Coles had gone up Granite from Hwy 78. I'd also heard second hand reports that the road into the mine for the southern approach to Granite was very bad. Therefore, I decided to try it from Hwy 78. The green was brush. Maris and Anna Valkass came for a desert peaks climb, they got pure HPS. Fortunately, the green was scrub oak and chamise. By day's end, Lew Amack was punctuating the air with screams. He'd worn shorts. It became evident that to trespass was better than to go back the way we'd come. I was too battered leading up, so Carleton led down the north ridge. Then with our little trespass across the desert we were back to the cars.

Lew Amack, Jim Raiford, Maris and Anna Valkass went home. The rest followed me to Blair Valley camp. I hate caravans. I counted lights behind me—five. Correct? No. That van is passing me. Where is car number five? Dave Hammond didn't know that Lew and Jim were leaving, so he followed them. He realized his error just through the wrong end of Scissors Crossing. He found us waiting for him at the entrance to Blair Valley campground.

Sunday morning dawned pink and pretty. Green grass covered the valley. It may be a very good Spring for flowers. Ice covered the cars and David's sleeping bag. The Martin and Stirratt cars were de-iced with hot water. Others tried scraping it away. By 7:00AM we were on the road to Whale. We left all the cars but Carlton's 4x4 and Bill Faulkner's Blazer by S-2. The rock hung up Carleton's car, but with a little road work we got him over it. Carlton led the way up Whale. We were on top by 10:30AM and were back to the cars at S-2 by 12:30PM. Carlton, Betty and Austin Stirratt, David Hammond and Dick Farrar went on to drive up Hot Springs Mtn. Bill Faulkner and I went home.

I appreciated the nice weather and the great group. I'm grateful for willing 4x4 drivers and for Carleton Shay's willing attitude. He didn't care if he led or swept. Which was great for me, since I was mending from a long illness and I didn't have the energy to lead the full weekend.

## Villager and Rabbit

11/27-28/87

Leaders: George Tucker,  
Frank Dobos

by George Tucker

14 Villagers headed north from the parking area 14.7 miles west of Salton City intersection at 10AM, on a clear day with a moderate temperature. We found a genuine trail leading up the toe of the ridge. Two who were not in adequate condition weakened after 3000 feet or so, but fortunately Richard Fritzen was available to help them along while the rest went ahead to locate a campsite. We reached a good ridgetop site at twilight's last gleaming. A small group diverged to a site in the trees for wind protection.

12 Wabbiteers hopped up Saturday morning at 7AM over one bump, over Villager, and on to Big Rabbit. It was another pleasant day with one band of clouds slicing straight northwest—oblivious of topography. Someone had done Villager from Clark Lake in three hours a couple of weeks before. I never did figure out why it takes six hours roundtrip between Villager and Rabbit (six miles, 3000' feet gain and loss, straight-forward ridge route). We had a pleasant lunch on Rabbit and replaced the register can.

Coming back from Rabbit, we discovered a smoldering campfire, explaining the smell detected when outbound. Someone (Al White?) had earlier mentioned poachers—a possibility. Martha Flores and helpers put it out. Fearless leader skillfully dived head-first down some rocks shortly after getting sight of camp, but declined a promising career as a diving instructor.

Whatever time we broke camp (2:30?) was too late. Richard got a head start with the slower people; the rest of us caught up halfway down as the third planet interposed itself between us and the nearest star. Bob Emerick headed off to Rosa point in the meantime. The cholla content of the boots and legs increased after dark. Pam Teichman decided she preferred to overnight on the ridge—around 2500 feet. The remaining "Dirty Dozen" went gradually far to the right (against Frank's advice), then contoured left to the trail down to the toe, found a good trail heading directly to the toe of the east-west ridge below, then headed for a light that was propitiously positioned at the parking area by persons unrelated to us. We arrived near 9PM, still warm. Bob and Pam got back the next day without incident.

Borrego Springs has one good restaurant open until 10PM, Jimbo's in the shopping center. Good Soup. OhMy-God Hot Spring was Road Warrior City, a dirtbiker hangout well into the night. Novel twist—the guy with the gyrocopter crashed while we were gone.

No one else wanted to climb Indian-head the next day, so it was cancelled. A couple of us went on our own, joined by Jim Haggarty of Thermal. Donna O. left early. We took the gentle back ridge; Donna took more direct and adventurous routes. No problems. Nice walk.

If anyone wants to lead Villager and Rabbit as a two day backpack in the future, I would emphasize preparation for return after dark, screen people better beforehand and turn them back even at the trailhead if not in shape, and be prepared to pull out cholla. Personally, I would prefer to include Rosa Point in a three day trip.

## Butterfly and Rock Pt

12/12/87

Leaders: Luella Martin,  
Jim Raiford

by Luella Martin

By 8:30AM, all fifteen of us were at the roadhead. The Stirratts drove their truck to the junction of the Rock Pt and the Butterfly Roads; the rest walked. The Stirratts were transporting the party. We had one slow hiker, and while waiting for him, I discovered that I had a group of mine-lovers. Most of the group explored both mines. The second, according to reports, leads to an air hole straight up. The first one to a cave-in. We followed the miner's route to the top of the ridge, then we found a ducted route. In the second saddle before the peak we found a second ducted route which led lower than necessary into the canyon just south of Butterfly and followed this route up to the South ridge. We soon got into extreme Class 2. One member said we needed Butterfly wings. Another suggested that he saw butterflies circling overhead. The route led off the dreaded south ridge between BRUSH and ROCK to the Backus route and the summit.

We had two new HPS hikers. For both Aaron Renn and Tom Sealese this was peak number one. For Austin Stirratt it was 199, so we started back quickly. We found the Backus route to be much easier than the second saddle mentioned above. Not too far from there I lost the ducked route. We ended up one canyon too far to the east of the mine. Bushwack. A rib of rocks kept forcing us



down instead of across. We arrived at the Stirratt's truck around 2:15PM. John Southworth signed out as he had to be home early. Tom Sealese also signed out for the cars. That left thirteen to transport and consume the party.

I followed the old road to where it ended on a new horse trail. From the place where the North ridge crosses and horse trail, we found a cut trail. We (Roy Stewart and myself) cut more brush and we ducted the route. Austin led the final push. It was partytime! Betty and Austin had lots of goodies, but it was very cool, so the party was short.

As the sun set we arrived back at the Stirratt's truck for a 38 degree PARTY. The Rock Bushmen were Cindy Okine, Aaron Renn, Ed Cokeley, Art Schain, Alan Hill, Frank James (Jesse's brother), Minor White, Kathy Banz, Betty and Austin Stirratt, Tom Sealese, John Southworth, Roy Stewart, Jim Railford and myself, the head bushperson. Thanks to all, especially to the Stirratts for the party and to Jim for the assist.

#### **Occidental Mtn 1/11/88**

**Leaders: Mike Sandford,  
Dottie Rabinowitz**

by Mike Sandford

First Annual (and maybe last) broken leg hike to Occidental Mountain and a 100 peak party for Karen Nikisher. The trip started at the "early" hour of 8:30 AM at Lloyds (in La Cañada) for an early breakfast. After a "serious" strategy meeting, off we went to (with a brief stop at the carpool point on the Angeles Crest) the turn out on the way to Mt Wilson. This was to finish a hike I started out on last year on the same date. As you might remember, I got halfway up there before I broke my leg. I decided to do the hike again on the same date with a larger group (totaling 23). As most of the trail was covered with snow we found ourselves on and off trail all the way, although there really isn't much a person could do to get lost on this hike. Because a few hikers were more laid back than others, and with the snow, the round trip took about 2-1/2 hours. After the hike we all met at the KCET transmitter (thanks to Roy Stewart) for an indoor party and tour. It took about two plus hours of champagne and pot luck dinner before we were able to finish all the great food. The weather was great with no wind and mild temperatures. Other notables were Patty Kline, Don Lum, Laura Webb, Julie Rush and Steve, Joe

Young, Frank Dobos, Ruth Lee Brown, Bobcat Thompson, Sue Palmer, Tom Neely, Sandy and Mike Baldwin, Berry, Dan and Bill. People I haven't seen in awhile were Arthur Schain and a warm welcome back to Jim and Jane Fleming.

#### **Martinez and Sheep 1/16/88**

**Leaders: Randy Danta,  
Wynne Benti**

by Wynne Benti

Saturday morning, by 6:15AM, thirteen trip participants had signed in at the roadhead on Hwy 74 across from Pinyon Flats campground, and were in their cars headed toward the Dolomite Mine. Following the HPS Peak Guide write-up, two-wheel drive cars were parked at the large parking area enroute to the mine. With everyone comfortably accommodated in the four remaining trucks, we drove the dicey dirt road down to the mine, where we parked. We were on the Cactus Spring Trail by 6:45AM.

The trail was well marked with what appeared to be fairly new signs with the word "TRAIL" emblazoned on them. In fact, in some places, there was a sign marking the trail every ten or twenty feet. We never saw a sign for Cactus Spring (or any sign of Cactus Spring!). We did ascend Martinez by the ridge on the south side of the "prominent gully" mentioned in the peak guide write-up, though the gully would have been fine for the ascent. Our group moved at a brisk pace and all were signed in on the top of Martinez by 11:10AM. One individual with a knee problem signed out and with the assistance of an "E" rated leader headed for the cars. The remaining group descended by the prominent gully and where the gully meets the wash, stopped for a half hour lunch break.

Using the peak guide write-up once again, we went to the left of the "prominent white rock ridge" and followed the contour of the ridge to the summit of Sheep. By following the contour, we lost all elevation and were able to move with relative ease through the brush-free terrain. All were signed in on the top of Sheep by 2:10PM. The descent was made by the southwest ridge directly off the summit of Sheep. We rejoined the trail about 1/2 mile below Cactus Spring and were surprised to meet with the other two participants who had signed off earlier, and were taking their time returning to the cars. Randy slowed the pace of the group to

keep everyone together. We were back at the cars by 4:45PM.

Twenty-five people had signed up for this trip, originally billed as a climb of Martinez, Sheep, Asbestos, Santa Rosa and Lookout, but most cancelled because of the weather forecast. Saturday was gorgeous with sunny, blue skies, though slightly windy. Toward the end of the day, clouds rolled in over the Santa Rosa Mountains darkening the late afternoon sky. Following Saturday's hike, seven people stayed on for Sunday. We enjoyed happy hour in the back of Ken's truck in Pinyon Flats campground. Around three in the morning, the rain started coming down and by sunrise it was raining and blowing really hard. As the last trip participants signed off the trip, the leaders also decided to make an early return to Los Angeles. Trip participants were: Austin and Betty Stirratt, Jim Murphy, Mary Sue Miller, Ken Croker, Minor White, Roy and Karen Stewart, Carleton Shay, John Strauch and Frank James. This was Mary Sue Miller's second to last Desert Peak. She will be finishing the DPS list on Old Woman Mtn in April. Thanks to everyone for a good trip.

#### **Mt Gleason, Iron Mtn#2, Fox Mtn and Condor Mtn#2 12/5/87**

**Leaders: Daniel Bleiberg,  
Jon Sheldon**

by Daniel Bleiberg

A large winter storm passed through Southern California the day and evening before our hike, but nine hardy souls were at the La Canada carpool point at 7:00AM. The best way to do all four peaks in one day is to take the Mt Gleason road to Forest Service road 3N32. In scouting the trip two weeks earlier (thanks go to Bob Wright, Carol, and Bill Hogshead for accompanying me) I discovered a new locked gate at 11.1 miles from Mill Creek Summit. This lengthened the hike from 10 miles to 14 miles and was a rude shock.

After much pleading, I was able to convince the Forest Service into giving me the key to the gate so that on the day of the scheduled hike our group could get through to the 13.1 mile mark. However, the ranger told me that this was a one-time exception. The gate was erected to keep people out of Pacoima Canyon shooting area (recently closed) northwest of Iron. The rangers do not like to give groups the key because they must change the lock the day before and after the event. It is also a hassle for the group leader who must go

to Sunland during the week to pick up and drop off the key. Future trips should just plan to do the whole 14 miles. There is room for about six to eight cars at two turnouts near the gate.

In any case, I did get the key and was determined to use it! After warning the participants that we might have to do only Fox and Condor if the dirt portion of the forest service was impassable due to the storm, we set off. To our surprise, the snow level was about 1,000 feet lower than forecast and the Gleason road was dusted with the white stuff for a few miles. But we took it slowly and reached the hike's starting point around 9:00AM. By this time the weather had cleared nicely and the day's peaks were above the clouds obscuring the Los Angeles basin.

Our group was quite strong and we made good time over to the saddle next to Condor Peak. After a brief rest, we were on the trail again and had part one of lunch on top of Fox. Soon clouds began to engulf the peak giving everyone a chill and we set off back to Condor. Shirley Akawie was kind enough to guard our day packs at the saddle while the rest of us made a quick trip up and down Condor. After moving to the north side of Condor to get out of the wind, we had part two of lunch, topped off with homemade brownies. Feeling rejuvenated by the sugar fix, we set off for Iron collecting beer cans along the way. While it was a bit cold on top, the view was quite striking as clouds would hit the south side of Iron and then dissipate. The northern sky was perfectly clear and blue!

We were back at the cars by 3:00PM. and we bid a fond farewell to those who already had Gleason and were going back to L.A. The rest of us drove to the top of Gleason and took a quick jaunt around the top. To celebrate our bagging all four peaks, we had an overflight by a private plane 300 feet above our heads on Gleason. The pilot was kind enough to wag his wings in response to our waves and after a few pictures of the fluffy clouds below us, we set off for home.

Many thanks to the participants for coming out, given the doubtful weather. The group included Deborah Kattler, Dick and Shirley Akawie, Jim Killberg, Ruth Adler, Evan Samuels, Diane Harman, Judy Ware, and Karen Leonard. Congratulations to Deborah Kattler for bagging her first peaks. Special thanks to Jon Sheldon for assisting and checking me off. A good time was had by all!

## Cajon Mtn and Sugarpine Mtn 2/3/88

Leaders: Luella Martin,  
Gordon Lindberg

by Luella Martin

It snowed down to 3800' on Tuesday, so I decided to do two lower peaks instead of the scheduled Gobbler's and Circle. We drove up Cleghorn Road from the Silverwood Lake side. We were stopped just short of the first saddle by a curve covered by icy snow. This stopped all but two 4x4's. Sixteen of us set out on foot from here. Soon we were in mud then in snow. The views from the top of Cajon Mtn were excellent. The Baldy group was dramatic with their snow cover. The can was replaced on Sugarpine by our group. The snow made for slow going so we decided to stop at two peaks. All were back at the cars by 3:50PM. From old hands like the Akawie's to the four brand new members, all agreed that it had been a very nice day. Thanks to Gordon for the assist and to Tom Moumbleau for walking ahead at times and helping me break trail.



First and only six time List Finisher, John Backus, receives an emotional ovation at 1988 HPS Banquet.

## He Sets New Mark Reaching Old Heights

by Charles Hillinger  
Times Staff Writer

GARNET MOUNTAIN, Calif.— Nuclear physicist and bassonist John Backus, 76, hiked to the top of this San Diego County peak Sunday afternoon and became the first member of the Sierra Club to climb 270 mountains— six times.

Completing the circuit has taken Backus to eight Southern California counties where he climbed mountains over 5,000 feet high, including 11,499 foot Mount San Geronio.

"Hurray for John, the mightiest mountain climber of them all," shouted one of the 17 Sierra Club "Hundred Peaksters" accompanying Backus on his final assault, the climb to this mountain's 5,680-foot summit 15 miles south of Julian.

It was one of the shortest hikes of the 270 peaks on the "Hundred Peaks" list, only one-third mile from the road, cross-

country and straight up over rocks, through snow-covered, icy slopes and dense manzanita thickets on a chilly Sunday afternoon.

Earlier in the day Backus had hiked eight miles round trip to the summit of 5,054-foot Oakzanita Peak, leaving at 8 AM in 15-degree weather. That jaunt took him four hours.

Then he drove 16 miles to scale the second mountain of the day, three miles round trip to 5,880-foot Garnet Peak, an hour's hike. (Garnet Peak and Garnet Mountain are two distinct places.)

When he finally completed his sixth time around the 270-mountain loop—meaning he had climbed 1,620 peaks—he broke into a few lines of poetry from Alice in Wonderland:

*Oh, Oysters said the carpenter  
We've had a pleasant run.*

*Shall we be going back again?...*

As is the custom with "Hundred Peaksters," there was a champagne celebration. Austin Stirratt, 66, who climbed his 200th peak Sunday, pulled a bottle from his knapsack, and hiker Charlotte Bourne, 67, who completed the list, her 270th peak also being Garnet Mountain, provided the glass. And Backus quenched his thirst.

"I would have brought along my bassoon and played a tune if I hadn't had a recent operation on my lip," apologized the mountain climbing professor who lives in Eagle Rock.

The Hundred Peak Section of the Sierra Club was the brainchild of the late Weldon Heald, a conservation writer, who compiled a list of 180 peaks over 5,000 feet in Southern California in 1945.

A person could become a "Hundred Peaker" by climbing 100 of the 180 mountains on the list. The list has grown through the years to 270 mountains.

Now, 43 years later, some 765 men and women have hiked to the top of 100 of the peaks; 240 have done 200 peaks; 123 hikers have done the complete list of 270.

Only seven men and women have gone around twice. Only three men have gone around more than three times: Backus, Dick Akawie, 63, a Santa Monica chemist, and Frank Goodykontz, 61, head of data processing for the Hacienda-La Puente School District.

During World War II Backus worked on the development of the atomic bomb at UC Berkeley. He attributes his seven cancer operations over the last 11 years to his exposure to radiation at the lab. But he doesn't let cancer interfere with his hiking.

He taught physics at USC from 1945 to



1980 and has written as many scientific papers on musical instruments as he has on physics. He has been an orchestra leader and played first bassoon for years for the El Camino Community College and Pasadena Community orchestras. He also plays kettle drums and piano and produces clarinet reeds as a hobby.

"Climbing mountains is my exercise. I love the fresh air, looking at the magnificent scenery and getting out of the smog. It keeps me young. But climbing mountains is also like hitting yourself on the head with a hammer. It feels good when you stop. It's hard work," he said with a twinkle in his eye.

Backus first began the 270-peak circuit with a climb in 1965 and finished in 1971. He completed the other circuits in 1975, 1980, 1983, and in 1986.

At a potluck party on the slopes of Garnet Mountain after his record climb, Backus said he didn't think he would try to make the loop again. But he said that after his second, third, fourth and fifth conquests of the circuit.

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### Don't Panic, Don't Sleep.

by Eddie Ferlise

The temperature was already dropping when I got separated from my ski group at 4:00 O'clock. There were 10 of us descending Jean Peak on Mt. San Jacinto, near Palm Springs. Suddenly I was alone in the forest, at 10,000 feet, trying to get off the mountain before dark, before a storm due in at midnight. By 5, I began looking for caves or boulders for shelter, just in case. I'm in trouble, I thought, feeling agitated though unable yet to accept being lost. By 5:30, I accepted the reality of having to spend the night on the mountain. Keep calm, I told myself. This is just another camp-out. Ahead was a felled log with a belly-high snowdrift beside it, and I settled for that rather than squander more energy. Under my feet the snow, icy and hard, made crunching sounds magnified by the calm silence of the forest. Let the storm be a mild one, I thought.

Darkness rapidly overtook daylight, and with it the temperature, already below freezing, fell still lower. I took off my backpack and checked my supplies; I had some extra clothing, including a second turtleneck and a vapor-barrier jacket, which I quickly put on. Now I had six layers of clothes on my torso and four on my head. A heavy plastic trash bag with holes for my arms and head became a poncho. At the bottom of the pack, because it had never been used, was an emergency bag,

containing matches, candles, a compass, a flashlight and a bag of precious dates.

The storm hit early, about 6, and with a vengeance. Snow began to fall. The wind tossed my gear haphazardly, sending me chasing after my ski gloves. No, this was no ordinary outing, I finally acknowledged. And for the first time the possibility of hypothermia and death occurred to me. Mental discipline and presence of mind, I told myself. No negative thoughts or emotions. And no accidents—no bumping my head on a low branch or spraining an ankle. Above all, don't panic, and don't sleep. Stay awake and keep the blood circulating by gathering firewood, I told myself.

Assessing the wood situation did not take long. Three feet of snow from a previous storm covered both the ground and felled trees. A few pine trees had dead branches, but that was it. I broke off several boughs from nearby trees, dumped them by my pack and set out for more. Under the felled log were some dry pine needles—my fire starter. So far, luck was with me. My matches were dry, but when I tried to light them they were immediately blown out by the hostile wind. Several times the wind teased me by letting a few needles ignite, only to blow the flame out. In the emergency bag I found a stubby candle, and its flame stayed alive long enough for the needles to catch. I placed twigs on top and, fanned by the storm, they burned long enough for big branches to catch fire. The flames danced frantically, but they did not die, and to my surprise, the fire was blazing.

Quickly, I went for more wood. The snow was knee-high in most places and thigh-high where drifts accumulated. The winds were getting fiercer, and I was taking a beating. After several trips plodding back and forth through the snow, I came back to the fire and collapsed, exhausted. I had to rest, even if it meant risking that the fire might die. And because the high altitude was dehydrating me, I needed water constantly, more than I was getting. All my gear was buried in the snow; to get to it I had to brush the snow off with my gloves. Finding my water bottle, I thawed it over the fire, drank a mouthful, then replaced the water with snow. As the night passed, the storm strengthened and the snowfall became heavier. About midnight, a plane passed overhead; my first thought was that no search plane would be out in a storm this bad. But when, moments later, a plane came from the opposite direction, my cynicism turned to hope. The

third pass persuaded me to gamble on a bonfire, using the surplus wood I'd garnered on my last few trips—an emergency supply for when I became too tired to get more. The bonfire warmed me nicely, but the gamble was a bad one. The planes must have been commercial flights flying in and out of Palm Springs. After that fiasco I couldn't trust my judgment.

By 2 in the morning, after eight hours of trudging through snow for wood, I was tiring. Eating two dates every hour or so helped, but my strength was abandoning me. On my forays into the forest my steps were getting wobbly, and breaking branches became difficult. I started putting the midsections of 15- and 20-foot branches into the flames, waiting for the fire to burn them, then taking the two end pieces outside the fire and tossing them back in.

On one wood-gathering trip, I tried to break a high branch off a poplar. I swung on it with all my weight, feet off the ground, until it broke, sending me backward into the snow. The snowfall was so heavy by then that brushing myself off seemed futile. Trudging back, I felt so sluggish that I couldn't lift my boots high enough to clear the snow. I went sprawling. Getting up was an effort. I took two more steps and went down again. This time I did not get up immediately but sat, trying to summon energy, feeling foolish for not having the strength to walk without falling. I knew that hypothermia affects one's coordination in addition to the thought process. After a dozen more falls, after losing half the wood in my arms, I made it back to the fire. Slowly I tossed the meager branches into the dying flames.

My fingers felt in vain for the extra mittens and glove liners that were supposed to be near the date bag. No surprise. The storm had already played havoc with my equipment, having buried my flashlight and water bottle. I tried melting snow in a piece of plastic, but the plastic melted, too. The only way to get water to fight off dehydration was to eat snow, which meant a further loss of body heat.

The fire was waning, and I watched it, thinking that there was time to revive it, but my body refused to move. As I mourned the loss of my equipment, my mind and emotions indulged in a gloomy mood. All I needed to do was to sit there and let the flames mesmerize me; nature would do the rest. Besides, life had not been too gentle

with me lately. Did I want to survive? Was life really worth living? Gazing into the diminishing flames, I began wondering about the huge log across from me. As the surrounding snow had melted from the fire, the log had become visible, and for some time I had been studying it, thinking that there must be some way of using the wood, but how? It was too heavy to move. The only alternative was to take the fire to it. That's possible, my weary mind informed me. Using my last two twigs as pliers, I carried a hot coal to the log and shoved it under the driest spot. After repeating the maneuver several times, I returned to my snow-covered seat. If you had built the fire on a stump, I thought, it would have burned all night and day. You should remember that the next time you die in a blizzard. Without those embers, the main fire succumbed to the snow, and the black night loomed heavy and menacing. No stars and no moon. Only the freezing, howling winds, whipping and tossing snow.

Death was beckoning, telling me how easily it would come if only I would stop resisting, if only I would lie down in the snow and let sleep overtake me. As I sat there thinking, chills overtook me, and when the shivers came, I knew that hypothermia was in the dangerous stage. About all that was left for me to do was to jump up and down to keep the blood circulating, and that I did, meditating for several minutes, then jumping up and down, repeating the routine over and over.

The outline of the forest was becoming more distinct, and I realized that dawn, minus the sun, was approaching. Trees that had provided firewood during the night looked different, more towering, the forest was a whole lot more foreboding. Snow, heavy and majestic, glided gracefully to earth, and for a time I felt uplifted, privileged that nature was sharing her noble and tranquil moments with me. Then the fierce winds raged again, and the moment was over. With the blizzard-like winds came a freezing chill that pierced through my clothing. The storm was intensifying.

Rescue helicopters could not fly in this blizzard. Nor would skiers be out in what would certainly be an avalanche alert. Death was not easy to accept, but for a moment I felt relieved. Nature had overpowered me, and I felt humbled. Stumbling to the stump, which was still emitting heat from those few hot coals, I warmed my hands and feet until the wind chased me behind a tree again. After another hour or so, I began falling

while standing—falling until I was spending more time lying on the snow than standing. With each fall, getting back on my feet became more difficult. The huge Jeffrey pine became my crutch. Breathing became a chore. The shivers were going wild, and my teeth were chattering, biting my lips and inner cheeks whenever I tried to stop them. Blood on my lower lip was already coagulated, perhaps frozen. What did it matter?

It was about 5 in the morning. Fumbling in my parka, I found my plastic whistle, my last hope, and I blew it. Every 30 minutes or so I blew on the whistle until my energy failed me.

About 9, on the morning of March 16, 1986, U.S. Forest Service rangers and Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit members found Ferlise, conscious but suffering from first-stage hypothermia.

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Thanks to Eddie Ferlise for allowing the reprinting of this article and thanks to Ruth Adler for doing all the work necessary to gain its approval.

### **Mysterious plant blight killing off more brush**

by T. W. McGarry  
*Times Staff Writer*

The chaparral-covered hills of Southern California appear to be lush with greenery, nourished by unseasonal autumn rains.

That should be good news for firefighters and forest researchers worried by the mysterious "dieback" that has been killing brush on the mountainsides for the last three years.

Instead, it's bad news.

Because the die-back was blamed, in part, on four years of drought, precipitation was expected to ease the problem. But researchers now believe the warm rains actually fueled the fungus that causes the plant blight, making the situation even worse. The die-back, which appeared to have peaked more than a year ago, has now shifted into second gear, ravaging what remains of brushy areas depleted by the first round.

"In some areas of the Santa Monica Mountains, the die-back is approaching 50% or more," said Los Angeles County Fire Capt. Scott Franklin, coordinator of vegetation management.

"We don't have a firm count, but a conservative estimate would be that it has already killed about 15% to 20% of the brush in Southern California, he said.

"If these were trees instead of brush—things like redwoods that people get emotional about—the public would be

going crazy," remarked Philip J. Riggan, a U.S. Forest Service Scientist, one of the leading researchers into the die-back phenomenon.

Indeed, Riggan says, there is concern that the problem may be spreading to ornamental trees and shrubs in the yards of foothill residents—and that it could endanger prized oak trees.

But the focus of the research now is how to stop the mysterious die-back from killing off thousands of acres of brush—greatly increasing the danger of brush fires.

The problem is that the dead, tinder-dry brush provides "tons of additional fuel per acre in a brush fire," said Capt. Ron Mathis, superintendent of a county firefighters camp in La Cañada Flintridge as he recently surveyed a hillside in the San Gabriel Mountains with Franklin and Riggan.

Dead brush burns more readily, as well as hotter and faster, than live brush. The swifter burning rate increases the danger that a blaze will flare into a populated area or that an eruption of flames will trap firefighters, injuring or killing them, said David R. Neff, regional resources program manager for the Department of Forestry.

Instruments placed in the path of fires in areas devastated by die-back showed that soil temperatures reached levels as high as 1,200 degrees, twice as hot as temperatures in burning areas with mostly live vegetation, Franklin said.

Higher temperatures do more damage to topsoil and chaparral seeds, worsening soil erosion and mud slide problems and making it more difficult for the burned over area to recover.

Especially worrisome for firefighters is the loss of ceanothus, also called wild lilac, a widespread shrub that has been one of the chief victims of the die-back. Healthy wild lilac has a high moisture content and resists burning, forming a natural fire damper.

"The die-back, first seen in the San Gabriel Mountains in 1984 and then in the Santa Monicas in 1985, is evident throughout Southern California," Neff said.

"Now we find it in Santa Barbara County—up around Lake Casitas is the northernmost reach—and south to Temecula in San Diego County and eastward into Riverside County," Neff said.

In June, 1985, at the request of die-back researchers, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration flew an ER-2 reconnaissance plane—a civilian version of a U-2 spy aircraft—over Southern California at 60,000 feet, photographing the

extent of the blight.

Researchers say they still do not understand the origin of the die-back. It does not seem to have a single cause, but is the result of several interacting factors, perhaps including some that are not yet known, they say.

One of the factors appears to be the fungus- *botryosphaeria ribis*- which was identified by state researchers in 1986 and has been found in wild lilac in die-back areas. But the fungus alone does not seem to cause the die-back, Riggan said. It appears to be common throughout the chaparral area, but otherwise healthy plants usually resist it, he said. One theory is that the heavy rains of 1982 and even heavier storms of 1983- the year the El Niño condition in the Pacific Ocean sent a series of destructive downpours through Southern California- encouraged the chaparral to grow larger, or faster, than normal.

"They just grew like crazy after those storms in '83," Franklin said.

But the overextended shrubs had trouble surviving in the drought that began

in 1984 because the excessively large root systems could not find enough moisture in the soil. The weakened shrubs were then finished off by the fungus, Riggan and others theorize.

Riggan also suspects air pollution is involved because shrubs in areas with high pollution levels are more susceptible to the blight, but he said he does not have enough data to prove the point.

If lack of water was the trigger for the epidemic, however, the recent rains should have fortified the chaparral, easing the problem.

"But when we checked, we found it was spreading again, faster than before, which seems to fly in the face of the drought idea," Franklin said.

It seems clear by now that the rain has been causing the die-back to spread, Franklin and Riggan agreed. "The die-back is appearing in large areas that resisted it before", Franklin said.

Why, they don't know.

Franklin speculated that the rainfall was warmer than later winter rains, and that the warmth may have caused the fungus

to spread.

One of the most vexing questions for researchers is whether the blight is unprecedented or if it has happened before. Neff said state researchers and consultants with more than 30 years experience, "people who have spent all their lives observing the chaparral, have simply never seen anything like it."

Riggan said he has found nothing like it in scientific literature, noting "there are clues that maybe this has happened before, but the researchers didn't recognize it. "Years ago," he said, "they used to believe that the chaparral just had a short life span, which we know now isn't necessarily true."

Researchers have no idea what to do to combat the blight, he said.

"This is a whole natural ecosystem. Unlike the forests up north, which have been cut over by loggers, sometimes many times, this system is the way nature made it. And it's just vanishing before our eyes."

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## Banquet

Continued from Page 1

The R. S. FINK SERVICE AWARD, for contributions to the section, took the Chapter Executive Committee Chair, Bob Kanne, by complete surprise.

Then Frank announced that henceforth our Leadership Award will be called the JOHN BACKUS LEADERSHIP AWARD. This year it went to Alan Coles- who was scouting a trip and couldn't be with us.

Finally, the coveted SPECIAL AWARD went to John Backus for all the work he has done on our Mountain Records, and for the inspiration he has provided us.

Neither winner chose to speak beyond saying a quick "thank you", amid our sustained applause.

Before intermission, Frank conducted the raffle and gave out the door prizes..

At 10PM, the slide program began with photographer Roy Murphy showing us some of his beautiful slides of scenes in the San Gabriel Mountains. I never realized that they could be so beautiful. I have taken them a bit for granted, having seen them since childhood.

Lastly, I must add that Roy very generously contributed 15% from the sale of each one of his books to the HPS. (seven books were sold, so that means \$70.00 to our treasury). Thank you.

At 11PM the 1988 Banquet program was over, much too soon, and it was time for us all to part till next year.

Thanks to everybody for a really great evening.



Julie Rush, Joe Young and Sue Palmer funny-nose about at the Banquet. No prizes were given in this category.

## Banquet Raffle and Door Prize Winners

### SPORT CHALET- LA CANADA:

*Wilderness Adventure Day Pack-*  
Roy Stewart, Tom Armbruster.

*\$25 gift certificate-*  
Tom Neely.

*License plate holder-*  
Ron Jones, Jon Petiljean.  
Hazel Goodykontz, Mike Sandford.

### BOB CATES:

*"Joshua Tree National Monument"*  
Roy Young, Bob Thompson.

### REI- SAN DIMAS:

*Jones Sunglasses-*  
Bob Thompson.

*\$20 gift certificate-*  
Alice Carlson.

*\$10 gift certificate-*  
Karen Niklsheer.

### MAPS ETC.- CANOGA PARK:

*"An Island Called California"*  
Bill Brockman, Jacques Brosseau.  
Ruth Lee Brown.

### PATTY KLINE:

*Original framed photography-*  
Les Reid, Roy Young.

# OUTINGS

by Micky Thayer

As your new Vice-Chair, I am also your Outings Chair. It is my responsibility to check your trip writeups, and see that they are written in the proper format before sending them on to Dick Akawie for inclusion in the Chapter Schedule. This printing of the "EXAMPLE SCHEDULE

WRITEUP", last revised by Dick Akawie, may be old hat to a lot of you, but hopefully this may help our newer leaders.

I will also be responsible for the safety of our outings, and I will need your help with this. First, all outings need to be led consistent with the directives of the

Chapter Safety Committee. Second, please report to me, as soon as possible, any problem you may have had during an outing (refer to Section II 3-14 of your Leader's Reference Book). Third, and most important of all, THINK SAFETY. *Happy Hiking!*

## EXAMPLE SCHEDULE WRITEUP

Your writeup must be submitted to your Sponsoring Group Outings Chair (send to Micky Thayer for HPS). A duplicate copy is recommended. Your writeup should include all the information your prospective participant will need to know in order to sign up without telephoning you. If that would make the writeup overlong, give basic information and request, "Send sase for detailed information", or write "phone Leader for more information". The Schedule uses 90 letter spaces. Set your typewriter for 45 letters and treat each line as half a Schedule line.

- (1) JUN 17-19 FRI-SUN HPS
- (2) Q: Emerald Lake/Pear Lake, Sequoia Natl Park: (9)
- (3) Leave Fri night by bus. Sat hike 5 mi on good (4)
- (12) trail through a very beautiful area to campsite. (10)
- Total gain 2500'. Return to LA Sun around
- (14) 10 pm. Beginners welcome. Reserve early. Group
- (6) limited to 20 people. Send check for \$20 mem,
- (7) \$22 non-mem, payable to HPS and 3 sase to (13)
- (6) Leader: TOM SKIER. Asst: JOHN HIKER. (6)

- (1) Date and section heading, ALL CAPITALS- month is three letters only. If there are joint sponsors, separate by a dash.
- (2) Level of technical certification: C, O, I, M, E, T.
- (3) Underline title that is to be in bold face type, including (2).
- (4) For all hiking and biking events, give distance, elevation change and general statement of difficulty.
- (5) Double space or triple space all lines. ONLY ONE WRITEUP PER PAGE AND ONLY 8 1/2 "X 11" PAPER.
- (6) Reservation information possibly including deadlines, space limitation, experience, deposit and check payable, sase, H (home) and W (work) phones, carpool information, rain cancels, S.C. (Sierra Club) number. If participants are to meet at a carpool point or trailhead, be sure to give a detailed location and time of meeting.
- (7) All checks payable to sponsor group, or first named sponsor entity.
- (8) Names of leader and assistant, ALL CAPITALS.
- (9) Never use apostrophies to indicate an abbreviation or contraction, use "natl" not "nat'l" for "national".
- (10) Never use periods after abbreviations, use "LA" not "L. A." for "Los Angeles".
- (11) Never use a hyphen in the word "writeup".
- (12) Never use "thru" for the word "through", or "lite" for "light", or "nite" for "night".
- (13) Never use all capitals to abbreviate "self-addressed stamped envelope", use "sase" not "SASE".
- (14) On the hour is 8 am, other is 8:15 am, or 7:30 pm.
- (15) Map directions use one letter only: E, W, N, S, R, L.

### MAXIMUM LENGTH OF WRITEUP (Does not include DATE/ SECTION HEADING LINE (1))

1 day	360 spaces	8 lines of 45 spaces
2 days	450 spaces	10 lines of 45 spaces
3 or more days	630 spaces	14 lines of 45 spaces

### LEADERS NOT IN PREVIOUS SCHEDULE or ADDRESS CHANGE:

submit two typed, 3" x 5" cards with last name first, address and phone number (work phone if desired)

Revised 1986 Winters/ Akawie (Destroy all prior copies)