

July 2012 Overview
Shasta Trinity Backcountry Trail Crew
Supervisor: Peter Martinez

July has rolled into the calendars of the 2012 Trinity Alps Trail Crew bringing with it the hump of the halfway mark for the season. This backcountry family continues to grow in strength, both on the trail and off, physically as well as mentally. With our halfway mark the strains and pleasures of our nearly half year adventure really begin to set in, and our crew makes the best of all of them.

Still at our third camp near the junction of the Seamour Gulch Trail for the beginning of the month, we take our second, entirely uphill hike to work each day, though steeper than the Soldier Creek Trail, our first. We sweat, we grunt, and we relish in the growth of the tough hike, treading and cutting our way to the rewarding views (and flat terrain) of the top of the trail.

For July we really brought out the games. We continue to hacky sack as much as possible before our wooded hack idol. A beautifully stitched trail crew beanie finds its way onto his head, and the hack gods smile upon us. Nights of "Mafia" bring much excitement, and a new set of horseshoes that of course broke first try, lead us to playing with old ones we recovered from camp. And the arrival of a banjo adds to our chorus of musical instruments. We move to our fourth camp later in the month, rightfully dubbed "Slanty Town" for its lack of flat ground, and hone in on our camp set-up strategies.

As we continue to make the best of our weekends we travel to peaks such as Cabin Peak, Pony Mountain, Green Mountain, and Thornton Peaks. One group finally completes a one-day triple peak, and we anticipate more to come!

The twenty-fifth brings a glorious "Christmas in July" party complete with a butterball turkey in a dutch oven, Christmas cookies, a lovely Christmas tree, and even Santa and an elf. With a powdered beard and too much stuff shoved under his belly, Dan is joined by his equally well-dressed elf McWilliams for our festivities. A fun night of giving and stealing gifts leave us all with items useful, funny, or just plain random.

The end of the month will bring us to a week-long spike to help us complete the Green Mountain Trail, and we look forward to August when we can take our epic 50-mile hike to the Eastside of the Trinity Alps!

Curriculum:

Our corpsmember-taught classes this month have been a blast, starting off with a sewing/arts and crafts class with Mollie where we all used socks (clean of course...) to make our own hacky sacks. We cut up the socks, sewed them up, and used lentils to fill them. Stephanie followed up with teaching us all the beginnings of speaking and writing Japanese, so a big "Domo Arigato" to her for that class. She put in a lot of work preparing for it for us as she just picked up the language herself. Nate gave a neat creative writing class, complete with homework! He passed out scraps of paper with individual topics written down and we all wrote haikus and short stories. We also had our safety tailgates, one particularly set on avoiding rattlesnakes when Peter brought in pictures of what a rattler bite could do to you. We also continue to learn about packing and handling stock as well as our knot-tying every week when the packers come in.

Work Production:

We completed the Semour Gulch Trail, the Whites Creek Trail, the east fork of the New River Trail, and continue to work on the Green Mountain Trail. We have constructed waterbars and multiple causeways in wet drainage areas getting a taste of rock work.

Odds and Ends:

First off, big thank yous to two incredible members of our crew: our cook, Bonnie, and our sponsor, Holly, both going above and beyond their duties. They help keep us together as a team, and feel like members of our family. Another big thanks to Peter for being out here with us everyday with his shiny yellow hard hat and a special thanks from those of us with beards with whom he gifted beard brushes. We had a good time with our visitors, Sammy's brother, and Michael's girlfriend and dog. A hefty thank you to our interns Lance and Paul for making us feel a touch of home with the ice cream they had packed in for us. Another thanks to our great team of packers led by Eric for always getting our supplies when we need them, and to the Forest manager Mike McFadden for his visits, stories, and Smokey the Bear related gifts.

"Oh messy life! The simplicity ... its beautiful!"