

Help plan the 97-98 SMS ski season!!

Thursday, June 12, 7:00 pm

Details on p. 2

MUGELNOOS

MAY 20, 1997

Number 736



Humphreys Basin Base Camp

April 12-15, 1997

By Tom Marsh

This four day adventure into Humprey's Basin had a little bit of everything . There was nine of us : Gene Serabyn, Lawrence Pallant, Denise Huibregtse, Felix Betschart, Scott Meek, Mike Bratleowski, Matt Doody, Keith Martin and myself. We started at 9:00 pm at the road closure to North Lake, which happen to be at the town of Aspendale. We walked the approximate three miles to North Lake. We were finally able to put on our skis a 1/2 mile before North Lake. Felix was most relieved to get his Randonne gear off his back. We had a sunny and warm break at North Lake camp ground before beginning the trek up to Piute Pass. We had intermittent snow in trees for a mile before reaching the first steep part of the climb. We were all in need of a lunch break at this spot under sunny skis. As we continued, the

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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 DEDUCTABLE AS CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS.

MUGELNOOS STAFF

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MUGELPRINTER
MUGELMAILER

ANDY FRIED
ANDY FRIED
PAT HOLLEMAN

MEETINGS

3RD TUES EACH MONTH NOV. THRU MAY EXCEPT DEC. 7:30 PM GRIFFITH PARK RANGER STATION AUDITORIUM 4730 CRYSTAL SPRINGS DRIVE, LOS ANGELES, CA.

NEXT ISSUE: SEPT 25, 1997

ISSUE DEADLINE SEP. 11, 1997. ALL PHOTOS, SLIDES, AND ARTICLES SENT TO: ANDY FRIED, MUGELNOOS EDITOR, c/o TEC GROUP, 10727 WHITE OAK AVE. SUITE # 205, GRANADA HILLS, CA 91344. 3 1/2" OR 5 1/4 " DISKS (IBM) OR AT 71237.1270@COMPUSERVE.COM. 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 31-J 1	Rock Creek Ski Camp	Pete Matulavich / Ken Deemer

ELECTION RESULTS

ELECTED TO THE CENTRAL COMITTEE ARE:

KEN DEEMER
OWEN MALOY
TOM MARSH

MARK GOEBEL
DIANN FRIED
ERIC KLOSTERMANN

I am a (not so active) SMS member. I will move back Europe(Cambridge, England, no snow mountains) end of June and would like to sell my stuff like furniture, TV, VCR, boom box etc. For one of you the following might be of interest:
Black Diamond Skis (190) with RIVA binding, leather shoes (size: 8 1/2), poles for \$100. I got these 'free healings' from Nancy Gordon (how are you?).

Send me a reply, if you want them or anything else like:
IKEA bed (futon), futon sofa (which can be folded into a bed), table with 4 chairs, 2 desk (large out wood, small metal with drawers, bed frame with mattress, several halogen lamps (flooder, desk lamp), 2 bicycles (tark 700 commuter bike, trak800 mountain bike), Vivitar slide projector 2 recharger for batteries, couch table, sofa, microwave, toaster (Braun), food blender (Braun) etc. Plants are for free.
If you want anything, let me know. Sorry for bothering
Dr. K.H.J. Bockhorst office: Dep. Rad. Sci., UCLA, 10833 Le Conte Ave, B2-229 CHS, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1721
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Welcome New SMS Members

Lawrence Pallant	Encinitas
Craig Hoehstetter	Hermosa Berach
Daniel Richter	Santa Monica
Greg Stach	Sausalito
John Bees	Reno

Baldy Hut Work Party June 7-8

Come up for one or both days. SMS members are encouraged to attend. Meet Sat 8:00AM by gate to carry supplies. Overnight, and or dinner rsvp asap Jerry Held (714) 751-8805.

Schedule and Activities Planning Meeting
Thursday June 12, 7:00 PM at Ken Deemer's. All interested members invited. Please bring ideas for outings, activities, programs, leaders and new members. 2401 Pine Ave. Manhattan Beach. RSVP (310) 546-3042.

SMS WEB PAGE

<http://www.edgeinternet.com/skimt/>

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clouds started to appear. Matt made the comment that it was snowing. This seemed contrary to the weather projection. We reached Piute Pass at 4:00 PM under a driving snow storm. Suffice to say, we did not stay long admiring the view. We quickly set out to our base camp of Muriel Lake. After 10 miles and 3,000 feet of gain, we were all ready to camp.

The next day dawned with cool, sunny crisp air. At about 10:00 am, we set out for our 1st day tour under a pleasantly warm sun. We skied up to the crest of the Mt. Humphreys divide (13,000 feet) and peered over the other side. The day was warm, but the snow at the top was not quite consolidated. As we lunched right below Mt. Humphreys, we enjoyed a spectacular view of the basin. We caught glimpses of Mt. Darwin, Mt. Humphreys, Four Gables, etc.. It was a very pleasant day. After lunch, we enjoyed much better corn snow conditions as we descended 1,000 feet to our base camp.

That evening, Lawrence, Gene, Felix and I were admiring a crooked South facing peak on the extreme North of the basin. It was called simply "12,225" on the Map. It was not on the Sierra Peaks list, but looked to provide some good corn snow conditions. Therefore, the next day, the group set out for the top of this peak. The firm snow provided a good base for this long distance day tour. Again, we enjoyed a warm sunny morning with spectacular view all around. We made good time to the outlet of Desolation Lake. At that point, the real climbing began. We started up the ridge to the left of peak 12,225. We quickly made it to the top within an hour. Gene led the last section to the top. The views were much better than the day before. We enjoyed a sunny warm lunch with view of Alpine Col, Bear Creek Spire, Four Gables, etc... After lunch, we enjoyed a great ski down the peak and then down to Mesa lake. We arrived back at camp at around 5:00 pm.

The last day, we broke camp at about 10:00 am. We arrived at Piute Pass to find good corn snow conditions. We skied effortlessly to the next steep section. We encountered one exposed section in a narrow gully, but everyone did well skiing this section. Gene decided to take a more adventures route on the left side. After that, we skied through a maze of trees. Denise likened it to working on a puzzle. After one interesting creek crossing, we made it back to the campground at North Lake for lunch. The day, contrary to the previous two days, was cool and cloudy. Therefore, it did not take much convincing to end our trip soaking at Keough Hot Spring.

Much thanks to Keith Martin for co-leading and

John Moynier's for advice on conditions. John has a wonderful web site at "<http://www.csac.org.bulletins>".

SKIING IN THE TOIYABES

by Rich Henke

A classic high crest ski tour exists in the Toiyabe Range, north of Tonopah Nevada. The range extends in a north-south direction for over 100 miles with elevations between 10,000 - 11,000 feet for most of the route. In Feb. 1997, Armando Menocal and I attempted this route - for the second time and failed for the second time.

The timing must be perfect for a successful Nevada ski tour. Often, there is not enough snow cover for an entire season. If you go too early, winter conditions are often encountered which make it difficult to cover long distances. This year, there was a good snow pack, which was verified by Virgil Mink, of the National Forest Service in Tonopah.

I drove to Kingston, Nevada about 100 miles North of Tonopah on Feb 26, where I spent the night, planning to meet Armando the following morning. During the night, about 1 foot of new snow fell which delayed Armando's arrival by several hours. He was driving from Jackson, Wyoming and needed a tow truck to get him back on the road after skidding on icy roads. We left a car at Kingston and drove south to the Peavine Canyon road which was driveable as far as Tom Canyon Trailhead at 6,900 feet. We would ski north towards Kingston, planning to ski 60 miles along the crest of the Toiyabes in 5 days.

We started at noon following a summer trail up Tom's Canyon, north over a 9,400 foot ridge and down Trail Canyon. Our camp on night 1 was near the Reese River. The snow was deep requiring strenuous trail breaking going up but was too heavy for good turns coming down. The end result was slow progress. That night, more snow fell which continued in the morning. This caused us to be less than enthusiastic about an early start, but when we did get going the snow had stopped and the sun was shining. The winter like conditions we were encountering would not give us time to finish our intended route. Instead we decided to do a loop in the south end of the range, circling Arc Dome and returning to our starting point via a different route.

Our camp that night was at 10,000 feet on a ridge just east of Arc Dome. The next morning we skied to the 10,700 foot col north of Arc Dome on our way to the summit. However, the wind had blown all of the snow off the north slope and was gusting heavily. Since we had skied the peak 2 years previously on our first trip to this range, there was

little enthusiasm for slogging up the bare north slope with the wind howling. Instead we dropped west into Big Sawmill Creek which we followed down for 3,000 feet to the Reese River. After spending our third night, we skied upstream on the Reese until the stone cabin which is a ranger administrative site, and is shown on the maps we had. From here we headed south, crossed a 9,200 foot pass which led to Peavine Canyon and eventually, our car.

We are slowly closing in on skiing the Toiyabe Crest. Two years ago we started on the east side of the range and ended up doing an accidental east-west traverse of the range when we had to abort our south to north route. This year we did a 4 day loop from the south. Maybe the third time will be the charm. We will start in the north and go south. At least we will see the northern part of the range!

GEORGE BOWMAN HARR

George Bowman Harr died on March 15, 1997, at the age of 78 in Oceanside, California. He was the beloved son of Herman Ernest Harr, originally from Jackson, Michigan, and Muriel Bowman Harr of Danville, Illinois. Graduating from the California Institute of Technology in 1941, he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Applied Chemistry. He was later employed as a Chemical Engineer at Firestone Tire and Rubber Company for 25 years in Los Angeles, followed by 11 years at Air Logistics Corporation in Pasadena. He retired in 1977. George traveled extensively to distant lands in connection with his career and during his retirement. He enjoyed a wide range of outdoor activities, including hiking, backpacking, camping, rock climbing, skiing, and fishing. An avid gardener, George found special delight in growing orchids. He also loved classical music, reading, and photography, and was a member of Mountain Dancers folk dancing club. A private memorial service is planned, with the ashes scattered at sea off the coast of Long Beach. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the California Institute of Technology, the American Lung Association, the Nature Conservancy, or Sierra Club Foundation.

Horton Lakes

May 10-11, 1997

By Tom Marsh

The eight of us met at the corner of 168 and Buttermilk Rd. at 8:00 AM on Saturday morning, May 10. The group consisted of Owen Maloy, Matt Doody, Don Goodwin, Randy Lamm, Doug O'Neil, Eric Watts, Denise Huibregtse and myself. We piled into four vehicles as we rode the rocky firm road to the trailhead. The sky was blue and the temperature was a balmy 60 degrees as we started our slog up the road to Lower Horton Lake. The day before, Owen and Walt Boge scouted the road to the

Lake. It was helpful to know that we would pass two large snowfield on the way up. They appeared to be remnants of an avalanche.

Most of the walk was on dry road. Upon arrival, we discovered a nice large campsite near the outlet of Lower Horton Lake. It took us about three hours to get to the campsite. After a long lunch, we all strapped our skis on for the first time and skied the North side of Lower Horton Lake. We did have to walk through two snowless areas, but upon reaching the west inlet to the lake, the snow was quite continuous. We followed this continuous field up a canyon leading towards Upper Horton Lake. Because of the lateness of the day, we stopped before the last final mile (and 1,000 feet of gain) from the upper lake. We did find a nice North facing slope with about a 25-30 degree pitch. The snow was fairly good corn at that point, maybe a little past prime. Nevertheless, it provided a nice 500-600 feet ski down. At that point the clouds had started to form rain pockets, so heading back seemed like a good idea. It was after 5:00 PM anyway and folks were hungry. To make things interesting, six of us decided to climb back up the north slope and ski the upper East side of the canyon. It provided some fun and exciting descents down to the west inlet of Lower Horton Lake.

Sunday dawned much like the day before, warm sunny and pleasant. We got about an 8:00 AM start on our quest to bag Mt. Basin. In retrospect, an earlier start would have been ideal. We found a man-made log bridge crossing over the outlet from Lower Horton Lake. At that point, we started our ski up the broad canyon. The firm snow pack provided a good base for the climb up the first part. Up to that point, the ski up was quite gradual. We stopped and broke before the next section. The next part was more exciting with a steeper climb on hardpack. This led up to the upper shelf. At that point Mt. Basin and the entire ski was quite visible. Owen arrived at this point to watch a number of us ski the last patch of snow up to the ridge. This North facing bowl proved to be quite ice and steep, so we decided to post the skis and scramble on the rocks. Eric and I were the only hold outs at that point. Two of our group, Doug and Randy, had Randonee gear and preferred skiing on the slopes. The rest of the group napped. Eric and I found one large snowfield on the way up. At first it was quite gradual and soft. Before we knew it, we were in a 40 degree icy slope with no self arrest equipment (we had decided not to take our poles). Needless to say, we worked our way to the nearest exit from this ice field. Unfortunately, it deposited us to the far right of the summit route. At that point, it was getting quite late, so we decided to lower our objective to the ridgeline. We were able to peer over into the Owens Valley from a very steep narrow chute. The decent back was most delightful. After sliding down a scree slope, we gathered as

a group and skied down to where Owen had been napping. We continued skiing (and taking pictures) down the steep North facing slope climbed earlier in the day. The North face of the slope was quite unconsolidated and deep. Some of us sunk down 6-8 inches. Owen summarily warned all of us off this area and onto the more consolidated southern bowl. It was a great pitch for tele skiing. The rest of the ski down to the lake was quite moderate and fun. Upon arriving at camp, Doug broke the news that Owen had an impromptu swim crossing a snowbridge over the lake. It was a warm day, so it must have felt good. Too bad Owen did not invite any of us to jump in. Anyway, we packed up and broke camp at 4:30PM. The hike down was not without excitement. Thunder, lightening and some shower activity graced our route out. We finally got down the road to Bishop by 8:00 PM. It was going to be long drive home for some. I decided to stay back and ski Mammoth with Owen the next day. Owen and I had dinner at a very good Mexican Restaurant in Bishop (Amigo's). Special thanks to Owen on this trip. His knowledge and expertise were most indispensable on this trip. It is good to have individuals like Owen with some much resident knowledge of the Sierra's.

Thoughts for the Future

Owen Maloy

Because membership in the Ski Mountaineers has grown into the hundreds, I think we need to diversify and expand our activities and streamline how we do things. Below are some suggestions and food for thought. Members and leaders, please communicate your own suggestions to a member of the newly-elected Central Committee (see notice this issue), or send a letter to the 'Noos. Comments from those who are new and who have not participated much will be particularly welcome: what do you want out of your membership? Trips? Training? Meeting others with similar interests? Old-timers may want to comment on how things were done in the old days, when the section was very successful.

Back in the 1930's, the section had over 300 members, and was an active downhill-oriented ski club with many social events and ski weekends in the local mountains. There were no ski lifts at that time, so that if you wanted to ski down you had to ski up first. This is still our tradition. More people are interested in earning their turns now, but our leader cadre is not large enough to serve all our new members, and there are not enough trips for everyone or for all levels of experience. More members need to become leaders and plan original and interesting trips (some suggestions below). Most people who ski well enough to lead already have the skills

needed for backcountry leadership (map and compass, snow camping, avalanche training), so that it is only a matter of attending the Chapter's one-weekend lectures and passing a map-and-compass test: no big deal. The rest of it consists of leading, which one would do anyway. The safety policy defines the details. A summary is posted on the Web at the SMS site (<http://www.edgeinternet.com/skimt/>), or you can send a 9x12 sase to me for a paper copy. Postage is \$1.24.

Since the 1950's at least the SMS had led the same trips year after year. Of course these go to the places where the snow is usually good, but in off years we tend to cancel rather than be creative, especially if the weather is iffy and camping out does not look like a happy activity. There are other options. The emphasis amongst locals in the Eastern Sierra is to do day trips, and some people who dislike backpacking may welcome those. There are places where one can drive right up to the snow in May: Normally the eastern side of Tioga Pass is open long before the road opens to Yosemite Valley. There is great skiing right next to the car near Tioga Pass Resort. Sonora Pass has terrific skiing (best on the middle day of Memorial weekend, because of the distance). Onion Valley is a great place to carcamp and ski. As our members improve their skiing, we can run more ambitious trips, such as the recent trips to the Wahoo Gullies and Mt. Shasta. But we also need introductory trips in the Sierra. We neglect the West side, except for Pear Lake or Ostrander on occasion.

In recent years it has become much less expensive to fly to neighbor resorts, such as Tahoe and Salt Lake as well as the Pacific Northwest. This makes running trips to these areas feasible. There is a great deal of backcountry skiing in the Tahoe area, and Pete Yamagata has provided us with an excellent guide to Tahoe peaks, including ski routes. There are also Nevada peaks within reach of the Reno airport (Jefferson, Arc Dome, etc). Driving a sport utility vehicle to Mammoth can be more expensive than round-trip air fare to Tahoe. We need to gain experience with more distant trips.

Because of the loss of participation from the Rock Climbing Section, we also need to extend our activities into the summer. It used to be thought that there was no point in doing this since everybody would go out with the Sierra Peaks Section, but that is a mistaken view. Many of our members do not even belong to the SPS and are not peakbaggers. In the summer, one can ski Mt Hood, the 3 Sisters, Mt. Bachelor, Mt Baker, Mt Rainier. There is plenty of skiing in the summer!

Finally, it will help recruit members and leaders if the section increases the number of purely social events, such as leader potlucks before the schedule. This technique is

used throughout the Sierra Club (I am doing a national survey, in fact). We now have an October meeting. We need one in February and June as well.

Also, I think, we need to review our bylaws and methods and simplify things and make them consistent with our practice. For example, people seem to think that one must pass a test to qualify for membership, and this turns off many skiers. The membership application cards and the Schedule announcement do not conform to the bylaws and need to be clarified. In practice we have wandered back to the restrictive policies that existed for a short time before 1980. These policies not only violated the bylaws at the time but were superseded years ago.

The bylaws require that a candidate member belong to the Sierra Club, subscribe to the Mugelnoos, be a 4th class skier, be sponsored by a member, participate in an SMS tour, and be voted in by the Central Committee. I think this is too complicated. The process is not followed in practice. Besides the Club membership and 'Noos subscription, I believe that participating in a tour and demonstrating reasonable skill equivalent to the test should be enough, and that the Secretary should be able to enroll somebody as a member without a vote upon receipt of an application card (the actual practice).

Being a 4th class skier has never meant that a candidate had to pass the 4th Class test on an SMS tour. This is a subtle distinction, but it has been in the bylaws for many decades. According to the minutes, the section has been unwilling to make people to submit to a test as a condition for membership, and proposals to include that provision were always voted down. The tour required for membership can be any SMS tour. It does not need to be a special introductory tour. Of course the section has a right to see how well someone can ski to participate on an outing, but that's a safety matter, not a membership matter. Leaders are supposed to screen people for each trip, and not rely on some other leader's word.

I also think it is time to make use of the "Big Badge" membership for ski tour leaders. The requirements for this grade of membership, unused for many years, are precisely the same as for ski leadership in the section. The only privilege of this grade is to wear the section's original and larger metal emblem, so in practice we are just talking about authorizing a leader pin which people can choose to wear or not. I do not think that in practice this will make our leader cadre into badge-wearers and pin-collectors — not in this crowd. But at least it gives some recognition to many people that have earned it. The separate grade of membership might be eliminated (opinions?), but all of the current Big Badge members should be designated as leaders.

We also might consider revising the ski tests we use as standards to define membership and leader skills. We have a number of certified instructors in the section who could do this. We have no need for the Second Class test (I think only two SMS members in history have taken it). The Third Class test is not backcountry-oriented; it involves a slalom race, which we are unlikely to bother with. We need a more practical definition of the ski skill required of a leader. Helicopter turns off cornices?

We also need to think about snowboarders in the backcountry. This is a growing sport (boarders use snowshoes to climb). I certainly would not object to having backcountry boarders on one of my trips, provided they had the skills. But what is the 4th Class Snowboard test?

The top priorities, though, are to expand the activities and get everybody involved.

Owen Maloy (jom@qnet.com)

CHESTER L. ERRETT 1905-1994

Chester L. Errett was a member of the American Alpine Club for fifty-one years. He was hard working, persistent and helpful to others in his vocations and avocations.

Chet was born in Los Angeles, California October 23, 1905. He worked his way through Inglewood High School where he met his future wife Evelyn in 1920. He attended University of California Los Angeles intending to become a physical education teacher but a Fireman Uncle persuaded him to become a professional fire fighter. From 1925 to 1928 he was a weigh master at Consolidated Rock. Chet and Evelyn were married in 1928 and he joined the Los Angeles Fire Department April 10 1929 retiring from Truck Company 10 as a Captain April 24, 1951. As a fireman he was a champion hand ball player and played on the fire Department football team..

Chet was an early member of the Ski Mountaineers Section and Rock Climbing Section of the Southern California Chapter of the Sierra Club serving as instructor, test judge and ski race judge. He was a Chairman of the Rock Climbing Section and later Chairman of the Ski Mountaineers

In March 1938 after a major Southern California storm Chet Errett and Howard Koster made a 40 mile round trip to check on the San Antonio Ski Hut. In the same month he made a ski trip to Gem Lake in the High Sierra. Labor Day weekend 1938 he climbed the East Buttress of Mount. Whitney (Peewee- Sunshine Route)

Fire Marshall.

In 1939 he made a winter ascent of Mount Banner and solo ascent of Mount Langley and with his wife Evelyn Errett an ascent of Popocatepetl in Mexico. In 1947 an ascent of Ixtacihualtl and another ascent of Popo.

In 1940 he made winter ascents of Mount Whitney and White Mountain.

In 1942 Chet Errett and Robert Brinton conducted the Mountaineering School at Belmont High School in Los Angeles recruiting dozens of men for the Tenth Mountain Division. Chet and Bob wrote a syllabus for the course. Chet was an professional expert in rescue and gave detailed instruction,

In June of 1942 Chet and Evelyn were in the Grand Tetons when William Rice and Clyde Nelson were killed. This great tragedy affected the lives of many of us especially the Erretts .

After months of recruiting others by January 1943 Chet himself started out as a private in the army with the Tenth Mountain Division at Camp Hale, Colorado. Like others he was in a variety of positions and locations January 1944 he was made a second lieutenant with Special Troops M.T.G. When the Division was at Camp Swift, Texas he was with Co. A, First Battalion, 86th Mountain Regiment later while still in the army

Chet graduated from University of Chicago (August 18, 1945) and was sent to Japan and Korea as an army fire fighter. (LA Times, December 23, 1945) He had the title of Military Government Fire Chief of South Korea responsible fire fighting in over 85,000 square miles inhabited by 24 million people. He was Fire Chief of Seoul, capital of Korea and on call 24 hours a day. He spoke some Japanese but not Korean. He left the army as a Captain the same title he had with the Los Angeles Fire Department.

In 1952 Chet Errett was Fire Chief at Eielson Air Force Base in Alaska. He and Evelyn were part of a group of nine who attempted to climbed the East Buttress of Mt. McKinley 20,300 feet elevation.. After 27 days of traveling and climbing they were forced back at Camp Five at 12,000 feet elevation because of a lack of food. The return was even more difficult to having to wade icy streams at flood stage. (Mugelnoos No 238, October 9, 1952)

In Alaska Chet became a Major in the Infantry Reserve. In 1954 in June and July the Erretts made another unsuccessful attempt on Mount McKinley again with weather related problems. (Mugelnoos 253)

From October 1954 to October 1956 the Erretts were in Puerto Rico where he held the position of Navy

Chet and Evelyn became acquainted with Theodore Payne when he was still operating his nursery on Los Feliz Blvd. in Los Angeles and they were early members of the Theodore Payne Foundation for Wild Flower & Native Plants joining in 1961. They became active volunteers at the Sun Valley location.

Evelyn eventually served as President of the Board of Directors and Chet as Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds from about 1976 to 1984. Chet and Evelyn were major participants in solving the zoning problems of the Theodore Payne Foundation. In 1980 when Chet was 75 years old, a fire threatened the Foundation grounds and at 3 am. went out to guide his old Engine Co. to the nursery and save the property from being destroyed.

After the death of his wife Evelyn, Chets health failed and the last few years of his life he lived a hermit like existence in the airy Hollywood Hills home which Chet had contracted. The Erretts had no children. According to records of the LAFD Relief Association Chester Errett died in Escondido, California, October 2, 1994.

A friend, Shirley Docter taped an interview with Chester Errett in 1984. She writes, Chet was goal oriented, a man of action, hard working, intensely loyal and loving a challenge.: In remembering Chet and Evelyn it is impossible to think of one without the other.

Glen Dawson 4/30/97

AVALANCHE TRAINING SESSION, TETONS, WYOMING Ellen Wilts

A few MD friends urged Ellen Wilts to report her recent adventures during an avalanche training session in the Tetons, Wyoming. Early in January, she accompanied her daughter, Janet, and the Wyoming K-9 Search and Rescue group for the session. The entire assemblage consisted of about 25 Forest Service, sheriffs and Geological Survey personnel and dog trainers. There were about 9 dogs (2 belonging to Janet) and 12 snowmobiles and their trailers. Some of the government clan were avalanche experts. At 9 AM, during a hardy snowstorm, the session took place at Togwatter (toe-ga- tee) Pass which is about 9500' and ninety minutes north east of Jackson

After snowmobiling a half mile into the back country to a sheltered area, a Forest Service ranger dug a deep hole, or snow pit, and commenced to teach the group about snow layers, temperatures, slopes, and avalanches. The ranger talked about common mistakes made by skiers. They do not check weather, snow conditions or snow depth. They cut across steep slopes which may be avalanche-prone, and they do not carry a transceiver or Peeps. He said that in order to be safe when skiing, one should first dig a pit all the way to the ground and check the snow layers with a shovel or ski (sheer

test). The resorts are safer because every precaution is taken, such as breaking off cornices and deliberately causing avalanches before the runs open. The Peeps are used to hone in on an avalanche victim who also carries the device. These transceivers were tested by the participants. It seemed to be difficult for the novice to locate another Peeps hidden under the snow due to the fact that they kept honing in on one another. A victim is very likely to live if found within the first 10 minutes, but after an hour, a person rarely survives. Minutes can make a difference between life and death.

After the avalanche lesson, it was time for the dogs and handlers to demonstrate their abilities. Janet coordinated this training session because, as a Teton ranger, she had avalanche training and she has also worked dogs for several years. Janet gave a short session on how the dogs and their trainers work together and how the dog locates avalanche victims by sniffing at the snow. She said that it takes about 8 to 10 minutes for the human scent to rise from the site if the victim is buried 6 to 8 feet deep. The scent usually drifts down the slope and up through the snow and consequently the dog usually alerts a few feet down the slope. When the dog begins to dig, two or three people use shovels and if the dog sniffs and then moves on, the shovelers stop and wait for the next signal from the handler.

Everyone attending the session wanted to observe the trainers and dogs at work. By process of elimination, Ellen became the first one to climb down into a very cramped and confining man-made snow cave with a mat, radio and a plastic shovel (to protect the head and ensure air space). For safety purposes, one dog trainer was stationed within 7 feet of the planned avalanche site with a radio in order to stay in contact.

The safety person informed the victim about the surface activities of the dogs and trainers. She promised Ellen that she could be dug out in thirty seconds if panic set in.

When the snow cave, containing the victim, was totally covered, a German Shepherd began to sniff about in the area designated by the handler. The trainer points and calls orders to the dog. It was somewhat dark under the snow. The thought that this was a luxurious cave compared to a real avalanche site gave some security as well as the realization that the radio was a contact to the outside world.

The first area the dog located was about 6 feet past the site. After a little digging, the dog sniffed and ran beyond and then soon returned. The dog found the cave-site within 10 minutes and the shoveling began in earnest. Snow was thrown aside, but more powder fell back into the hole, packing in behind Ellen. When her back was slightly exposed, the dog's nose pressed up against her to check out the find. After several tries and a direct hit with a shovel in the shoulder area, the radio suggested that Ellen try and back out of the cave because the shovelers could not break through properly. After a bit of squirming and pushing backwards, Ellen was able to free herself and stand up in the outer hole. Almost everyone was watching her carefully to see if there was panic or any abnormal reaction. The dog waited until the victim emerged and then he got raves, notoriety, affection, a treat, and a tossed toy. Suddenly, he took his toy disk to the victim, expecting and then receiving a response of a heave-ho. The dog was excited and showed delight as did everyone else (especially Ellen). During the next 45 minutes all the dogs found a victim, and the group called it quits at 4 PM. This was a very beautiful area with deep powder, large gorgeous pine trees covered with snow and sharp pointed peaks—such a lovely sight for an avalanche.

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