


RLH 12/06
2006 YEARBOOK

THE  UGELNODS

November 2006

Issue # 797



Randy rips 'em, classic hat and all

Glass Creek Meadows, April 1-2, 2006 *Randy Lamm*

This SMS trip was originally billed as Elderberry Canyon and Onion Valley car camp. That plan was aborted due to recent heavy snows and high avalanche activity in Elderberry and road closure low down on the Onion Valley road. With snow predicted for the weekend we had no other choice but to reschedule for something with a lower angle for safer conditions. We decided to base camp out of one of the fisherman motels in June Lake. The participants were: Scott Koepke, Lance Pherson, Mike Rector, Randy Lamm and Tom Marsh. Saturday morning we rendezvoused at about 9500' at Glass Creek Meadows (west end of Glass Creek, <http://www.topozone.com/map.asp?lat=37.7299&lon=-119.0526&datum=nad83>).

Saturday was a perfect day for a ski tour with no wind and temps in the 30's. We set our sites on a peaklet at the west end of the White Wing ridge and skinned across the meadow into the forest. Following our compass heading due south we climbed out above the tree line and arrived at the base of a saddle between the white wing peaks. Seeing a good glade we climbed higher thru 3 1/2' of light powder. Gaining the ridge line we toured up to the top of the peak. With views of Mammoth Mountain to the south and San Joaquin Peak east face with "The Negatives" in view, we ripped our skins and picked our lines thru the sparsely treed glades. Snaking thru the light powder we found our rhythm and carved our initials on the virgin powder canvas. Too quickly we were back at treeline. We used our previously

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MUGELNOOS STAFF

EDITOR
MUGELMAILER

John Anderson
Pat Holleman

EDITOR'S NOTES

This is the first edition of Mugelnoos with me as editor, and new leadership. Scott Koepke, a high-energy litigation attorney in Los Angeles has taken over as SMS chair. More on Scott next issue. Heiko Knapp has moved on to Outings Chair, where he will do an outstanding job. Randy, Keith, Steve, Reiner, Owen, Pat and Tom represent the sage wisdom of prior SMS leadership in their various official roles.

This first edition is a bit rough (and late). We are going back to the old format as the software is more familiar to work with. I hope to make the publication fun and interesting over my tenure, as it was in the early days of the SMS. If you have any ideas, let me know .

John

NEXT ISSUE

January issue deadline is Jan 10, 2007. All letters, photos, slides, or articles should be sent to Mugelnoos editor, John Anderson, 21717 Evalyn Avenue, Torrance, CA 90503. Materials can be sent by IBM disc or e-mailed to jaydeeay@yahoo.com. 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!

SMS WEB PAGE

For Sale:

2003 Atomic Tm:22 160cm skis (106-72-98) drilled for Fritschi bindings, used once \$125obo. 2002 BD Crossbow 171cm skis (115-82-105) mounted with Fritschi Diamar-Freeride bindings w/ brakes, excellent condition. Also have ski crampons and BD Ascension skins for this rig. All for \$575. Mens Lowa Strukura EVO AT boots, 299mm shell, fits size 8.5 to 9 \$100obo. Thermarest ultralight 3/4 pad, approx. 7/8 in thick, \$30. jim_garvey@sbcglobal.net or call 310-809-0792.

OFFICERS

Chair: Scott Koepke	(310) 413-8087
Vice Chair: Steve Hessen	(562) 693-5012
Secretary: Randy Lamm	(310) 319-1947
Treasurer: Tom Marsh	(805) 498-9580
Programs: Keith Martin	(310) 316-7617
Outings: Heiko Knapp	(213) 385-8220
Mugelnoos Editor: John Anderson	(310) 503-2542
MugelSpinner: Thomas Johansson	
Conservation: Kathy Crandall	(661) 255-9661
Mugelmailer: Pat Holleman	(310) 374-4654
Asst. MugelSpinner; Reiner Stenzel	(310) 454-8787
Asst. MugelSpinner: Owen Malloy	(760) 934-9511

SMS LEADERS

SMS Leaders and Officers:

Kathy Crandall (M)
Newhall
661-255-9661
kcran-dal@hartdistrict.org

Andy Fried (E)
Northridge
818-993-1891
andy-fried@earthlink.net

Mark Goebel
Huntington Beach
714-963-9384
Goebel.mj@verizon.net

Leslie Hofherr (Prov I)
Pleasanton
(925) 422-8255
hofherr2@lilnl.gov

Pat and Gerry Holleman (M)
Manhattan Beach
310-374-4654
patngerry247@verizon.net

Thomas Johansson
Newport Beach
thomasjohansson@sbcglobal.net

Heiko Knapp
Los Angeles
213-385-8220
heiko.knapp@web.de

Scott P. Koepke
Los Angeles
(O) 213-623-7820
(Cell) 310-413-8087
SPKoepke@aol.com

Randy Lamm (I)
Santa Monica
310-319-1947
randy_lamm@yahoo.com

Owen Maloy (I)
Mammoth Lakes
760-934-9511
owen.maloy@verizon.net

Keith Martin (M)
Palos Verdes Estates
310-316-7617
kwmartin@verizon.net

Tom Marsh (I)
Thousand Oaks 805-498-9580
qrtmoon@aol.com

Lorene Samoska (I)
La Canada Flint-ridge818-952-3665
sam-sei@earthlink.net

Mike Seiffert (I)
La Canada Flint-ridge818-952-3665
sam-sei@earthlink.net

Reiner Stenzel (M)
Pacific Palisades310-454-9787
stenzel@physics.ucla.edu

Alvin Walter (M)
San Diego, CA858-586-1982
awalter@pacbell.net

The Mugelnoos is a newsletter published by and for the Ski Mountaineers Section of the Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter since 1938. Send subscriptions and address changes to: Pat Holleman, 1638 6th Street, Manhattan Beach, CA.90266 \$15 per year payable to "SMS." Due in October. Subscription payments are not tax deductible as charitable contributions.

Calendar of Events

All trips sponsored Ski Mountaineers unless otherwise indicated.

Nov 21 Tues Ski Mountaineers Monthly Meeting. Meet your ski friends, discuss trips and be entertained by a slide/video program. Newcomers welcome. 7:30 pm Griffith Park Ranger Station Auditorium, 4730 Crystal Springs Drive, Los Angeles.

Dec 9 Sat O: Ski Mammoth Mountain: Early chance to brush up skills for the upcoming season. Two days of skiing Mammoth Mtn: Ldr: Andy Fried. Asst: Gerry Holleman

Jan 12-15 Fri-Mon TI: Ski Mammoth: Join us for 3 days of skiing in the Mammoth area. Stay in comfortable condo, ski mountain or join local ski tour. Includes 3 nights comfortable condo, 2 dinners, happy hour, continental breakfast. \$25 cancellation fee before Dec 10; entire fee non-refundable thereafter without suitable replacement. Send 2 sase, photos, \$210 with SC#/\$225 non-member (Ski Mountaineers) to Leaders: Ldr: Tom Marsh. Co-Ldrs: Lorene Samoska and Mike Seiffert

Jan 16 Tues Monthly Meeting Meet your ski friends, discuss trips and be entertained by slide/video program. Newcomers welcome. 7:30 pm Griffith Park Ranger Station Auditorium (4730 Crystal Springs Dr, Los Angeles).

Jan 27 Sat I: (Orange County Sierra Singles, Ski Mountaineers) Mt. Pinos Backcountry Ski Tour: Moderately strenuous 4 mi, 500' gain to panoramic vista. Ski from end of Mt Pinos Hwy to summit at Condor Pt. Possible side trips to Inspiration Pt, other destinations or just playing may add a few miles and several hundred feet elevation gain. May ski lower on mountain if conditions warrant. Part of route may be in pre-existing tracks, but recent snowfall, rutted trail or aesthetics may require breaking new trail. Intermediate xc skills required and metal-edged backcountry skis and backcountry boots highly recommended. Email/phone with experience/conditioning to leaders. Ldr: Mark Mitchell. Co-Ldr: Keith Martin

Jan 27-28 Sat-Sun TI: Baldy Hut Weekend: Stay in the comfort of the Baldy Hut and ski all the chutes of the Bowl Saturday and Sunday. The terrain is high intermediate to very advanced. Ldr: Alvin Walter Asst.: tbd

Feb 20 Tues Monthly Meeting Meet your ski friends, discuss trips and be entertained by slide/video program. Newcomers welcome. 7:30 pm Griffith Park Ranger Station Auditorium (4730 Crystal Springs Dr, Los Angeles).

Mar 10 Sat I (Orange County Sierra Singles, Ski Mountaineers) Mt Pinos Backcountry Ski Tour: Moderately strenuous 4 mi, 500' gain to panoramic vista. Ski from end of Mt Pinos Hwy to summit at Condor Pt. Possible side trips to Inspiration Pt, other destinations or just playing may add a few miles and several hundred feet elevation gain. May ski lower on mountain if conditions warrant. Part of route may be in pre-existing tracks, but recent snowfall, rutted trail or aesthetics may require breaking new trail. Intermediate xc skills required and metal-edged backcountry skis and backcountry boots highly recommended. Email/phone with experience/conditioning to Leaders: Ldr: Mark Mitchell. Co-Ldr: Keith Martin

Mar 10-11 Sat-Sun TI: Ski Where the Best Snow Is: Ski tour to local mountains, the Sierra or desert peaks, where the snow conditions are the best. Typical destinations are Baldy, Gorgonio, Jacinto, cl 2 Sierra Peaks, White Mtns or Panamints. Location depends on road and snow conditions. Snow camping or car camping. Bring backcountry ski and camping gear. Intermediate to better skiing abilities required. Send experience, contact info, ride share info to Ldr. Reiner Stenzel. Asst: tbd

Mar 10 Sat I (Orange County Sierra Singles, Ski Mountaineers): Mt. Pinos Backcountry Ski Tour: Moderately strenuous 4+ mile, 500' gain to panoramic vista. Ski from end of Mt Pinos Highway to summit at Condor Point. Possible side trips to Inspiration Point, other destinations, or just playing may add a few miles + a few 100 feet elevation loss & gain. May ski lower on mountain if conditions warrant. Part of route may be in pre-existing tracks, but recent snowfall, rutted trail, or aesthetics may require breaking new trail. Intermediate X-C skills required & metal-edged, backcountry skis & backcountry boots highly recommended. Bring winter clothing, water, lunch. No snow or likely blizzard cancel trip. Send e-mail or phone leader w/ experience level/conditioning for trip details in the 2 weeks before trip. Ldr: Mark Mitchell, Co-Ldr: Keith Martin

March 10-11 Sat-Sun TI: San Gorgonio Area Snow camp: Spend two days camping near and skiing the chutes and bowls around San Gorgonio, Mt Jepson, Mt Charlton, Mt Anderson, Mt Shields. The terrain is intermediate to advanced and anyone who is intermediate or better who wants to come to photograph is welcome. Ldr: Alvin Walter Asst.: tbd

Mar 20 Tues Ski Mountaineers Monthly Meeting. Meet your ski friends, discuss trips and be entertained by a slide/video program. Newcomers welcome. 7:30 pm Griffith Park Ranger Station Auditorium, 4730 Crystal Springs Drive, Los Angeles.

Mar 29 - Apr 1 Thu-Sun M: (Ski Mountaineers, SPS) Mt. Lyell (13,114'), Mt. McClure (12,880'): Join us on a challenging winter climb of these classic Sierra peaks as we ascend the second largest glacier in the Sierra. Emblem celebrations will no doubt ensue! Skis and snowshoes welcome. Must have excellent snow camping skills, comfort on class 3-rock/steep snow, experience with ice-ax and crampons and travel on avalanche terrain, and a positive attitude. Be prepared for strenuous days and cold nights: total 26+ mi, 8400' gain. Approach via Rush Creek and Donohue Pass. This is a restricted outing open to all Sierra Club members. Please send an email w/ recent experience and conditioning, SC#, and completed Medical Form to Ldr: Jeff Dhungana. Co-Ldr: Reiner Stenzel

April 14-15 Sat-Sun TI: Sierra Day Tours: Ski to Cloud Ripper and Mt Goode from South Lake. Intermediate to advanced terrain. Ldr: Alvin Walter Asst.: tbd

Apr 17 Tues Ski Mountaineers. Monthly Meeting. Meet your ski friends, discuss trips and be entertained by a slide/video program. Newcomers welcome. 7:30 pm Griffith Park Ranger Station Auditorium, 4730 Crystal Springs Drive, Los Angeles.

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The boys skinning up to White Wing

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built skin track to quickly hike back up and make our marks on the untracked slopes in the vicinity. After a quick lunch stop we climbed to east up to the higher main white wing ridge. Here we found deeper powder on wider open slopes. We had some good vertical and then descended into the trees. Eventually we encountered crust and wound up back in the middle. After a 700' we skied back to June village.

In our base camp motel room we sampled fine beers with mike's wife's home made pasta and then crashed out ready for the next day's attempt of San Joaquin Peak's east faces.



April Fool's Sierra Pow!!

On Sunday we descended into the south end of Yost Creek Meadow. Our goal was a ridge heading up from the south towards the top of the ridge above the negatives. We started a long slog thru the forest and heavy powder snow. After a long struggle with clawing branches and thick roots we made it above the

treeline. By the time we got there, a storm was starting to blow in. This was the precursor of the big 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ in 3 days storm. We continued on, contouring around the ridge lines and finally picking a broad gully to ascend. The wind howled, but we persevered. At around 10.5 k the gusts were strong enough to blow us over. We had enough and decided to pull skin and head back. We surfed the wind waves of sastrugi snow back to the Yost Meadow. An invigorating climb above Yost Meadows and we pulled our skins and skied back to June Village.

Scott headed back home to go to a birthday party for his kids. We had another beer tasting and



Tracks in the powder on the lower slopes. San Joaquin ridge in the background

crashed out early. It rained all night. Then in the morning it started snowing big fat wet flakes. We headed over to the ski lifts to see if it would be a powder day on the lifts. With 1 vote in favor of skiing the wet powder and 2 against, we decided to head home. This was the beginning of the storm that dropped 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ in 3 days. We headed for the Taqueria in bishop where we ran into Lorene and Mike. After a fine meal of tacos, chips and salsa we headed down 395 back to our regular routines, until our next scheduled SMS adventure.



SANGORGONIO SNOW CAMP, MARCH 2006

Alvin Walter

My San Gorgonio Wilderness Snow camp was excellent with about 2.5 feet of new powder. Craig Denson was the only skier willing to head to the mountains in the face of Southern California's first major cold snowstorm for 2006 bearing down.

We started at 7,000 feet at Jenks Lake Road and headed toward Dollar Lake. The distance and trailbreaking was taking a toll on our time. We stopped short of Dollar Lake and set up camp leaving time to climb and get some turns. We went straight up via many switchbacks towards peaklet 9,810. The dry and cold powdery snow was boiling up around the sides of my fat K2 skies as they compressed air when sinking deep into the new powder -- an experience unique these conditions. By 5:00 PM, we had peeled our skins and started down. It was Awesome! We were hopping and floating from turn to turn as waves of frictionless powder would accelerate past us from our previous turns. These are the conditions that ski moun-

taineers dream about and we were living it! Stopping for photos was hard, but we did manage a few that I will be sending along. They include the top and bottom of a major avy chute that crosses the main trail in, a different perspective of Christmas Tree Hill, our campsite, nice scenery, and of course some deep tracks with action plums and waves of powder.

Night time brought more snow and cool temperatures of nine degrees fahrenheit. By Sunday morning the storm clouds had cleared and the sun shown bright. We headed back up the beautiful old growth forest to a more northerly aspect of peaklet 9,810. Clouds came back in with some light winds within the first hour keeping temperatures cool. It wasn't cool enough to dampen our sprits or enthusiasm for another powder charged descent on those tiny little white crystals that bring us such joy. Back at camp we enjoyed a leisurely lunch while packing up to head out to rejoin the more civilized

Wrightwood to Baldy Ski Tour April 20-21 2006 by Rich Henke

Multiple day point-to-point ski tours are not common in Southern California. One of the best is a trans-San Gabriel tour from Wrightwood to Baldy. It is possible to ski a continuous ridge that connects four peaks: Wright Mountain, Pine Mountain, Dawson Peak, and Mt. Baldy. I did this route for the 1st time as a day trip in Feb 1985 and repeated it several years later as the final leg of a 3-day winter ski from Mount Waterman to Mt Baldy. It was much more pleasant the third time in late April with long days, a leisurely schedule, and mostly corn snow.

It was almost noon on April 20 when Armando Menocal and I start walking from the Blue Ridge Trailhead on Hwy 2 just above Big Pine. We had spent the morning driving from Redondo Beach and spotting a car at Manker Flat on the Mt. Baldy road. The elevation is 7380 feet, and although we can see snow covered Mt. Baldy in the distance, there is no snow on the road in front of us. We quickly gain elevation and by the time we reach the top of the Mountain High Ski Area, we are able to put on our skis and ski most of the road as it winds its way toward Wright Mountain. This year was a heavy snow year for the San Gabriels. For most years, this tour would have to be done much earlier in the season.

The Blue Ridge road parallels the Pacific Crest Trail and it often is on a narrow ridge with precipitous drops on both sides. After about 7 miles, we reach the point (8240 feet) where a narrow ridge headed south toward Pine Mountain. This is the beginning of the "interesting" part of the tour. The sign that I remembered from many years ago, marking the start of the summer hiking route, is no longer there. After a short detour to summit Wright Mountain, we

walk down the steep ridge carrying our skis. We decide we will contour left around the first bump on the ridge. This turns out to be a mistake. The east side of the ridge is too steep and we are forced to descend to 7600 feet before we find a steep gully where we can ski up again toward Pine Mountain. Staying on the initial ridge would have been difficult for a short distance but easier overall. Shortly after 7 p.m., we find a flat spot and camp for the night.

On day 2, we climb to the summit of Pine Mountain at 9648 feet. To the west, Mt. Baden Powell dominates our view on the far side of the huge valley formed by the East Fork of the San Gabriel River. Although the skies are clear and the temperatures pleasant, a strong wind prevents the formation of corn snow. We wait for a while, hoping that the snow will soften, but we become impatient. We drop down 400 feet to the saddle between Pine and Dawson, having to sidestep and survival ski most of the way. By the time we reach the summit of Dawson, the snow has softened a bit and we have reasonable skiing down to the saddle between Dawson and Baldy. Thirteen hundred feet of climbing with skins gets us to the top of Mt. Baldy. It is still windy, but the snow in Baldy Bowl is excellent and we do nice turns all the way to the Baldy Hut. The snow becomes sparse, and our skis are on our backs as we walk down the trail to Manker Flat and our waiting car.

This seldom done tour consisted of about 15 miles and more than 4000 vertical feet. The views in all directions are unbeatable. We went relatively light - our packs were 28 pounds each. We carried crampons and an ice ax but didn't use them. The snow can be very icy on this tour

(Continued from page 3)

Apr 21-22 Sat-Sun TI: Onion Valley Area ski tours: Ski (hopefully) on corn snow in the Eastern Sierra to Kearsarge Pass and Robinson Basin on day tours and car camp. Intermediate or better downhill skiing ability, metal edge skis with skins. Send experience, h/w phones, e-mail & addresses to Ldr: Mark Goebel. Asst Ldr: Tom Marsh

Apr 21-22 Sat-Sun TI: Ski Where the Best Snow Is: Ski tour to local mountains, the Sierra or desert peaks, where the snow conditions are the best. Typical destinations are Baldy, Gorgonio, Jacinto, cl 2 Sierra Peaks, White Mtns or Panamints. Location depends on road and snow conditions. Snow camping or car camping. Bring backcountry ski and camping gear. Intermediate to better skiing abilities required. Send experience, contact info, ride share info to Ldr. Reiner Stenzel. Asst: tbd

Apr 27-30 Thu-Mon TI: Middle Fork Bishop Creek: Ski up into drainage and make a base camp. Ski tours to places of interest, possibly including Mt. Wallace. Required metal edged skis with climbing skins, avy beacon, shovel, and snow camping gear. E-mail or call with experience, address and home phone to Ldr: Jim Crouch. Asst: Alvin Walter.

May 12-13 Sat-Sun TI: Rock Creek Introductory Ski Tour: Car camp, ski slopes of beautiful Little Lakes Valley and surrounding area. Intro SMS day tours aimed at intermediate or better skiers with some backcountry experience. Metal-edged skis & skins required. Send experience, contact, ride share info to Ldr: Mike Seiffert. Asst: Lorene Samoska

May 15 Tues Ski Mountaineers. Monthly Meeting. Meet your ski friends, discuss trips and be entertained by a slide/video program. Newcomers welcome. 7:30 pm Griffith Park Ranger Station Auditorium, 4730 Crystal Springs Drive, Los Angeles.

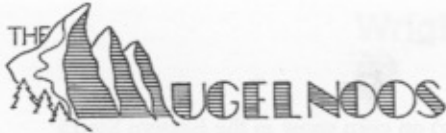
May 19-20 Sat-Sun TI: Ski Where the Best Snow Is: Ski tour to local mountains, the Sierra or desert peaks, where the snow conditions are the best. Typical destinations are Baldy, Gorgonio, Jacinto, cl 2 Sierra Peaks, White Mtns or Panamints. Location depends on road and snow conditions. Snow camping or car camping. Bring backcountry ski and camping gear. Intermediate to better skiing abilities required. Send experience, contact info, ride share info to Ldr. Reiner Stenzel. Asst.: tbd

June 2-3 Sat-Sun TI: Ski Where the Best Snow Is: Ski tour to local mountains, the Sierra or desert peaks, where the snow conditions are the best. Typical destinations are Baldy, Gorgonio, Jacinto, cl 2 Sierra Peaks, White Mtns or Panamints. Location depends on road and snow conditions. Snow camping or car camping. Bring backcountry ski and camping gear. Intermediate to better skiing abilities required. Send experience, contact info, ride share info to Ldr. Reiner Stenzel. Asst.: tbd

MAMMOTH NORDIC TO GROOM TOWN TRAILS

Sometimes when the weather is bad, the backcountry isn't working, and Mammoth and June are too windy to be fun, a good few hours of cross country skiing gets you a good workout in a short period of time.

A new wrinkle in the Nordic scene in the town of Mammoth Lakes will be groomed public trails. The Mammoth Lakes Trails System (MLTS) was put into place in 1993 to provide a year-round trails system for locals and visitors. This year the winter half of that year-round formula gets going. Brian Knox, local business owner and founder of Mammoth Nordic, has raised money to buy a CAT to groom the trails. Brian will begin a pilot grooming system in place this winter (if it ever snows). Eventually officials hope to expand the trails system grooming program to connect the tunnel under Hwy 203 all the way to Mammoth Creek Park on Old Mammoth Road, including a Nordic loop on the parcel of school property just north of the Middle School, as well as a connecting trail from School District property due north to the Hwy 203 tunnel.



FUTURE MUGELNOOS ISSUES 2006-2007

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- List of great backcountry websites
- Essential books for the backcountry library
- Articles from other backcountry publications and websites

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22 DEC 2006 PM 8 T



Mugelnoos

Pat Holleman
1638 6th Street
Manhattan Beach,
CA 90266

Richard L. Henke
409 South Lucia
Redondo Beach, CA 90277-
SMS RCS R 2007