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THE MUGELNOOS

December 2002

Issue # 777



Eric, Ruth, Joe and Tom on top of Middle Sisters with Mt. Jefferson, Mt Hood and Mt. Baker in the background.

Three Sisters Wilderness Ski July 4th-7th, 2002 *by Tom Marsh (Private Trip)*

Similar to the building of the Sierras, the Cascades were formed by the collision of Ocean and continental plates. Although, the existence of molten magna and volcanic activity is not near as evident in the Sierras. You can see some similarities in the Mammoth Lakes area South of Mono Lake. On the other hand, the Cascades are still quite active. As the rest of the land settled, the volcanic hot points continued to blow, venting magna from below and building new formations above. You see these long lines of spouts jetting out of more settled land. The land is a long way from complete, as was evident in 1980, when Mount Saint Helens blew its top. Since that time, the dome within the crater has risen over one thousand feet. Sometime in the next two hundred years, Mount St. Helens will have regained what it lost in that explosion. Our destination, The Three Sisters, are three closely aligned volcanic mountains that form the middle of the line of fire stretching from Mount Lassen in California to Mount Rainer in Washington. The Sisters range is particularly interesting in that you can see the line of White peaks from Mount Jefferson to Mount Baker going north. In addition, it contains some unusual topography as it forms the point where the Cascades meet the high desert. It was also (Southeast ridge) one of the few summer ascents that had a 5 ripper rating (scale of 1-5, 5 being highest) that did not involve glacier-crevasses.

Mike and I meant up with Joe, Ruth and Eric Wednesday evening at my 91 year old Grandmother's place in Albany, Oregon. Grandma had two large bowls of popcorn waiting for us. After greetings and good conversation, Mike, Eric, Joe and I laid out sleeping bags on the living room floor, while Ruth (on Grandma's insistence) got the bedroom. We gave grandma a wake up time of 8:00 am. Sure enough, the sounds of pots and pans clattering could be heard from the kitchen at 7:45. Grandma was insistent about making the gang breakfast. At 1st the

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NEXT ISSUE

Next issue deadline is January 10th, 2002. All letters, photos, slides, or articles should be sent to Mugelnoos editor, Lorene Samoska, 701 Craig Avenue, La Canada, CA 91011. Materials can be sent by IBM disc or e-mailed to samsei@earthlink.net. Electronic photos and articles are preferred and appreciated.

MEETINGS

3rd Tuesday each month – November through May (except December) 7:30 PM, Griffith Park Ranger Station Auditorium 4730 Crystal Springs Drive, Los Angeles, CA. Newcomers welcome!

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SMS WEB PAGE

The link is: <http://angeles.sierraclub.org/skimt/>

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SMS Chair finishes SPS List



Reiner Stenzel, above left, shown atop Three Sisters Peak (California) with other SPS List Finishers and Chairs. For story see page 6.

Calendar of Events 2002-003 Ski Season

Jan 11 Sat Ski Mountaineers Section

TI: Local Tour: Intro ski mountaineering tour in local mountains. Check out your gear and enjoy some turns. Metal-edged skis and climbing skins required. Call leader in the prior week for location and time. Leader: Mark Goebel, Asst: Kathy Crandall.

Jan 17-20 Fri-Mon Wilderness Adventures, SMS, OCSS

I: Ski Yosemite National Park: Join us for three days of skiing and/or hiking for MLK weekend. Stay in comfortable cabins at Wawona near Yosemite's south entrance. XC ski in the Mariposa Grove and Badger Pass areas, downhill ski Badger Pass, or hike Yosemite Valley. Many Opportunities for all levels. Cost includes 3 nights comfortable cabin, 2 dinners, happy hour, breakfast. \$175 (made payable Sierra Club) to Tom Marsh Co-leader : Keith Martin

Jan 21 Tue Ski Mountaineers Section

Monthly Mtg: Entertaining slide programs featuring equipment, safety, and outings. Newcomers welcome. 7:30 pm Griffith Park Ranger Station. See SMS Section listing for newsletter info or <http://angeleschapter.org/skimt/>.

Jan 24-26 Fri-Sun Ski Mountaineers Section

TI/C: SMS Navigation Practice and Free-Heel Downhill Clinic: Sat backcountry tour with Nav. Training, Sun develop and improve your skills on free-heel equipment. Clinics appropriate for all levels of skiers taught by professionals at a local area . Stay two nights at Keller Hut, with lift ticket and all day clinics on Sun. High quality rentals available at \$12. Sat. Dinner. Reserve early. Send a check for \$95 and 2 sase to Res: Keith Martin, Asst Reiner Stenzel

Feb 1 Sat Ski Mountaineers Section

TI: Local Tour: Intro ski mountaineering tour in local mountains. Check out your gear and enjoy some turns. Metal-edged skis and climbing skins required. Call leader in the prior week for location and time. Leader: Mark Goebel, Asst: Kathy Crandall

Feb 5 Wed DPS, SPS, HPS and SMS

Joint Meeting: Visit Mt. Everest Base Camp with world traveler Penelope May. Penelope has trekked world-wide and takes us on a trek in Nepal. Bring gear to trade or sell before the meeting. Swap meet 6:30. Show: 7:30PM at the LA Zoo Grande Room.

Feb 8 Sat Ski Mountaineers Section

TI: Thunder, Telegraph and Timber: Ski the 3 T's in the San Gabriel mountains. Intermed or better skiing ability required, not for beginners. Metal-edged skis w skins req'd. Send experience, h&w phones, email address to Ldr: Reiner Stenzel. Asst. Ldr. Randy Lamm

Feb 18 Tue Ski Mountaineers Section

Monthly Mtg: Entertaining slide programs featuring equipment, safety, and outings. Newcomers welcome. 7:30 pm Griffith Park Ranger Station. See SMS Section listing for newsletter info or <http://angeleschapter.org/skimt/>.

Feb 22-23 Sun Ski Mountaineers

TI/C: Local Tour and Free-Heel Downhill Practice: Sat intro ski mountaineering tour in mountains near Keller Hut. Check out your gear and enjoy some turns. Metal-edged skis and climbing skins required. Call leader in the prior week for location and time. Option to stay two nights at Keller Hut, with lift ticket and all day clinics on Sun. High quality rentals available at \$12. Sat. Dinner. Reserve early. Send a check for \$95 and 2 sase to Ldr: Keith Martin, Asst ldr Kathy Crandall

Feb 28-Mar 2 Fri-Sun SMS

TI: Igloos on Kaiser Pass: Join us for a long weekend of wilderness survival techniques and backcountry skiing. Fri build igloos on Kaiser Pass. Sat ski Kaiser Pk. with practice in backcountry navigation. Sun ski out. Bring snowsaw, shovel, no tents, avalanche beacons, backcountry ski gear. Intermed or better skiing ability required. Send experience, h&w phones, email address, rideshare info to Ldr: REINER STENZEL. Asst: KATHY CRANDALL.

Mar 8-9 Sat-Sun SMS

TI: Boundary Pk: Ski Nevada's highest. 10 mi, 5000' rt. Intermed or better skiing ability and stamina required. Send e-mail with experience to co-leaders: REINER STENZEL, ALVIN WALTER.

Mar 8-9 Sat-Sun SMS

TI: Mt. San Antonio (10,064'): Ski classic Baldy Bowl and spend the night in the Ski Mountaineers' historic San Antonio Ski Hut. Intermediate or better skiing ability required, not for beginners. Metal edged backcountry skis with skins required. Overnight hut fee:\$10.00. Send experience, H&W phones, email address to Ldr: KATHY CRANDALL .Asst: TBD

Mar 15-16 Sat-Sun Ski Mountaineers

TI: San Gorgonio Mtn. (11,499'): A 10.8 mi rt, 4300' gain overnight ski tour with a snow camp in the San Gorgonio Wilderness. Leave No Trace snow camping techniques will be demonstrated and practiced. Metal edged skis with climbing skins required. Send experience, H&W phones, carpool info, email address to R.J. SECOR. Asst: ALVIN WALTER

March 22 Sat Ski Mountaineers Section

O: Conditioning hike. Moderate to fast-paced hike to Echo Mountain (5 mrt, 1300 ft elev. gain). Weather and group interest permitting, continue to Inspiration

Calendar (continued)

Point (additional 4 mrt, ~1700ft). Be prepared for rain, wind and cold weather, bring lunch and water. Meet at top of north Lake Ave. and Loma Alta in Pasadena at 8:30AM. Ldr. LORENE SAMOSKA, Asst. MARK GOEBEL

Mar 22-23 Sat-Sun Ski Mountaineers

TI: Mt. Mary Austin (13,040'): ski and climb one of the few Sierra peaks named after a woman. Route will take us up the Baxter Pass trail or into Little Onion Valley, depending on snow conditions. Metal edged skis with climbing skins, avy beacons, shovels and snow camping gear required. E-mail experience, address and h/w phones to Prov. Ldr: Mike McDermitt; Asst Ldr: Reiner Stenzel

March 22-23 Sat-Sun SMS

TI: Mammoth Weekend: Ski the Mountain on Sat., Sun Ski Mt., or local tour.

Ldr: Andy Fried Asst. Ldr: Gerry Holleman

April 12-13 Sat.-Sun SMS

TI: Sardine Cnyn, and Slopes of Onion Valley, Independendence or Kearsarge Peaks: Day tours/Car Camp. For Strong well conditioned Skiers with Metal Edge skis, Skins, beacons and shovels. Leader: Randy Lamm, Asst: Tom Marsh

April 12-20 Sat-Sun SMS

TI: Northern Sierra Peaks: Ski and climb Mt Rose, Tallac, Freel, Castle, Granite Chief, Tinker Knob. For experienced backcountry skiers. E-mail experience, address and h/w phones to Ldr: REINER STENZEL; Asst Ldr: TBA .

April 25-27 Fri-Sun SMS

TI: Convict Lake Drainage: Join us for this three-day basecamp in the spectacular Convict Lake drainage. For Interim. Skiers with Metal Edge skis, Skins, beacons and shovels. Leader: Tom Marsh Asst. Randy Lamm

April 25-27 Fri.-Sun SMS

TI: Rock Creek Intro Trip: Ski the slopes around Little Lakes Valley from Base Camp. Practice low impact snow camping. Metal edged skis, skins, beacon, 0 degree sleeping bag and backcountry gear req'd. send lg. SASE with eperience, address, H & W phones + email if avail. by April 1 for carpool and further info." Leader: MICHAEL DODSON, Asst: KEITH MARTIN

Apr 26-May 4 Sat-Sun Ski Mountaineers

TMR: Yosemite Border Tour; Electra Pk (12,442'), Foerster Pk (12,057'), Merced Pk (11,726'), Red Pk (11,599'), Gray Pk (11,573'): A 47 mi, +12,933', -13,002' trans-Sierra ski tour along Yosemite NP's SE boundary and the Clark Range. Leave No Trace snow camping techniques will be demonstrated and practiced. Metal edged skis with climbing skins, ice axes, crampons, avy beacons, shovels, and snow camping gear required. Send experience, H&W phones, carpool info, email address to R.J. SECOR. Asst: REINER STENZEL.

May 10-16 Sat-Fri SMS

TI: North Lake to Rock Creek: Join Joe and I on another section of the Sierra High Route. Opportunity for many diversions on this 35-mile ski adventures. For strong interm. to advanced skiers with pack skiing experience. Metal edged skis, climbing skins and avalanche beacons required. Send e-mail/sase with experience to Ldr: TOM MARSH. Asst.: JOE MCGUIRE

May 17-18 Sat-Sun Ski Mountaineers

TI: Mts. Stanford-N (12,851'), Morgan-N (13,005'): Climb two Sierra peaks from base camp in Hilton Lakes area, enjoy two 2000+ foot descents on spring corn snow. Metal edged skis with climbing skins, avy beacons, shovels and snow camping gear required.

E-mail experience, address and h/w phones to Prov. Ldr:Mike McDermitt; Asst Ldr: Reiner Stenzel.

May 23-26 Fri-Mon SMS, SPS

TI: Taboose Basecamp: Ski and climb Cardinal, Striped, Gooddale, Split, Vennacher Needle. For experienced backcountry skiers. E-mail experience, address and h/w phones to Co-Ldrs: REINER STENZEL; ALVIN WALTER.

May 24-26 Sat-Sun SMS

TI: Buttermilk Base Camp: Day tours/Car Camp, Wahoo Gulleys- Mt. Locke, Basin Mt. , Elderberry Canyon For Strong well conditioned Skiers with Metal Edge skis, Skins, beacons and shovels. Leader: Randy Lamm, Asst: Tom Marsh

June 15-22 Sun-Sun SMS

TI: Oregon Volcanoes: Ski your hear out on Three Sisters, McLoughlin, Batchelor, Broken Top, Jefferson, Hood, St Helens, etc. Day trips, car camps, long days of driving, skiing, and fun. Advanced backcountry ski skills required. E-mail experience, address and h/w phones to Co-Ldrs: REINER STENZEL; TBA.

enormity of the portions of eggs, bacon, ham, potatoes and biscuits were quite daunting, although bit by bit the crew made their way through the entire spread, except one egg. Grandma seemed quite happy with the completeness of our meal, the one egg left signifying that we had enough.

By 10AM, we were on our way driving east along HY 20 over Santiam Pass to the town of Sisters. The friendly nature of Oregonians came out when the gas attendant eagerly volunteered to assist us in finding our way. After a short drive from Sisters, we arrived at the Pole Creek trailhead. Smiles were all around as we were finally starting our backcountry adventure. It was 6:00 PM by the time we arrived at camp. Snowfields were within reach of camp, so Mike and I decided to be the first to make use of those heavy boards that we've been carrying for 6 miles. Easy gliding in the twilight was the rule, although attention to dinner may have been a better use of time. Much to our surprise, we were faced with an unpopular possibility, no dinner. One stove had the wrong canister and the other stove was not working. Harking back to Boy Scout days, we built a fire and cooked over warm coals.

The day dawned sunny and calm for our first day on the skis. The approach to Middle Sister was on intermittent snow, with small patches of dry earth that required ski carrying. The real climbing began upon attaining the saddle between South Sister and Middle Sister (our goal for the day). At that point, the route up was obvious. Climb up the South/East facing snowfield and then traverse left on the narrow ridge to the summit. A couple steep pitches of snow convinced Eric to don crampons. The rest of us either booted up or applied skins and ski crampons. Eric seems to have the correct idea making quick work of the snowfield. Ruth and I struggled with the ski crampons. The Irving Glacier had some uneven surfaces making it difficult to get skin purchase. In addition, there were spots that were too hard to get the ski crampons in at all. At about 9,300 ft., we all made our way off the snow to the tulas. It was two steps forward, one step back up to the ridge in volcanic pumice, obsidian and granite. We all made the summit after a boulder hop along the ridge. The summit views were spectacular on this clear calm sunny day. To the North, you could see the long line of volcano peaks starting with Mt. Washington to Mt. Baker, Mt. Jefferson and Hood being the most dramatic. To the south are Mt Bachelor and Three-Finger Jack. Of course the giant megaliths of North and South Sister looming on both sides with eerily equal height. South Sister's North Facing Glacier fields caked in volcanic dust making it look like the dirtiest of the Sisters. After a long lounge at the top, obligatory photos and many sips on Eric's Murphy Beer, we started the long ramble down to the snowline for our 1st skiing. We decided to do the descent about 1/3 down the upper snowfield because of the steep pitch and long distance to the bottom. Joe started with a couple good turns before taking about a 40-foot tumble down the slope. That made both Eric and I a bit reserved, at first. It only took two to three turns to gain confidence on this excellent snow. There was a surprising lack of snowcups on this the 5th of July. The underlayer was still firm despite the fact that it was near 3:30 in the afternoon. It was superb all the way down with surprising consis-

tency. The southeast facing slope above Camp Lake were the best with hero snow for 500 feet to the Lake. The sun was still high in the sky at 6:00 PM as we arrived in camp. Mike decided to take an evening ski until 8:00 PM under the extended daylight. We had good light from 4:30 am to 10pm. A warm fire, good conversation and sips off of Eric's beverage made for a pleasant evening.

Another beautiful Oregon day dawned on our final day in Sisters. Everyone seemed to be settling into the volcanic landscape of the cascades. Quite different than the Sierras where granite is the rule. Fine reddish black ash, pumice and obsidian abound. Smooth metallic-like material plastered on porous rock from a violent event some eons ago. Remembering the great slopes above Camp Lake, we decided to go yo-yoing in that area. The velvety snow was wonderful as some of us napped and some of us laid 1st tracks on several Southeast-facing slopes. Ruth had an opportunity to swim in Camp Lake as Eric went to retrieve his hat from the day before. All and all a wonderful ski day with many possibilities in this vast area. By 4pm, we were packed and made ready for our long 6-mile trek to the cars at Pole Creek. In an effort to get in as much skiing as possible, we decided to ski Timberline on Sunday. So after an obligatory Guinness beer, we packed up and headed towards another great Oregon Volcano, Mount Hood.

We awoke on an abandoned forest service road near Government Camp to the smell of Jeffrey pine forest, pesky mosquitoes and gray skies. The huge megalith of Mt. Hood loomed in the foreground on the morning drive to the base of this great volcano. The ski area looking like a tiny soccer field surrounded by crevasses. The climbing route that killed three climbers and resulted in a helicopter crash just three weeks prior was quite visible. Even with this tragedy, you could still see a steady line of adventure seekers booting up the final snowfield to the top. Ruth, Joe and I bought a summer ski ticket, while Eric caught an early flight and Mike visited his sister near Portland. The lift skiing was fabulous on the long, uniform slopes of Hood with the warm sunny desert plain to the East and cool cloudy coastal forest to the west. Mt. Jefferson looms large to the South between these two extreme climate zones.

The summer sun did its work on the slopes of Hood. By 12 noon the snow was mushy and sticky, so much so that it caught on edge of Ruth's ski and caused her to have a bad fall. Unfortunately her bindings did not release and caused her injury to her knee. She managed to painfully ski down to mid mountain. Within 1/2 hour a large contingent of ski patrol and ski patrol trainees descended on Ruth like moths around a candle taking pulse, checking alertness and strapping her to a slide. The friendly nature of Oregonians again manifested itself with the overwhelming sensitivity to Ruth's injury. We even got five paramedics to help rearrange Joe's car for Ruth's ride back.

A timely rainstorm on the trip back to Mike's Sisters house cooled temps. Ruth, again, was taken care of over at Sister Terry's house with Mike fashioning crutches and a new brace for Ruth's leg.

All and all, a fun trip with great friends and superb surroundings.

Three Sisters List Finish Sept 21st, 2002

By Reiner Stenzel, SMS Chair

Three Sisters is a nice peak to finish the SPS List. From Courtright Reservoir it is an easy dayhike and close to the trailhead there is a fine campground for the list-finish party. On Fri night most of the 28 participants arrived at Trapper Springs Campground on the west side of Courtright Res. (8184'). The attendants were Barbara Berne, Gary Bowen, Craig and K-9 Katie Connally, Darrick Danta, Randall Danta, Wally Drake, Steve Eckert, Rick Gordon, Leslie Hoffherr, Delores Holladay, Pat and Gerry Holleman, Ted Lenzie, Susan, Bill and K-9 Kaweah Livingston, Mike McDermitt, R. J. Secor, Helen Shen, Elena Sherman, Dave and Barbara Sholle, Jan StAmand, Ryuta Stenzel, Scot Sullivan, Bob Suzuki, Asher Waxman, and Ron Webber.

Hunting season started at midnight and it was not exactly peaceful. On Sat, 7 am, we walked 10 min to the Cliff Lke trailhead, signed in and took off 30 min later. Safety in numbers prevented a hunting incident. We hiked 2 hours to Cliff Lke (9438') where we regrouped before leaving the trail. It was a picture-perfect summer day. During the break, Leslie took a quick dip into the lake and Ryuta caught a trout. We proceeded along the south shore of Cliff Lke, climbed up a chute to the plateau above the lake and headed XC to a spring from which a small creek runs into Island Lke. At the spring, about 0.3 mi NE of Three Sisters, we regrouped again, directing the trailing party by radio. The spring produced cold clean water for drinking and for cooling our five champagne bottles. The last effort was the ascent into the saddle between higher Sister 1 (10,612') and lower Sister 2 (10,438') and to scramble over rocks and through gnarly whitebark pines to the summit. Partly happy, partly sad I opened the register box of my last SPS peak. While signing in with a #247, Randall popped the first cork and the party on the summit started. We had cheese, crackers, smoked salmon, various dips, chocolate and, of course, plenty of champagne to toast with. Randall sang in Bavarian, I toasted to all my sisters, and R.J. kissed them. We took many pictures, including the formal ones of list finishers and section chairs. The view from the summit was alone worth the hike. On this cloudless day we could see a 180-degree panorama of Sierra peaks from the Kaweahs in the south to the peaks in Yosemite to the north. The San Joaquin Valley baked in 100-deg haze but the Coastal Range was faintly visible. Below us were several blue lakes. The Sisters Ridge has at least four rock outcroppings (or little sisters) which I climbed on an earlier occasion. Likewise, nearby Dogtooth is a fun cl 3 scramble (actually, the lower tooth is cl 4-5). The group, spread out over the rocky summit area, enjoyed the cloudless summer day for a long time. After promising more partying, I convinced everyone to descend by 1 pm. The tigers rushed to beautiful Cliff Lke and took a long break to wait for the trailing party. Some took a refreshing swim in the lake, and Ryuta pulled out six more trout. After regrouping we hit the trail and hiked down at an individual pace, arriving at the campground between 4-5 pm. The day before, I had reserved 5 adjacent campsites so that we had a

nice area for ourselves. We had constructed a hot shower under trees, prepared plenty of firewood for the evening.

As the sun got lower we started with happy hour, cold drinks and hors d'oeuvre. I fired up the coals for my Dutch oven to prepare a big pot of beef stew for dinner. Everyone contributed with so many delicious foods, appetizers, salads, main dishes, fresh trout, deserts, fruit, and abundant wine, beer, soft drinks, even marshmallows to roast over hot coals. As it got dark we all sat around the campfire and it was my turn to tell stories about my climbing experiences and adventures. For this purpose I had prepared 247 pictures on my laptop which turned out large and bright enough for everyone to see. So here is the essence of my story: I grew up in the "old" country, hiked as a boy throughout Germany and especially liked the Alps. I learned to ski in Austria while staying with a youth group in backcountry huts. In the mid-sixties I came to Caltech for further graduate work. The first time I traveled to the Sierras I fell in love with them. But outdoor activities were limited in the busy years of graduation, newly married, starting a career and raising a family with three kids. I climbed Mt Fuji during my honeymoon in the late 60s, Mt Whitney on a Sierra crossing in the 70s. In the early 80's my son joined the Boy Scouts and I became an Assistant Scoutmaster leading many of their outdoors activities. To become more proficient I took the Sierra Club's BMTC course in 1986, taught it next year, followed up with AMTC, became an M-rated leader in 1988, and climbed some 22 SPS peaks that year. At the same time I joined the Ski Mountaineers Section, learned the telemark turn, and began leading T-rated ski trips. During the years of the mountaineering insurance fiasco I acquired the taste and confidence for solo climbs. I also joined the CMC and lead their trips. Undoubtedly, the SPS List stimulated my climbing activities. Although I never imagined to finish the List I continued to climb new peaks and in time passed from basic to senior to master emblem. After some 200+ peaks it dawned to me that it was possible to finish the last 40 peaks as well. Last year I got the list "fever" and climbed 32 peaks, among them some tough class 4-5 peaks like Devil's Crags, Norman Clyde, Palisades Crest, T-bolt and Disappointment. For those climbs I gratefully acknowledge the company of expert leaders like R. J. Secor, Ron Hudson and Greg Vernon. This year I only had to finish some distant "orphans" and to plan the party. Now some special things to mention about my list-finish: I enjoy two activities in the mountains, climbing and skiing. In the first half of the year I lead many ski mountaineering trips for the SMS. Many of these trips involved climbs of SPS peaks on skis. To my knowledge I have skied more SPS peaks (37) than any other list finisher. Some SPS peaks we skied straight to/from the summit (Ritter, Goddard, Trojan, Birch, Tinemaha, Dana, Silliman, Basin, Bago, Morgan, Pickering, etc.), others we skied to the summit block or a steep ridge and climbed the rest (Alta, Brewer, Matterhorn,

Whitney, Red&White, Perkins, Powell, Thompson, State, etc.). I have skied across the Sierra Nevada three times (High Route, Cirque Crest, Onion Valley-Mineral King) and hiked the John Muir Trail in summer time, climbing SPS peaks on the way. Experiencing the mountains in all climates is very special. Ski trips offer unique sceneries, exhilarating ski runs, but challenges from route finding, weather and avalanches. There are no mosquitoes, no bears, hardly any humans, one can ski across lakes and glide over talus and scree slopes. However, in summer time one enjoys better weather, easier climbing, green meadows, wildflowers, swimming, fishing, and eating off the land. Both seasons offer wonderful experiences. Thus, I like both skiing and mountaineering. I have led many joint SPS/SMS trips to promote skiing among climbers and climbing among skiers, in short, ski mountaineering. I am trying to establish a ski mountaineers list of peaks, passes and traverses. It will partly overlap with the SPS list so that there is interest in joint activities. To return to my climbing experiences, I have soloed half the List including some exciting peaks (North Pal, Mid Pal, Darwin, Sill, Bear Creek Spire, Charybdis, Cathedral, Clark, Glacier Ridge, Abbott, and snow-covered ridge on Russell). I have led groups up to 15 people (Powell and Thompson, 5/28/00), but also enjoy to share adventures with one partner. On all lead trips I had only one unpleasant experience, an unpredictable person who signed out, got himself into a near-fatal accident (lightning stroke on Bear Creek Spires), forced us to search at night, activate a Search and Rescue Team, only to find that he survived a night under snow near the summit. Once, I got myself into a typical beginner's trouble on North Guard, i.e., climbed off route unroped into cl 4-5 terrain. Only twice I aborted a planned climb (fresh snow on Abbott, cornices on Triple Divide). I have had no accidents on 247 peak climbs (was born on a Sunday). But I have had some close calls such as a near-strike from a tumbling table-sized boulder released by climbers above me on Winchell, skiing across a snow slab which fractured, riding out a sizable wet snow avalanche on Ritter, surviving a blizzard stuck on a pass, breaking through snow into a hole to the chest with skis and pack on a 4 day solo ski trip, getting hypothermic after swimming to a distant islands on a cold lake, and standing face-to-face with an upright bear with my foodbag between us.

My nicest experiences include walking through fields of wildflowers on climbs of northern Sierra peaks (Disaster, Stanislaus, Sonora in July), skiing T-bolt's North Couloir on firnglider skis in June, watching the colors of the sky at sunrise after spending the night on top of Whitney, sunbathing at the sandy beaches of Benson Lke, eating sautéed King Boletes with fresh trout, blueberries for dessert. My longest trip was the JMT, 19 days, 250 mi, 50,000', and 7 SPS peaks. My longest day hike was to Mt Lyell, 25 mi, 5000'. The largest ascent in one day was 8000' to Colosseum via Sawmill Pass (9/22/01). Most peaks per day were three (N Guard, Brewer and S Guard, 10/15/88, and Rogers, Foerster and Electra, 6/26/99). The most exhilarating climbs were Devils Crag #1 and Norman Clyde; the least interesting ones were Granite Chief and Kern Point. My latest climb of the year was Owens Pk in December (12/ 29/99), my first one in the year was Alta Pk in February (2/12/00). Outside the Sierras, I climbed and skied in the Alps (Haute Route Zermatt-Chamonix on telemark skis), Canadian Rockies and Selkirks, Norway, climbed Mt Fuji, skied Mauna Kea, and, of course, Lassen and Shasta. Now, after finishing the List, I began to reflect on the most obvious questions: Why did I climb the List? What do I do after it? Well, I climbed it because I simply like climbing and skiing, the physical and mental challenge which it requires, the reward of summiting, I enjoy the nature, the freedom, friends to share it with, photography, etc. The List was my guide, not always my goal, but I am grateful to have done it since it led me to so many beautiful places in the Sierra. Finishing the List is no reason for me to retire, rather to search for new goals. On my mind is an SPS "Extension List" of some 50 worthy, but unlisted peaks (The Sphinx, Furquhar, Starlight, Polemonium, Fin Dome, Feather, Caltech, Mary Austin, Woodworth, just to name a few). In contrast to the main list this one should be flexible and any comparable peaks would qualify. I am also happy to repeat some fine SPS peaks and help others to climb/lead them. On the ski mountaineering side, I would like to complete 50 Sierra peaks on skis. I also would like to establish a suitable list for ski mountaineering. I think all these goals are worthy, not too far-fetched, and may be accomplished in my 60's with the help of good friends.

Last but not least, I would like to thank Gerry Holleman for co-leading this SPS/SMS trip and all participants to share the fun on the summit and the party.

PASSINGS

STEVE WILKIE

Long-time SMS member, Steve Wilkie passed away in November, following two heart attacks. He had enjoyed activities with the Ski Mountaineering Section as much as anything else in his life, but left behind that "heavy lifting" to come north with his partner, Doris Golden, where they took up canoeing on the Russian River and lakes around Healdsburg. He left this good life with a bagpipe memorial service in Healdsburg where many friends and relatives gathered to bid him adieu.

Submitted by Pat Holleman

MARY HELEN DAWSON

Mary Helen Dawson, wife of Glen Dawson for 62 years, passed away on November 22nd. Glen Dawson was a Charter member of the Ski Mountaineers Section.

Submitted by Ann Kramer

Mt Islip Hike Trip Report

By Mark Goebel

There were nine of us. It was a first. The women outnumbered the men! The gals were all immigrants to the US, representing France, Poland, Russia, Thailand, and I think Japan. Only saw 5 other people on the trail. Cool in the shade, upper 40s at the start. Beyond Little Jimmy we started seeing burnt trees. At first I thought they were from lightening strikes, but later realized the fire from Crystal Lk had come over the ridge. There are burnt trees almost to the top of Islip, but somewhat spotty. The day was so nice, and the group was hiking great, so we pushed on to Mt Hawkins. Lots of burnt forest as you get close to the peak. There was a burned area that extended clear down to the Crest Hwy. All but one made Hawkins, great view to B. Powell, Baldy, and Iron Mt. The sun was getting low, so we were soon on our way down, mostly through chilly shade, reaching the cars a little after four.

Mugelnoos

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Announcements

Link for Current Snow Pack in the Sierra: *(from the California Department of Water Resources)*

<http://cdec.water.ca.gov/snow/current/snow/>

East Side:

<http://cdec.water.ca.gov/snow/current/snow/pillowplots/OwensMono.html>

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Happy Holidays!

