

# TRACK



Newsletter of the Ski Touring Section

Loma Prieta Chapter

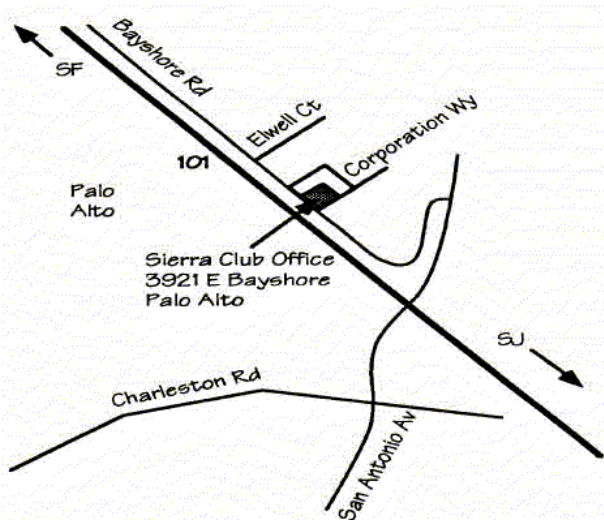
Sierra Club



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

## Next Meeting: Annual STS Pot Luck Dinner, Slide Show and Equipment Swap Monday, May 7, 2007, at 6:30 pm

Peninsula Conservation Center  
3921 East Bayshore Road, Palo Alto



Come join us for our annual pot luck dinner, slide show and equipment swap. Please bring your slides or laptop computer with pictures to share. We'll provide a VGA projector. If you have equipment to swap then bring that as well. And of course whatever you'd like to share in the way of food and drink.

We will also be voting on STS Officers for the 2007/2008 winter recreation season and discussing proposed changes to the STS Standing Rules and the STS By Laws.

Note that since we'll be eating dinner, we have moved the start time for this meeting up by one hour to start the festivities at 6:30 PM instead of our usual 7:30 PM start time. This meeting and pot luck meal will be held at the Peninsula Conservation Center, 3921 East Bayshore Road, Palo Alto.

## Trip Reports

### Peter Grubb Hut 3-4 March 2007

With 4 feet of new snow since the previous weekend, a couple days of better weather (to allow settling), and a full moon, this looked like the perfect weekend for a trip to Peter Grubb Hut. We never quite filled our roster (13 of 15 spaces plus a couple others who signed up, then canceled); but about a thousand other people agreed. The Sno-Park at Boreal was filled with cars on both sides as far as the eye could see when I arrived for our 9:30 departure Saturday morning. As we were pulling away from the assembly area on the north side of I-80, six snowmobiles charged up the hill — including two carrying riders with telemark skis. Although the noise and smoke lingered, we didn't run into them again.

A scout group, which had reserved the hut the previous night, also experienced the heightened interest. They pulled in late Friday to find the hut already filled with people: a youth group from the Bentley School in the East Bay and a search and rescue team from Santa Clara had both planned to snow camp, but howling winds made the cabin seem more attractive. One of the scouts, who had suffered a

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concussion a couple weeks before, came down with altitude sickness. Eugene Miya was the first in our party to reach the hut Saturday (about 11:30 AM) and got a close view of the helicopter evacuation.



Chris (left) and Don Draper cross Castle Pass en route to Peter Grubb Hut with the peaks of Granite Chief Wilderness in the background. Photo by Dick Simpson.

Inside the hut it was standing room only at lunch time. The S&R team from Santa Clara had been joined by a nordic S&R team, the local nordic ski patrol, and a larger than normal contingent of day skiers just in for a midday break. Our group had become spread out; the rear pulled in about 2:45, four hours after starting. Most of us found a place to drop packs and then headed out to do a little skiing before seriously trying to claim living space inside the hut. The Bentley group was slowly withdrawing to a new snow camp on the east side of Round Valley.

The overnight wind had put a formidable breakable crust on the new snow; then the sun added a wet and sticky layer so that conditions weren't as good as we would have liked. Even in the gullies on the north side of Castle Peak, where there is often powder for several days after a new storm, it was difficult to get up much speed. Falls resulted from unexpected changes in snow consistency; but no one was getting hurt.

After the day skiers had pulled out, I realized there was a huge amount of abandoned food and equipment in the kitchen area. Over the protests of several in our group who lamented the wastage, I supervised the incineration of 20-30 pounds of instant oatmeal, soup and noodle mixes, macaroni and cheese, beverages, and candy bars. We put skeleton candles, bottles, and unappealing cooking utensils into our trash bag. Then we cleaned up the cabinets and remaining utensils before putting our own commissary onto the freed

shelves. In this frenzy, I unfortunately disposed of Ted's and Mark's lunches. Michele set aside a few packages of oatmeal and chocolate to take home; but the volume that remained was sufficiently daunting that no one else stepped forward to take a share.

As sundown approached, the first of the "moonlight" trekkers arrived. They were mostly in small groups and dribbled in; but there were eight by the time the flow stopped. Some stopped just to get warm; a few cooked dinner around the edges of our group. The moon came up on schedule, and by 8 PM (when we were ready to eat) all the visitors had departed to snowshoe back out in the moonlight. Before I turned in about 10:30, I took a quick tour in the meadow myself; Erica and Kent had taken a longish walk in down booties earlier, but I don't think anyone else in our party took advantage of the moon.

The fire in the wood stove kept the hut warm overnight, but the firebox itself was pretty full by dawn. At first light Sunday morning I attempted to remove some of the ashes, but the job was only partly successful. I reduced the volume by about half but the ash bucket smoked as I hustled it out the door and a few minutes later the light sleepers on the second floor were coming down the ladder to find out what was going wrong in the kitchen. Opening a window upstairs solved the problem, but it took a few more minutes for the smoke to clear.

We split for day tours on Sunday morning with about half taking the standard tour toward Sand Ridge Lakes and the other half being more adventurous and heading to Basin Peak. There were high clouds, but it was another great day; unfortunately the snow conditions were about the same with a lot of crust and increasingly severe icing as the top surface warmed.

We returned to the hut for lunch, then packed up to head out. Tim, Kent, and Erica had already made separate reservations to spend an extra night at the hut. Tim said he was told by the people at Clair Tappaan Lodge that the hut was going to be fully booked Sunday night. We passed another scout group (the only five who actually made it to the hut for Sunday night) heading in after we dropped down over the south side of Castle Pass.

In order to reduce further the volume of abandoned equipment at the hut, I dragged a large duffel, several large plastic boxes of food, and a sled to the freeway. The duffel had a luggage tag which allowed me to

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trace the owner to San Francisco. He said he wasn't sure how it had arrived at Peter Grubb; his group had not been able to locate the hut, he had abandoned the sled and its contents, and he was planning to go back the weekend of 10 March to recover it. Our trip out went much more quickly than the trip in. The people who were slow on Saturday turned out to

be good downhill skiers. So the last in our party were at I-80 by about 3:30, a bit more than two hours after leaving the hut.

— Dick Simpson (leader and scribe).



Group photo before departing Peter Grubb Hut (left to right): Mark Williams, Tim Molinare (front), Ted Williams (rear), Michele Dauber, Bobbie Morrison, Debbie Bulger, Dave Marancik, and Dick Simpson. Not shown: Erica Crawford, Chris Draper, Don Draper, Eugene Miya, and Kent Newbold. Photo by Tim Molinare.

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## 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 4)*

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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