

# TRACK



Newsletter of the Ski Touring Section

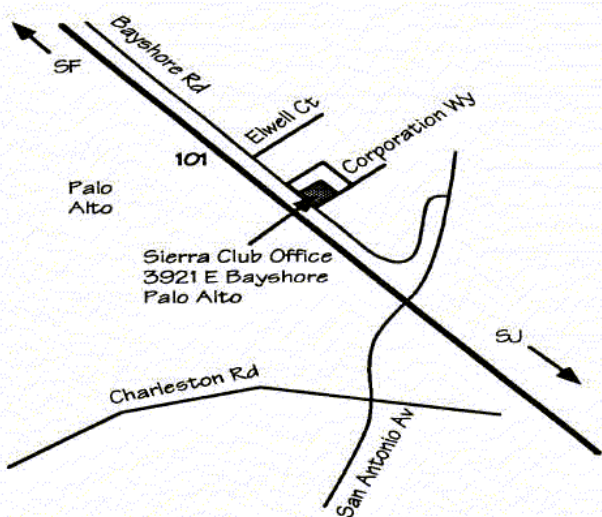
Loma Prieta Chapter

Sierra Club



[www.sierraclub.org/chapters/lomaprieta/sts](http://www.sierraclub.org/chapters/lomaprieta/sts)

**Next Meeting:**  
**“Backcountry Emergency Communications”**  
**Monday, March 5th at 7:30 pm**  
**Peninsula Conservation Center**  
**3921 East Bayshore Road, Palo Alto**



Come join us on Monday, March 5, 2007, at 7:30 PM, at the Peninsula Conservation Center, for an informative presentation on backcountry emergency communications by Loma Prieta Chapter Backpack Section outings training instructor and radio communications expert Steve Stearns.

Steve will discuss traditional signaling methods (whistles, smoke, and mirrors) and their pros and cons before launching into a discussion of electronic communication systems coverage and reliability for

various back country communications requirements. Steve will discuss the pros and cons and techniques for using cell phones, portable ham radio transceivers, satellite phones and more for back country communications. Please come, this informative meeting is open to all.

Also, please mark your calendars for the April and May STS meetings. Our general business meeting and Ski Touring Section officer elections will be held on Monday, April 2, 2007, and our annual pot luck dinner and slide show will be held on Monday, May 7, 2007.

## **Deadline for April TRACK submissions is March 16<sup>th</sup>**

Written descriptions of STS trips and private trips are encouraged, and will be printed as space permits. E-mail submissions (plain text or attached Word documents) to xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx. Leaders are asked to submit trip descriptions and other key information as soon as possible after the planning meeting.

The STS Track Newsletter would like to obtain photos of STS skiers on relatively recent STS trips from STS members to use in future issues of Track. Please include any helpful information with the picture such as the location, a description of the picture, names of any skiers in the picture and a note that it is OK for Track to publish your photo.

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## 2006-2007 STS Calendar

### March

3/3-4 – Kings Canyon lodge trip

**Leaders:** Terri Michel / Chris Kramar;

**Skill Level(s):** Intermediate

3/3-4 – Peter Grubb Hut trip

**Leaders:** Dick Simpson; **Skill Level:** Intermediate

3/5 – STS Monthly Meeting

Peninsula Conservation Center (7:30 pm)

3/10-11 – Highway 88 Ski Trip

**Leader:** Janet Hoffmann; **Skill Level:** Adv Beg - Int

3/9-11 – “Loop Around” Mt. Lassen

**Leader:** John Langbein; **Skill Level:** Advanced Int

3/16-18 – Pinecrest cabin trip

**Leaders:** Joe Schmidt; **Skill Level:** Adv Beg

3/17-18 – Carson Pass to Bear Valley (snow camping)

**Leaders:** Roy Lambertson; **Skill Level:** Advanced

3/17-22 – Tioga Pass Resort to Tuolumne Meadows

**Leaders:** Lowell Mouton / Terri Michel

**Skill Level:** Advanced Intermediate

3/23-25 – Tahoe Donner Cabin Trip

**Leader:** Larry Krumm

**Skill Level(s):** Intermediate+

3/24-25 – Dewey Point snow camping trip

**Leader:** Steve Sergeant; **Skill Level:** Intermediate

### April

4/2 – STS Monthly Meeting

Peninsula Conservation Center (7:30 pm)

4/4-6 – Peter Grubb Hut trip

**Leaders:** Lowell Mouton; **Skill Level:** Int / Adv Int

4/13-15 – Pinecrest cabin snowshoe trip

**Leader:** Joe Schmidt

4/14-21 – Trans-Sierra ski tour

**Leader:** Andy Hudson; **Skill Level:** TBA

### May

5/7 – STS Annual Potluck (location and time TBA)

## Trip Basics

Trips are cooperative ventures organized and lead by volunteers. Trips range from leisurely single-day tours to strenuous multi-day expeditions. Each trip has a classification, which indicates the level of skiing ability and experience that the leader feels is the minimum required. The trip leader has the final say in whom may join a trip and may refuse anyone at any time that they feel has not demonstrated the required level of ability.

## Trip Classifications

**Beginner:** Includes first time cross-country skiers. Leaders frequently provide some type of beginner instruction. 1-2 miles on gentle terrain.

**Advanced Beginner:** Skiers in good condition who have learned the basics of the diagonal stride on the flats and on easy hills. 2-5 miles over rolling terrain.

**Intermediate:** Uphill and downhill skiing on slopes that can be traversed if too steep. An intermediate has developed skill and confidence to snowplow, step turn, and control downhill speeds. Overnight hut trips with a moderate pack load. 3-10 miles average.

**Advanced Intermediate:** Same as Intermediate plus poor snow and weather skills, winter navigation, greater endurance, and snow camping. 10-15 miles.

**Advanced:** These tours are for the hardy skiers who can ski 10 to 30 miles in one day, are able to climb high mountains using skins, and descend with Telemark turns. The advanced skier must be in good shape, acclimatized to high altitudes, and have a working knowledge of map reading, compass, avalanche hazards, and winter survival.

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## Trip/Event Descriptions

### Peter Grubb Hut

**March 3-4 (Sat-Sun)**

**Intermediate**

Ski 2 miles and climb 800 ft from I-80 at Donner Summit to Castle Pass, then go another mile and down into Round Valley and Peter Grubb Hut. The hut is 60+ years old, but has been equipped with solar electric lighting. Enjoy good snow on the north side of Castle Peak or tours to Sand Ridge Lakes. \$30



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## Trip/Event Descriptions (cont.)

Lee Vining Tioga Pass Road trailhead and drive home.

Cost of \$450 per person includes 1 night in motel, 2 nights at TPR (including tips for TPR staff), 5 delicious dinners and breakfasts, 2 lunches, and petrol reimbursement for the cache elves (trip cost estimate is based on 6 people). Note that hut or camping in Tuolumne Meadows is free. Limit 6. All participants must be comfortable skiing up to 16 miles and 3,000' elevation gain with an overnight pack, have snow camping experience, bring metal edged skis, climbing skins, a winter sleeping bag and an avalanche transceiver. Participants must also sign a Sierra Club Liability Waiver and complete a Sierra Club Medical form and return both completed and signed to the leader prior to the trip. All participants must also sign a TPR Release Form. Send 2 long SASEs for trip sign-up application, medical form, waiver, TPR Release and a deposit check for \$450 per person (made to Lowell Moulton) to: Lowell Moulton, xx.

Part or all of deposit nonrefundable if you cancel after February 12th and we can't get a qualified replacement. Trip leader is Lowell Moulton (xxx-xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx). Co-Leader is Terri Michel (xxx or xxxxxxxx).

### Crabtree Trail Cross Country Ski Trip

**March 16-18**

#### Advanced Beginner

This trip is designed to challenge the advanced beginner\*. We will start at the Crabtree trail head and ski up to Aspen Meadows. After a break there, we will return to Crabtree and head east. From this point, it's almost flat along a ridge which offers seclusion in forested areas as well as some great vistas along the way. We'll monitor the group to determine the point to turn back. Our reward will be soaking weary bones in the hot tub as snowflakes descend to earth followed by a great dinner. On Sunday, we'll pick another route depending on snow conditions. There are many in the Pinecrest area. \$90 covers two nights accommodations; two breakfasts and two lunches and one dinner. Every participant will get their own bed and rooms will be shared by same sex. The trip is limited to twelve participants. Please send your check made out to Sierra Singles to Joe Schmidt xxxxxxxx. Be sure to include SIN or name, address, phone and email

address at a minimum. Rain is welcome and doesn't cancel ... think snow! Event covers 10 miles, with 1500 feet of elevation. **Meeting location:** Joseph's Cabin in the Sonora Pass/Emigrant Wilderness/Pinecrest Areas **Leader:** Joe Schmidt, xxx

### Carson Pass to Bear Valley (Snow Camping)

**March 17-18**

#### Advanced

Join us in exploring this seldom-skied section of the crest. We will do this trip as a key exchange, with both groups camping in the vicinity of Clover Valley on Saturday night. We hope to get good views of the Dardanelles region. The distance we will cover in two days is about 26 miles; our nominal route is described in Marcus Libkind's Ski Tours of the Sierra Nevada, Volume 2. It's the "Red Lake to Lake Alpine" tour. Severe weather or avalanche hazard will change our plans. Contact **leader Roy Lambertson** at xxx-; or

. Co-leader is Stephane Mouradian .

**March 23 -25**

### Tahoe cabin adventure

#### Intermediate or better

Want to try a classic Tahoe tour? How about Tahoe Meadows to Brockway Summit? We will stay at our cabin in Truckee. Saturday we'll car shuttle to Tahoe Meadows (off Highway 431 near Mt. Rose Summit) ski to Brockway Summit (11 miles, 2,150 ft ascend, 3,700 ft descend) and car shuttle back. Participants can come up Thursday night and day tour Friday to avoid the Friday traffic. After skiing we return to our cabin for a home cooked meal. Use the hot tub if you want. On Sunday, we'll do a shorter day tour in the Truckee/Tahoe area. Participants need to have metal-edged backcountry skis and skins. Limit: minimum 6, maximum 10. Cabin cost is \$280/ night & will be split between participants. If you are staying 2 nights \$110 holds your spot, 3 nights \$160. Actual cost will be adjusted for the # of people on the trip (costs should go down). Leaders: Larry Krumm - & Paul Hsieh

### Dewey Point Beginner's Snow Camp

**March 24-25**

#### Intermediate

Camp in the snow overlooking Yosemite Valley! This is a good trip for someone ready to graduate from Advanced Beginner to Intermediate. This trip will

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## Trip/Event Descriptions (cont.)

start at the parking lot for the Badger Pass ski area, and will cover 3.75 miles by cross country skis or snowshoe into our campsite. Campers will be encouraged to try alternative winter shelters, such as a snow cave, or a hybrid tarp/trench structure (tents are OK too). On Sunday morning we'll explore the rim of Yosemite Valley to the east of Dewey Point -- perhaps as far as another 3.6 miles to Taft Point -- before traveling back to the Badger Pass parking lot on the Glacier Point Road.

Prior snow camping experience is strongly advised. The leader can advise you on appropriate gear and preparation. Skiers should have experience skiing with a full pack (on a hut trip, for example). The trip is individual commissary, but participants will be encouraged to team-up for shelter and cooking. Limited to seven participants. This trip is co-listed with the Backpack Section.

To register, contact the trip leader: Steve Sergeant, at or ()

### **Peter Grubb Hut Ski Tour**

**April 4-6 (Weds-Fri)**

#### **Intermediate / Advanced Intermediate**

Join us for a fun two night mid-week stay at Peter Grubb Hut. We'll drive up to Clair Tappaan Lodge (CTL) in the Norden area on Tuesday 4/3. On Wednesday 4/4 we'll ski 2 miles and climb 800 ft from I-80 at Donner Summit to Castle Pass, then go another mile and down into Round Valley and Peter Grubb Hut. Peter Grubb Hut lies in a bowl, bounded on the north by Basin Peak and on the east by Castle Peak. The hut is 60+ years old, but was recently equipped with solar electric lighting. On Thursday 4/5 we'll have a full day to enjoy good snow on the north side of Castle Peak or tours to nearby Basin Peak and Sand Ridge Lakes.

We'll ski out and drive home on Friday 4/5.

The Tuesday night Clair Tappaan Lodge fee is about \$55 per night and includes all meals. There is a hot tub, library and living room at the lodge. If you would like more information about Clair Tappaan Lodge then please visit the Sierra Club website, <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/lodges/ctl/>. About \$70 covers hut expenses, Wednesday and Thursday dinner, and Thursday and Friday breakfast; you bring lunches and snacks. If food and hut expenses come in below this then refunds for the difference will be paid back to trip participants. Send 2 long SASEs for trip

sign-up application, medical form, waiver, and a deposit check for \$70 per person (made to Lowell Moulton) to: Lowell Moulton,

. Part or all of deposit nonrefundable if you cancel after March 14th and we can't get a qualified replacement.

Trip Leader: Lowell Moulton, ,

### **Pinecrest Snowshoe Trip**

**April 13-15**

You may have wanted to go to the back country and see nature's beautiful snow, streams but could not since you don't ski. Well, this is an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors and snow shoe! They say that if you can hike, you can snowshoe! We will start at 6,000 feet elevation and snowshoe to a wonderful area called the Punch Bowl. It is surrounded by volcanic cliffs with aspen trees in the vast meadow. We will have to hike to get to the snow since by the end of March the snow starts to melt. The gushing streams are really beautiful so bring your camera. Upon returning to the cabin, we can soak tired bones in the hot tub. On Sunday, we'll take Frasier Flat route down the north side of the ridge through the woods down to the bottom. Returning, we will follow the South Fork of the Stanislaus up to Strawberry. No snowshoeing equipment? It can be rented at any outdoor store like REI. If Dodge Ridge is still open, it can be rented there. See [www.dodgeridge.com](http://www.dodgeridge.com). \$90 covers two nights accommodations; two breakfasts and two lunch fix'ins and one dinner. Every Participant will get their own bed and rooms will be shared by same sex. The trip is limited to eight participants. Well behaved dogs may come on the trip with the advance permission of the Leader.

Please send your check made out to Sierra Singles to Joe Schmidt

. Provide SIN but at a minimum provide address, phone and email address. This event may be co-listed with other groups such as the Ski Touring Section and Bay Chapter. Rain is welcome and doesn't cancel ... think snow! Event covers 10 miles, with 1,000 feet of elevation. Limited to twelve participants with an attempted NOAH. Meeting location: Lucille's Cabin in the Sonora Pass Area (for location, go to google and enter "Lucille's Cabin". For the area, go to [www.thegreatunfenced.com](http://www.thegreatunfenced.com) or [www.dodgeridge.com](http://www.dodgeridge.com) Leader: Joe Schmidt,

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## Trip Reports

### Bradley Hut

January 27-29, 2007

Participants: Bill Behrendt, Cameron Dain, Rosemary Gregor, Dan Lynch, Joan Marshall, Hal Tompkins, Tim Molinare, Joe Schmidt, Steven Thaw, Ben Wallace, Cedar, and Dick Simpson (leader and scribe).

There are both advantages and disadvantages to doing a Bradley Hut trip when the weather is clear, cold, and dry and there hasn't been fresh snow in over three weeks. Obviously negative is the fact that the snow (where you can find it) is pretty well packed -- from wind, sun, and freeze-thaw cycles. Positives include no problem with trailhead parking, easy distribution of common gear and food, firm footing on the way in, and reasonably predictable snow conditions further on. More surprising was that we were able to find powder snow -- if we took the time to explore and checked the logical places. With no significant accumulation since the beginning of the year, the cold had protected powder in places that didn't see direct sun.

We met at the trailhead Saturday morning and were underway by 10 AM. We had three snowshoers in our party of 11 (plus Cedar, the dog). The choice of footwear didn't matter much; it was easy to get a grip with bare boots, snowshoes, or skis with patterned bottoms or skins. For smooth-bottomed skis, it was a little too slippery. With a stop for lunch we reached the hut at about 2 PM, just after the two parties who had booked the previous night had started out. After claiming sleeping spots in the hut (some did extensive testing before making final selections), most in our group did informal exploring around the hut. We found patches of powdery snow in sheltered spots that had been protected from wind and sun. Joan and Hal had brought a tent, planning to enjoy a quiet night away from snoring in the hut.

Cameron, a teacher, had to go out Sunday. Cedar agreed to guard the hut. The rest headed toward Deep Creek for the day. The north-facing slopes overlooking Deep Creek had powder snow and the people who had the right equipment were able to get in several good runs. Although clouds blowing in from the southeast hung around the crest until after noon, there were some breaks and the temperature back at the hut actually reached 33F by late afternoon. The tent was not occupied the second night as Joan

and Hal opted for the warmth of the hut after being assured that snoring had not been a problem the first night.

The overnight cold left enough frost on the hard-packed trail that it was possible to snowplow on the way out. Half of the group (including all of the snowshoers and Bill, trailing two sleds) decided to get an early start home on Monday morning. The remaining five did some skiing on the open slopes about 1/2 mile southwest of the hut. Although there was powder in some sheltered spots, it was harder to read the conditions than in Deep Creek the day before; there were a lot of spills as skiers hit varying degrees of breakable crust. But the morning sun was warm and there were no clouds. Back at the hut, the thermometer read 41F as we finished lunch and packed for home.

The trip out was uneventful. In places the sun had started to soften the snow along the road. Mostly it was hard-packed powder or icy with the frosty cover. Snowplowing was tiring, but the obvious and safe exit technique. The last of the group was at the highway by 3:30 PM and we headed home with no real traffic problems.

Cooking tip: Forget the powdered milk? Topping breakfast cereal or coffee with hot chocolate is an old trick; Tang also works on cereal. We made cream of spinach soup by melting some extra Swiss cheese into the boiling water; an ounce of cheese per cup of soup is about right and may even produce a better result than with the recommended milk.



Left to right, kneeling: Steve Thaw, Dick Simpson, Cedar, Joan Marshall, Hal Tompkins. Left to right, standing: Bill Behrendt, Joe Schmidt, Ben Wallace, Tim Molinare, Rosemary Gregor, Dan Lynch. Photo by Cameron Dain (not shown).

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## Announcements

### STS looking for volunteers to serve on nominating committee

STS Officers are elected for terms of one year that last from the first day of June to the last day of May. The Ski Touring Section is looking for three people to serve as a nominating committee to select a slate of officers for the coming year beginning June 1, 2007.

Serving on the nominating committee is a short term job. The nominating committee contacts the current STS Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary/Editor and Treasurer to find out if any of those current officers are willing to serve another term. You will nominate current officers who are willing to run again the April annual STS business meeting.

If any of the STS elected offices need to be filled for the next year then the nominating committee will contact STS members to locate members who are willing to serve as an STS Officer and nominate new candidates at the April annual STS business meeting.

If you are willing to serving on the STS nominating committee then please contact Lowell Moulton at -  
or  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Peak Climbing Section monthly meeting March 13, 2007 at 7:30 pm Peninsula Conservation Center

Come see photos from several recent ski trips to remote and spectacularly beautiful areas in the Arctic on Baffin and Ellesmere Islands as well as to the North Pole.



Included is travel technique with skis, backpacks and sleds as well as winter camping style in a luxurious dome tent, dining on everything from cocktails to fine hors d'oeuvres to excellent homemade meals.

For more information contact Louise Wholey at  
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### FOR SALE

Women's Kahru XC boots (lace up, high top style). Size 8, black with dark blue, 75mm 3 pin, vibram soles, heel grooves for cable bindings. Made in Hungary. I think these boots would be good for: casual backcountry use; learning to telemark; intermediate touring. About \$80 new, would sell for \$40 OBO. Contact Margaret Martin at (h) or \_\_\_\_\_

### Avalanche Safety Information Online

In the previous issue of TRACK we highlighted the online avalanche safety training offered by the Canadian Avalanche Association. There is a link to this course on their webpage at <http://www.avalanche.ca/>

In addition, the following websites provide useful current information on avalanche conditions:

#### Eastern Sierra Avalanche Center

<http://www.esavalanche.org/>

They have avalanche news and bulletins for the Mammoth area.

#### Central Sierra Avalanche Center

<http://www.sierraavalanchecenter.org>

They cover the Tahoe region.

#### Mt. Shasta Avalanche Center

<http://www.shastaavalanche.org>

They cover Mt. Shasta and Eddy Mt. Their bulletins also give an idea of what conditions on Mt. Lassen are.

Finally, there is the **Cyberspace Avalanche Center**

<http://www.avalanche-center.org/>

They are clearing house for avalanche info on the web with links to avalanche bulletins, reports and courses all over the world.

(Thanks to Dave Erskine for contributing this list)



STS'ers enjoying the Mt. Lassen trip in February (left to right: Cecily Harris, Diane Jakubowski, Jim Plourd, Diane Medrano, Bobbie Morrison, Terri Michel, and Dave Marancik). Brokeoff Mountain is in the background.

## Section Information

**Purpose:** The Ski Touring Section leads cross-country ski trips to the Sierra Nevada and elsewhere.

**Meetings:** The Section holds open meetings monthly from November thru May. Date, time, and location of the next meeting are announced in TRACK. Newcomers of any experience level are welcome. A special program is featured at most meetings.

**Membership:** To be a member of the section requires membership in the Sierra Club and additional dues of \$5/yr paid to the section Treasurer. This entitles members to all the rights outlined in the bylaws and standing rules.

**E-mail list:** To join the STS e-mail list, send an e-mail to the list server at: <listserv@lists.sierraclub.org>.

Include the following one line in the body of the message (not Subject line): <SUBSCRIBE LOMAP-SkiTour yourfirstname yourlastname>. Be sure to send the email from the address at which you wish to receive postings and the newsletter, TRACK. You must be a member to be on the STS e-mail list.

**Newsletter:** TRACK is published monthly from October through May. To subscribe, send a check for \$15 (\$10 for paper newsletter and \$5 for annual section dues) payable to Ski Touring Section with your name, address, telephone number, and proof of Sierra Club membership to Treasurer John Langbein ().

Proof of membership is one of the following: a mailing label from your Chapter newsletter (Loma Prietan) or Sierra magazine,

*(continued on page 9)*

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## Section Information (cont.)

a photocopy of your Sierra Club membership card, or your canceled check for membership dues.

To join the Sierra Club, enclose a separate check for \$35 payable to Sierra Club with your STS payment.

To submit meeting announcements, trip announcements, and trip reports for publication in TRACK, email them to TRACK editor Kevin Flynn at , (plaint text or attached

Microsoft Word documents preferred) or submit them as text files. Photos in jpeg format may accompany trip report submissions and will be included if space permits. Advertisements will be carried for members free of charge on a space-permitting basis. Ads will

run for one month unless resubmitted and will be limited to 6 lines or one inch. Notices from commercial enterprises will be carried at the editor's discretion on the same basis.

**Trips:** Trips are scheduled by VC/Scheduler Eric Valentino. Potential trip leaders should contact him (see address below) and new leaders should contact Janet Hoffmann, Chair of the Outings Committee. Potential trip participants should contact the trip leader listed for each trip. The trips are classified according to the minimum ability required of participants. The categories are listed inside under Ski Trips. The Sierra Club does not assume any liability for carpools to the "trailhead".

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<b>Chair</b>	Lowell Mouton
<b>VC/Scheduler</b>	Eric Valentino
<b>Secretary/Editor</b>	Kevin Flynn
<b>Treasurer</b>	John Langbein
<b>Conservation</b>	Dick Simpson
<b>Outings</b>	Janet Hoffmann
<b>Committee Chair</b>	
<b>Webmaster</b>	Brenda Giese

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## SKI TOURING SECTION

Loma Prieta Chapter  
c/o John Langbein

## First Class Mail