

R47 3797

# MUGELNOOS

MAY 17, 1994

Number 711



MARGY'S HUT, COLORADO MARCH 1994

## THE TENTH MOUNTAIN — YESTERDAY AND TODAY

Anne Wright

My husband Bob is the skier in the family; I'm a trekker. A number of years ago, we recognized that ski touring was the activity best suited to our preferences. But those fifty pound packs; blizzards weathered in a wet tent; and malfunctioning stoves all took their toll. Then we discovered hut skiing. Although there are some huts in the Sierra that make excellent base camps, the closest thing to an alpine hut system that we could find was the one built and maintained by the Tenth Mountain Division Hut Association in Colorado. After careful research, we made reservations for the classic, six day Vail to Aspen trip with Paragon Guides - a local guide service that stocks the huts with staples and sleeping bags in the summer. We would only have to carry about thirty-five pounds of personal gear and fresh food; better yet, they would make our hut reservations, carry emergency equipment, and cook for us.

Cont pg 3.

**THE MUGELNOOS** IS A NEWSHEET PUBLISHED BY AND FOR THE SKI MOUNTAINEERS AND ROCK CLIMBING SECTIONS OF THE SIERRA CLUB'S ANGELES CHAPTER SINCE 1938. SEND SUBSCRIPTIONS AND ADDRESS CHANGES TO: PAT HOLLEMAN, 1638 6TH ST., MANHATTAN BEACH, CA. 90266. \$7 PER YEAR DUE IN OCTOBER. SUBSCRIPTION PAYMENTS ARE NOT TAX DEDUCTIBLE AS CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS.

**MUGELNOOS STAFF**

EDITOR ANDY FRIED  
 MUGELPRINTER ANDY FRIED  
 MUGELMAILER PAT HOLLEMAN

**NEXT MEETING**

FALL 1994 7:30 PM GRIFFITH PARK RANGER STATION AUDITORIUM 4730 CRYSTAL SPRINGS DRIVE, LOS ANGELES, CA.

**NEXT ISSUE: OCT. 10, 1994**

ISSUE DEADLINE Oct. 3, 1994 ALL PHOTOS, SLIDES, AND ARTICLES (TYPED OR 5 1/4 " DISKS WP OR ASCII) SHOULD BE SENT TO: ANDY FRIED, MUGELNOOS EDITOR, c/o TEC GROUP 10727 WHITE OAK AVE. SUITE #205, GRANADA HILLS, CA 91344. IF YOU WISH TO HAVE PHOTOS RETURNED AFTER PUBLICATION INCLUDE A SELF ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE. WE ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST PHOTOS.

**UPCOMING TRIPS:**

Date	Location	Leaders / Program
May 17	Griffith Park Ranger Station	Members' Favorite Slides"
May 21-22	Cloudripper Peak, Inconsolable Range	O. Maloy/T. Marsh
May 21-22	Basin Couloir and Who Knows?	Craig Dostie / N. Gordon
May 28-30	Ritter Range Ski Camp	Reiner Stenzel / Eddie Nunez
Jun 4-5	Rock Creek	Reiner Stenzel /Pete Matulavich
Jun 25-26	Mount Baldy Bash, San Antonio Ski Hut	Gordon /C.Comm.

**Summer Diversions**

Plans are currently underway at Mammoth Mountain for the addition of an Adventure Challenge Course with ropes, an Orienteering Course and a 32-foot, Climbing Wall. These three new facilities will add to the growing list of the Mountain's on-site adventure activities drawing attention from -tourists and locals alike.

Considered to be the latest trend in fun, excitement and personal/team growth, all three are being created by the Ski Area along with Berkeley based Adventure Associates and the U.S. Forest Service. The activities can be taken on as a personal challenge, shared with family members or experienced as part of an organizational team effort.

Groundbreaking will begin in May, with all three facilities expected to be in full operation by early July, and possibly earlier.

The Climbing Wall will be located on the lawn in front of the Mammoth Mountain Inn. Climbers of all abilities will be faced with a challenge on the looming, massive rock structure called the Climbing Wall.

The Adventure Challenge Course is being designed and constructed in the woods behind the Inn. The course will be a series of outdoor obstacles utilizing ropes, cables and the natural surroundings. Each obstacle provides a physical, mental and emotional challenge designed to not only build trust and confidence, but be fun and exhilarating, too.

A map and compass will guide adventurers along the Orienteering Course, which combines the love of hiking with the thrill of exploration. Participants will strike out on their own, learn about and refine essential navigational skills -and become more familiar with the surrounding High Sierra.

Prospective adventurers are invited to check their inhibitions at the door and prepare to visit Mammoth's newest adventure activities this summer. More information can be obtained by calling the Mammoth Adventure Connection at (619) 934-0606 or (800) 228-4947.

**Ski Mountaineers Central Committee**

Chair -Howard Schultz Vice Chair- Reiner Stenzel  
 Outings/Safety- Nancy Gordon Sec.\Treas-Mark Goebel  
 Programs- Ken Deemer Mugelnoos Editor- Andy Fried

**Ski Mountaineer Leaders**

Walt Boge 13260 Cumpston Street Van Nuys 91401 818 781-4576	Marcia Male 1459 Westgate Avenue, #1 Los Angeles 90025 310 479-0758
Kathy Crandall 11552 Wish Avenue Granada Hills 91344 818 363-4677 or 363-0590	Owen Maloy P. O. Box 2083 Mammoth Lakes 93546-2083 619 934-4553 Fax 619 934-9511
Ken Deemer 1725 Pine Avenue Manhattan Beach 90266 310 546-4012	Tom Marsh 5308 Heather Street Cwnarillo 93012 805 388-3984
Craig Dostie 6438A Penn Street Moorpark 93021 805 523-0413	Pete Matulavich 126 Calle Candids San Dimas 91773 909 599-6148
Andy Fried 9218 Jellico Avenue Northridge 91325 818 993-1891	Eddie Nunez 296 Chesterfield Newport Beach 92660 714 644-0527
Mark Goebel 9522 Innsbruck Drive Huntington Beach 92646 714 963-9384	Don Pies 1606 Haynes Lane Redondo Beach 90278 310 318-6251
Nancy Gordon 6550 Ellenview Avenue West Hills 91307 818 884-8065	Howard Schultz 17045 Burton Street Van Nuys 91406 818 344-8313
Paul Harris PO Box 70765 Pasadena 91117 818 577-4800	Reiner Stenzel 519 Almar Avenue Pacific Palisades 90272 310 454-9787
Gerry and Pat Holleman 1638 6th Street Manhattan Beach 90266 310 374-4654	Larry Tidball 1400 W. Edgehill Road, #14 San Bernardino 92405 909 882-6168
Scot Jamison 2517 King Way Claremont 91711-1720 909 626-1712	Todd Yuen 10635 Lynn Circle Cypress 90630 714 220-2599

Early in the season we began polishing our skiing techniques on and around Mammoth Mountain. First, we loaded backpacks with thirty-plus pounds and trekked around the neighborhood; then we took telemark lessons from John Moynier. On one of the long chair rides from Wanning Hut 11, an older gentleman asked us what we were doing on free heel gear. More small talk on the lift? No ... he had just returned from a Tenth Mountain Division reunion in Vail. The reunion organizers arranged to have several doctors on hand because never before had so many people over the age of seventy been on a ski slope at one time. These were the men of the fighting Tenth Mountain Division of W.W.11, who had trained at Camp Hale — otherwise known as "Camp Hell."

Just north of Tennessee Pass in the Eagle River valley in the Colorado Rockies, Camp Hale was completed November 16, 1942. It was immediately ready to train the 87th Mountain Regiment. Because the National Ski Patrol was actually made an army recruiter, many famous skiers and climbers signed up along with other non-army types. It was, to say the least, an elite division. The 87th was sent to Kiska to fight the invading Japanese. But the Japanese had left before the invasion, and the landing troops fired at each other. There were many casualties. Morale was at its lowest when General George Hays was given command. After intense training, the outfit was renamed the 10th Mountain Division on November 7, 1944 — just in time for the Italian campaign. The Tenth was the first of allied forces to cross the Po River; again, losses were heavy. Between Italy and Kiska, 990 soldiers gave their lives. The 10th Mountain Division disbanded right after the war, was reactivated in 1985 and today trains at Camp Drum, New York. They were recently sent to Somalia.

The hut system was the inspiration of 10th Mountain veteran, Fritz Benedict. Volunteers built the huts and today maintain them: chopping wood in the summer, cleaning and painting. There are more than 20 accommodations between Aspen, Vail, Leadville and Crested Butte, but the I 1-hut loop north and east of Aspen is officially known as the 10th Mountain system.

Our group of five — three skiers and two guides — enters the 10th Mountain system at Sylvan Lake. The Paragon Guides van crept along a hazardous dirt road behind a truck towing a trailer full of dogs. And now... We are skiing behind them — a twelve dog team and driver, and a sled with two women passengers wearing fur coats. Just as we stop to take off a layer of clothes, the sledgers pass on their way back to Vail; we are alone in the wilderness. Eight hours later, we arrive at Harry Gates Hut 9,700 ft. in time to melt snow for water and watch Venus descend behind the tall silhouettes of bare aspens.

From the Harry Gates hut, we're off to the Diamond "J" Guest Ranch for a night of R&R (with showers.) It's only nine miles from the Frypan River at 8,250 ft. to Margy's hut at 11,300 ft., but it's a full day of climbing with skins on. All of the huts on this route are approximately 10 miles apart. The hardest days are determined by the elevation gain.

There is a picture of Margy on the wall next to the stove. She was Margaret McNainara, the wife of Robert McNamara, former secretary of defense. McNamara built the first hut, which is named after him, in 1982 and the same year dedicated a second to the memory of his wife. He had to

promise the Forest Service that he would raze the cabins if no one used them. Fortunately, that didn't happen. Today, there are more huts waiting for Forest Service approval to be built.

The 10th Mountain huts are luxurious in contrast with huts in the Alps. They sleep between six and sixteen and, in some cases, have one or two private rooms; but always, one bunk per person — which isn't always the case in Europe. There are two stoves — one for warmth and melting snow and another for cooking. A common area with tables serves as living and dining room and the kitchen is frilly appointed for any culinary endeavor. Except for one mishap when someone over stoked the stove, we have fresh baked bread every day. There is a matching library in every hut so you can continue reading what you might have begun somewhere else. Don't overlook the hut registers; they can be interesting reading. There was "the male bonding group" who wrote of their macho accomplishments in rhyme, and "the snow gods" who danced naked on the deck. I don't know if anyone was dancing, but in the morning we have to shovel a path to the outhouse.

It's a layover day. We go out for a sunrise ski and later climb Mt. Yeckel, 11,765ft.. Everyone whoops all the way down, "fresh powder!" "tele-tums!" Don, who is our guide and tele-guru chides us: "Even my grandmother could ski this."

I am reading about our next day's trek to McNamara hut when my eyes freeze on the words "treacherous descent to Spruce Creek." Don says not to worry, we are going to take a short-cut. We dug snow pits to check for avalanche prone snow, made miracle donuts of foam for my blistered heels, and otherwise headed off danger, but short cuts have consistently been troublesome. There was the thigh deep powder where Bob sank at every step — he was the heaviest. And now, the trees are tight, the snow is breakable crust, and it's STEEP. I'm thinking whiney thoughts, but it's so beautiful I forget my terror and make the descent with the rest of the group — side-stepping.

At McNamara hut, there is a group of young people who snow-shoed in; they carried snowboards and plastic snow saucers on their backs looking something like "ninja turtles." We must be getting close to civilization.

In the morning we make our last climb to Bald Knob. It is snowing gently, and through a break in the cloud cover we see the ski runs of Aspen Mountain and Snowmass. Our exodus takes us down the Hunter creek drainage, over a wooden bridge dedicated to the 10th Mountain Division, and through a beautiful snow covered meadow that suddenly runs out into a road. We pick up the van and drive toward the twinkling lights of town. Music is coming from the outdoor ice-skating rink in the square.

Back in Mammoth, Bob is racing in the Dave McCoy Invitational. At lunch we are joined by one of Bob's team mates, and her husband, who, when he hears that we have just skied from Vail to Aspen, sits bolt upright and with a sad smile tells us that he was with the 10th Mountain Division in Kiska and taught skiing to new recruits at Camp Hale.

some suggestions:

Late March is a great time weatherwise, but be prepared for cold as well as warm days. cont. pg 4.

Be sure to train a little, the cold and altitude can deplete your usual energy level.

Waxless touring skis are O.K., but a telemark ski is worth all the wax and skin bother when that fresh powder falls.

And, be sure to check out your equipment. Anne's boots were fine on day skis and downhill, but rubbed through mole skin and duct tape after 3,000 feet of climbing.

for Information:

10th Mountain Division Hut Association:  
1280 Ute Ave., Aspen, CO 81611  
303 925-5775

Diamond "J" Guest Ranch  
303 927-3222

Paragon Guides:  
P.O. Box 130, Vail, CO. 81658  
303 924-5299

Available from 10th Mountain Association  
"Colorado 10th Mt. Trails" by Louis W. Dawson 11

for transportation from Denver to Vail:

Colorado Mountain Express (CME)  
P.O. Box 580, Vail, Co 81658  
800 525-6363

# THE MUGELNOOS

Pat Holleman  
1638 6th St.  
Manhattan Beach, Ca 90266

Richard L Henke  
652 Marine Ave.  
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266  
1994 SMSRCS-R

**Couloir T-Shirts**  
"A word to the wise . . ."

Your bod here

Be sure to state your size: S, M, L, XL

100% Cotton

Check or money order in U.S. dollars

Send \$10 + \$2.90 for shipping  
California residents include sales tax.

**Couloir Publications**  
2378 N. Highland • Altadena, CA 91001

**PISTE**

Alpine Touring  
Telemark  
Winter Mountaineering

Granite Gear  
Kastinger  
Lifelink  
Rainey  
Ramer  
Secura-fix  
Wild X

Call or Write for our Catalog

PO BOX 683-GLENDORA-CA-91740 (714) 229-8959

