

CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP

TALUS PILE

Edition 110, April 2000

TRAINING SCHEDULE

Apr 8 Sat Mock search Finco
Apr 10 Mon Meeting/GPS (Green) C. Burge/Myers/Roseman
Apr 12 Wed Mojave Desert Encampment Finco
Apr 14-15 Fri-Sat Winter bivvy/Winter skills Runkle
Apr 16 Sun Climbing at Owens Gorge B. Niesen
Apr 22-23 Sat-Sun Inyo Range traverse Schafhauser
Apr 28-30 Fri-Sun Tahquitz B. Niesen
May 3 Wed Stretcher Practice Hut Night TC
May 6 Sat Rock Skills: Ascending and Descending Roseman
May 7 Sun Stretcher Practice, Great Falls Basin TC
May 8 Mon Meeting/Map & Compass (Gates) Huey/Toler/Florian
May 12-14 Fri-Sun North Palisade Runkle
May 17 Wed Dynamic belay TC
May 19-21 Fri-Sun MRA Regional Seminar Hueber
May 20-22 Sat-Mon Havasu Falls Breitenstein
May 26-29 Fri-Mon Jepson, Palisade Crest, Norman Clyde Sakai
Jun 3-4 Sat-Sun Thunderbolt Huey
Jun 9-11 Fri-Sun Balloon Dome Roseman
Jun 12 Mon Meeting/Knots (Botham) Botham/Hueber/Castro
Jun 13, 14 Tue, Wed Summer class begins Huey
Jun 17-18 Sat-Sun University Runkle
Jun 20, 21 Tue, Wed Summer class Huey
Jun 23-25 Fri-Sun Versteeg, Trojan McCormick

SUNDAY ROCK CLIMBING coordinated by W. Runkle

CLMRG is funded by United Way of Indian Wells Valley.

SHERIFF'S APPRECIATION BANQUET

Loren Castro

Five members--Mike Myers, Bob Huey, Bud Gates (and wife, Sandy), Elaine Riendeau (and husband, Larry), and Loren Castro (and guest, Jeannette)--enjoyed the third annual Kern County Sheriff's Department Search and Rescue Appreciation Banquet in Bakersfield on Friday, 31 March. We and members of the Bakersfield, Cooks, Desert, Divers, Indian Wells Valley, Kern Valley, Mounted, Southern Kern, and Tehachapi teams filled the large banquet room at Hodel's Restaurant.

After a fine buffet dinner, Sgt. John Diederich introduced speakers Carl Sparks, Sheriff/Coroner; Richard McCathron, Assistant Sheriff; and Stan Moe, Commander. All the speakers thanked the volunteers for their Search and Rescue efforts. They informed us that the Sheriff's Department had almost 800 volunteers to supplement the workforce of a little more than 1100 employees.

Team captains were introduced, and each stood for recognition. As our president, Mike Myers stood to receive this acknowledgment. The officials presented awards to three retiring volunteers and 5-, 10-, 15-, 20-, and 30-year awards to many active volunteers. The 30-year award went to our own Bob Rockwell. A 5-year award went to member Bill Ferguson, and a 10-year award went to former member Jerry Kong. Each team captain had been asked to name a top contributor for the previous year for recognition and a special award. Our team's top contributor was Tom Roseman.

President Mike Myers's nomination follows:

"The China Lake Mountain Rescue Group proudly names Tom Roseman as the person we wish to recognize for his outstanding contributions to our organization. Tom is named because of his overall support of every aspect of our group. He doesn't pick and choose what he wants to be involved in; he simply gets involved anywhere he can, and he is always willing to share his broad wealth of knowledge with anyone who has a desire to learn. Because of his intense desire to help others, Tom is the kind of member that makes a difference every year."

FROM OTHER SOURCES

Editor: This article appeared in the Sunday, December 19, 1999 issue of the Eugene Register-Guard.

Obsidians' princess tradition kept alive

Seventy years after the first woman was honored for climbing Oregon's Three Sisters, more and more are feeling on top of the world

By Mike Stahlberg

EUGENE REGISTER-GUARD

EUGENE, Ore. -- No wonder these women have the world at their feet. They are, after all, princesses.

Obsidian Princesses. And they form a long, thin line of female mountaineering blue bloods in the region. It's a line that traces its way back through two world wars and a Great Depression, to 1929. That's when Florence Ogden Sims climbed the North Sister with members of the Obsidians outdoor club, completing the trifecta of summing each of the Three Sisters.

The previous year, the Obsidians club had created a separate organization to honor men who successfully climbed the North, South, and Middle Sisters, each of which reaches more than 10,000 feet above sea level. These accomplished mountaineers, for whatever reason, called themselves "Chiefs." It was only fair, club members agreed after Sims matched their feat, that any woman who climbed all three peaks also deserved special status. In a ceremony held immediately after the climb in a meadow on Hinton Creek near the South Sister, Sims was initiated and given the name Princess Blue Waters. Legend has it she wore a gown made of grass for the occasion. Seventy summers later, Susan Sullivan summited the Middle Sister on an Obsidian climb and thus qualified to become the 136th Obsidian Princess. She was dubbed "Princess Crevasse."

The newest princess, ironically, may be the club's most accomplished climber. Sullivan has extensive mountaineering experience and has climbed internationally -- including peaks in South America that make the Three Sisters look tame in comparison. She had summited the Middle Sister several times previously -- but never on an Obsidian-sanctioned climb. And only Obsidian hikes count toward the club's three-peak and 10-peak awards.

Sullivan marked the occasion of her qualifying climb, with tongue firmly in cheek, by pulling a tiara and ballroom gown from her backpack and donning them while posing for a summit photo. "I decided to have a little fun with it," she said. "It was kind of a spoof."

At the end of the millennium, it would be easy to poke fun at this business about chiefs and princesses with names like "Cherokee Rose" and "Alpine Anemone." It all seems anachronistic at best, downright silly at worst. But you cannot easily dismiss the pride the Princesses have in their shared accomplishments--and in each other. "It's just a mutual admiration society, I think," said Judy Smith, who in May was initiated as Princess Blue Iris. "What makes it so genuine to me is that the older ladies climbed when there weren't modern techniques like the nice crampons, the insulated boots, the Gore-Tex coats"

And the admiration the Princesses feel for each other must be true and enduring. Why else would women who climbed 30, 40, 50, even 60 years ago continue to show up for Princess meetings? "Some of these older women really care about each other because they climbed together -- it was a real bonding experience for them," said Janet Jacobsen, who was inducted into the group in 1982.

"I'm still proud of what we did," said 91-year-old Vera Heidenreich of Eugene, the

oldest Princess to attend the recent meeting at which Sullivan was initiated. "You feel so exhilarated ... you have a real feeling of accomplishment because you've put in a lot of effort."

Heidenreich became Princess Wild Rose in 1936, the 29th woman initiated. She vividly remembers details from her climbs. "They climbed in larger numbers in those days," she said. "It was quite a bunch of us that climbed the North Sister together, something like 30 of us." Today, federal regulations ban any group larger than 12 in wilderness areas.

Many hikers and climbers have summited on South and Middle Sisters. But the North Sister, along with Mount Jefferson, is considered one of Oregon's most difficult peaks to climb. In fact, several women have qualified for the Obsidians' "10-peak pin" on the same North Sister ascent that qualified them for membership in the Princesses. The award goes to climbers who have made it to the top of 10 Oregon peaks -- Hood, Jefferson, Washington, Thielsen, McLaughlin, Diamond Peak, Three-Fingered Jack and the Three Sisters.

Mount Jefferson and the North Sister each involve "some relatively easy, but technical, rock-climbing and some snow- or ice-traversing," said Doug Nelson, The Obsidians' climb chairman.

All mountaineering in the Cascades is inherently difficult because "the Cascades are notoriously loose" in composition, Nelson said. "That adds a degree of danger and difficulty you have to contend with."

Anyone interested in climbing the Cascade peaks can find experienced company through the Obsidians, which typically schedule about two dozen climbs a year. An annual "climbing school" is put on in conjunction with the City of Eugene's River House Outdoor Program each spring, usually about mid-April. Few new climbers, however, begin with the goal of becoming a chief or a princess.

"I first climbed the South Sister in 1986 and remember saying, 'Why would anybody want to climb a mountain twice?'," Jan Anselmo said. "The next thing I knew I'd climbed all 10 peaks. It's one of those things I just sort of started and just couldn't stop. I've probably climbed the South Sister a dozen times now."

And, no doubt, felt like king of the world every time.

Editor: This announcement is in the March 24, 2000 on-line issue of Climbing magazine. Refer to <http://www.climbing.com/>. (Apparently, skateboards rule.)

Bouldering NIXed at X Games

ESPN has announced that bouldering will not be an event at their Summer 2000 X Games. According to ESPN's 1999 sport-climbing event organizer Jim Waugh, "There is no specific explanation for cutting bouldering, but I speculate that it's out simply because it didn't deliver enough bang for the buck."

*Editor: This announcement is in the current on-line issue of Rock and Ice magazine.
Refer to
<http://www.rockandice.com/ashes/news/ne.html>.*

Ice Climbing Eliminated From X Games

ESPN Blames Artificiality

Ice climbing has been a formidable sport for the ESPN Winter X Games for the past three years ('97 to '99), providing excitement and intense competition between some of the best climbers on the planet. The games have become the "Olympics" of ice climbing and have generated increased interest in the sport throughout the world. However, all this will change with the ESPN Winter X Games 2000.

ESPN has decided to eliminate the ice climbing competition from the winter games altogether. According to Chris Stiepock, Director of Marketing and Communications for ESPN X Games, the venue is looking to present all sports in their natural environment. "We (ESPN) are trying to be true to the sports as they are and as they happen," he says. As many of the competitors can attest to, the man-made ice walls used in the games can't adequately represent the sport for what it is. Some of the world's best climbers have refused to participate in the games because of the artificial presentation. Stiepock is quick, however, to defend climbers who have participated in the games. "The athletes were awesome and extremely talented--liked and respected by all."

Until ice climbing can be represented in a more natural form, it will not exist as a competition sport at future ESPN Winter Games.

--Michael Schneider

*Editor: This brief announcement is in the current on-line issue of Rock and Ice magazine. Refer to
<http://www.rockandice.com/ashes/news/ne.html> for a more comprehensive story.*

A Death in the Mountains

Guy Waterman Takes His Life on Mt. Lafayette

On February 6, climber and author Guy Waterman decided to take his own life atop the frigid White Mountain summit of Mt. Lafayette in New Hampshire.

Various press accounts have speculated on the reasons why the 67-year-old Waterman might hike to the top of this mile-high mountain, sit down and freeze to death. These include his fear of growing old and the painful loss of two of his three sons, both of

whom disappeared mysteriously more than two decades ago.

One of those sons, Johnny Waterman, was famed for his Alaskan first ascents, including his extraordinary solo of the Southeast Spur of Mt. Hunter, America's hardest 14,000-foot peak. In 1978, Johnny Waterman took 145 days to climb the route and traverse the peak with no assistance. Three years later, he set off to solo Denali with only minimal provisions and disappeared.

"The crowd diminishes according to the square of the distance from the highway, and to the cube of the elevation above it."

--David Brower

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Check our web page at <http://www.clmrg.org>.

All telephone numbers in *The Talus Pile* are area code 760 unless noted otherwise.

The trick is not simply to acquire the knowledge, but to survive the lessons.

---Charles de Lin