



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

BACKPACK SECTION, LOMA PRIETA CHAPTER

Inside VOL. 52, NO. 9, OCTOBER 2007

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Section members and public are invited.

SECTION MEETING

Season-End Photos at the Sunnyvale Sports Basement

Monday, October 8, 2007 at 7:00 PM

Note location and time change this month!

(Map and directions are on page 2)

Join the backpack section leaders for a season-end photo show at Sports Basement in Sunnyvale. Section leaders will show select photos and talk about their recent trips.

Come see all the fun that members had on trips this year! Come discover the beauty of the places we visited!

Refreshments will be provided courtesy of Sports Basement.

If you participated in a Section trip this year and have digital pictures to share, contact Steve Sergeant a.s.a.p.

Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter, Backpack Section (BPS)
 c/o Katherine Greene
 PO Box 390578
 Mountain View, CA 94039

Backpack Section (BPS)

<http://lomaprieta.sierraclub.org/bps/>

Founded January 13, 1956, the BPS is an official activities section of the Sierra Club's Loma Prieta Chapter, serving San Mateo, Santa Clara, and San Benito counties in California. The Section sponsors backpacking trips to wilderness and scenic areas, ranging from easy beginner weekend outings to more rigorous expeditions of up to two weeks, no matter what the season. Most trips are within California and Nevada, mainly in local, state, or national parks, national forests, wilderness areas, and national monuments. All trip leaders are volunteers, and fees for trips are limited to actual costs incurred for expenses, such as group meals and permits.

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Meeting: Season-End Photos

Monday, October 8, 2007 at 7:00 PM

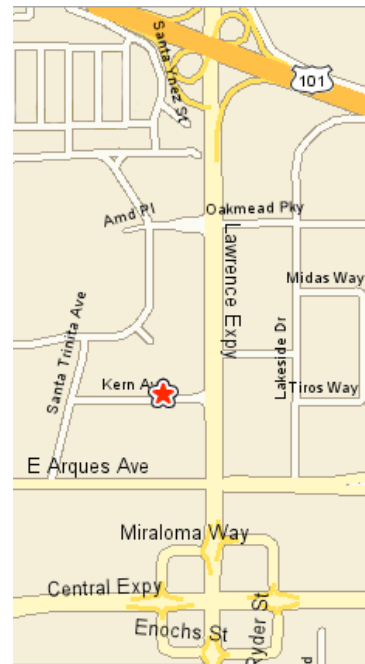
Hosted by

The Sports Basement

(This month only)

Directions

The Sports Basement is located in the old Fry's Electronics building at 1177 Kern Avenue in Sunnyvale. From Highway 101, take the Lawrence Expressway south to Kern Avenue. Turn right. The Sports Basement parking lot is the first driveway on your right.



PROGRAM SUGGESTIONS NEEDED

Submitted by Jean Higham-Sergeant, Secretary/Newsletter Editor

What ideas do you have?

In lieu of begging you to fill the Backpack Section's hard-core sounding volunteer position of programs coordinator, I'm asking instead for your ideas on what we might do for the evening programs at our monthly meetings. Can you or someone you know give a short presentation to a small group of people? Topics of interest are vastly numerous, including:

- Environmental issues
- Slide shows, near and distant trip destinations
- Equipment demonstrations/reviews
- How-to lectures
- Backcountry cooking demonstrations
- Poetry readings, book reviews
- Introductions to other Sierra Club sections and activities
- Photography
- Wildlife
- Wildflower/plant/mineral identification

Please pass along your ideas to any Section officer or appointee, or to Section Chair, Steve Sergeant, at backpack.chair@lomaprieta.sierraclub.org or at (408) 937-8116. 📍

TRIP REPORTS

Swimming the Emigrant Wilderness

by Mark Alexander

When a friend and I discovered last year that we share the same favorite lake, Lertora Lake, in the Emigrant Wilderness, we knew we had to plan a trip to visit it, and swim in as many other lakes as possible on the way. We finally did just that in late August this year, taking a leisurely week to get there and back in a near-loop, accompanied by two other friends.

Our route took us from the Crabtree trailhead to Lertora Lake via Camp Lake, Gem Lake (where we camped one night), Wood Lake, and Cow Meadow Lake. Lertora Lake is a little-visited swimmer's paradise, with numerous islands, inlets, peninsulas, and steep granite walls. We had the

lake nearly to ourselves for two nights. Even mosquitoes were scarce, due to the very dry conditions. On our layover day we took cross-country day hikes to visit nearby tiny Frog Lake and huge Huckleberry Lake.

On the return trip, we took a partly cross-country route to Pingree Lake, in the southern part of the Wilderness. We stayed two nights at this lovely lake, shallower than Lertora but still wonderful for swimming. In the evenings, we sat by the lake and watched bats swooping and diving for bugs. On the layover day we hiked down spectacular expanses of open granite to nearby Big Lake, where we swam and sunned.

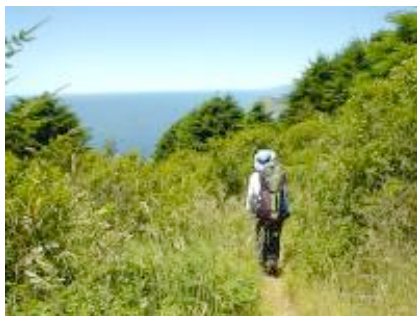
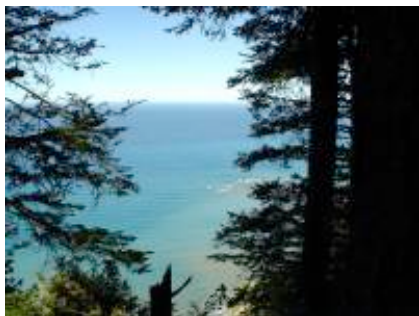
We made our way back towards the trailhead via Gem Lake, where we had a refreshing swim, and made camp at (appropriately enough) Camp Lake.

That night we woke at 2:00 AM to watch the lunar eclipse, and marveled at the reddish colors and crater details that were clearly visible through binoculars.

On the final short hike out to the trailhead the next morning, one of us saw a bear scamper up the hill away from the trail and disappear. This was the first bear any of us had ever seen in the Emigrant Wilderness. Clearly the bears there are much wilder than the soda-drinking, cookie-munching bears of Yosemite.

This was the longest backpack I'd done in many years, but I didn't really want to leave the wilderness, even after seven days. There are still some lakes in the Emigrant I haven't visited. Maybe next year I'll get a chance to see them.

Lost Coast Trail: Sinkyone Wilderness by Jean Higham-Sergeant



In mid June, starting at the Needle Rock Visitor Center near Garberville, Mary and I hiked the rugged and remote Sinkyone Wilderness portion of the Lost Coast Trail — about 22 miles. We hiked south, camping at Railroad Camp, Wheeler Camp, and Little Jackass Creek Camp, and on the fourth day, we hiked out at Usal Beach.

Steve and Lowell hiked from the south to the north, meeting us at Wheeler Camp. There we exchanged car keys with each other, enabling both our parties to do complete through hikes without requiring a shuttle.

Poison oak and ticks were abundant, but the mosquitoes were inconsequential, and the weather was perfect. The scenery was a fabulous

alternative to the Sierra, which at that time of the year was still snowbound. According to some other hikers we met, a bear preceded us on the trail, but we never saw it. We did see an elk, and at Bear Harbor we saw abalone divers taking advantage of the exceptionally low tide. We saw very few people along the trail. This was a wonderful way to start the backpack season! 🏃

MEETING MINUTES *submitted by Jean Higham-Sergeant, Secretary*

September 2007

The September meeting was our first since June. We had introductions, followed by reports of Section trips that were conducted since the last

meeting. Steve Sergeant talked about the Section volunteer positions that are open, i.e., programs coordinator and newsletter editor.

The Section officer election is due

to be held before the end of the year. A volunteer nominating committee was formed, including Pat Spragge, Anne Gorby, and Renee Rivera. 🏃

JOHN MUIR QUOTE

A fine meadow on the edge of the basin of the ancient Tuolumne Mer de Glace

On the head waters of the rivers there are what are called "Big Meadows," usually about from five to ten miles long. These occupy the basins of the ancient ice-seas, where many tributary glaciers came together to form the grand trunks. Most, however, are quite small, averaging perhaps but little more than three fourths of a mile in length.

One of the very finest of the thousands I have enjoyed lies hidden in an extensive forest of the Two-leaved Pine, on the edge of the basin of the ancient Tuolumne Mer de Glace, about eight miles to the west of Mount Dana.

Imagine yourself at the Tuolumne Soda Springs on the bank of the river, a day's journey above Yosemite Valley. You set off northward through a forest that stretches away indefinitely before you, seemingly unbroken by openings of any kind. As soon as you are fairly into the woods, the gray mountain-peaks, with their snowy gorges and hollows, are lost to view. The ground is littered with fallen trunks that lie crossed and recrossed like storm-lodged wheat; and besides this close forest of pines, the rich moraine soil supports a luxuriant growth of ribbon-leaved grasses, bromus, triticum, calamagrostis, agrostis, etc., which rear their handsome spikes and

panicles above your waist. Making your way through the fertile wilderness,--finding lively bits of interest now and then in the squirrels and Clark crows, and perchance in a deer or bear,--after the lapse of an hour or two vertical bars of sunshine are seen ahead between the brown shafts of the pines, showing that you are approaching an open space, and then you suddenly emerge from the forest shadows upon a delightful purple lawn lying smooth and free in the light like a lake. This is a glacier meadow. It is about a mile and a half long by a quarter of a mile wide. The trees come pressing forward all around in close serried ranks, planting their feet exactly on its margin, and holding themselves erect, strict and orderly like soldiers on parade; thus bounding the meadow with exquisite precision, yet with free curving lines such as Nature alone can draw. With inexpressible delight you wade out into the grassy sun-lake, feeling yourself contained in one of Nature's most sacred chambers, withdrawn from the sterner influences of the mountains, secure from all intrusion, secure from yourself, free in the universal beauty. And notwithstanding the scene is so impressively spiritual, and you seem dissolved in it, yet everything about you is beating with warm, terrestrial, human love and life

delightfully substantial and familiar. The resinous pines are types of health and steadfastness; the robins feeding on the sod belong to the same species you have known since childhood; and surely these daisies, larkspurs, and goldenrods are the very friend-flowers of the old home garden. Bees hum as in a harvest noon, butterflies waver above the flowers, and like them you lave in the vital sunshine, too richly and homogeneously joy-filled to be capable of partial thought. You are all eye, sifted through and through with light and beauty. Sauntering along the brook that meanders silently through the meadow from the east, special flowers call you back to discriminating consciousness. The sod comes curving down to the water's edge, forming bossy outswelling banks, and in some places overlapping countersunk boulders and forming bridges. Here you find mats of the curious dwarf willow scarce an inch high, yet sending up a multitude of gray silky catkins, illumined here and there with the purple cups and bells of bryanthus and vaccinium.



From The Glacier Meadows, Chapter 7, The Mountains of California by John Muir (1894). 🏔️

A BOTTLE (OR CAN) OF GREEN, PLEASE *from the Sierra Club Insider, September 4, 2007*

Green beer isn't just for St. Patrick's Day anymore

Green beer isn't just for St. Patrick's Day anymore. Breweries are innovating with more environmentally friendly

techniques that can also make for great drinking.

Listen to Jennifer Hattam's segment on Sierra Club Radio to

find out more about how to pick a beer that fits your values. Go to <http://www.sierraclub.org/radio/programs/beer.mp3>.

NATURAL HEROES *from the Sierra Club Insider, September 18, 2007*

Emmy-award winning television series

The Sierra Club is a proud sponsor of the third season of Emmy-award winning Natural Heroes television series. The program tells the stories of

ordinary citizens who are finding ways to bring clean air and water back to their communities, preserve open spaces, protect endangered species, and ensure that

their schools and neighborhoods are healthy.

You can watch it on channel 9, KQED, San Francisco, at 2:00 PM Saturdays.

SCORE YOUR 'HOOD *from the Sierra Club Insider, October 2, 2007*

"Everywhere is walking distance if you have the time." — Steven Wright

Most Americans take to walking like ducks to asphalt. But it's not always our fault. Many of us live in communities where walking to the store is dangerous, impossible, or both.

Now walkscore.com has launched a website that lets you get a sense for how "walkable" any neighborhood really is — based on the proximity of stores and other

services. Do you live in a "walker's paradise" (score of 90-100)?

Find out for yourself. Go to <http://www.walkscore.com/>.

ACTIVITIES AND TRIPS

General information

Trip registration

Participants need not be Section members, however, trip leader approval is required. Contact the trip leader to preregister. For by-mail trip registration, send the trip leader two large, self-addressed, stamped envelopes (SASEs) with your name, address, work and home phone numbers, e-mail address, a summary of your back-packing experience, and if specified in the trip description, send a check made out to the trip leader.

Up-to-date trip information

All trip information is subject to change. The Section Web site at <http://lomaprieta.sierraclub.org/bps/> may reflect changes that occur after *LUI!* publication. Contact the trip leader for up-to-date information.

Liability waiver

All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. You may review the liability waiver in advance at <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/>, or

contact the Outings Department at (415) 977-5528 for a printed version.

The Sierra Club assumes no responsibility of liability for transportation by private vehicle.

Equipment loans

Two bear canisters and some trail maintenance tools are available for loan (deposit required) to Section leaders and members. For details, contact Matt Hahne, Equipment Manager, (408) 749-9968.

Trip ratings

Max Daily Mileage		Max Daily Elev Gain		Additional Criteria	
<i>Distance in Miles</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>Elevation in Feet</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Code</i>
0 – 5	1	0 – 1,000	A	Cross-country*	-xc
5 – 7.5	2	1,000 – 2,000	B	(Off-trail travel with backpack)	
7.5 – 10	3	2,000 - 3,000	C	Lightweight	-lw
10 - 15	4	3,000 +	D	(Fitness/base pack-weight requirements)	
15+	5				

* Any trip may include optional cross-country hikes from camp

NR = not rated (Contact trip leader for information)

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