

August 2011 Overview

Yosemite Backcountry Trail Crew

Mark Allee: Supervisor

August: crown jewel of the Sierra summer. Hot weather and a blessed lowering of the ferocious snow-fed waters in the range of light. Each day opens more high country territory for us to explore. Stars fall from the sky and late spring wildflowers give way to bright summer fruits. A family of bay squirrels emerges from their den for the first time down from Alpine Meadows to regard us with hungry curiosity while trout in dark pools count their numbered days. A falcon circles overhead and mosquitoes trade in blood on the open market. Conversations deepen while silence lengthens. Lean muscle is defined and dirt is permanent. Individuals and crew alike feel the growing pains that self-awareness brings. Why am I here? There is a light at the end of the tunnel. Life is holy and every moment is precious.

On the grade, Hat Creek refused to go down and instead came up swinging. Going a full 15 rounds but Lil' Yose triumphed over the ceanothus, sharp and dense as the devil's own pubes. Many a crewmember pulled thorns from the skin and logged hours on the chainsaw as we battled our way downhill trying to shorten our 10 mile commute. High spirited throughout we prevailed and moved on to the overgrown Tiltill Valley trail to clear the way for our camp move and stock train. How lucky are we to cap our season living in Tiltill Valley and working rocks on the stone highway? Very, it seems. Our move on the 17th went off without a hitch and the Red Dawn General finally breathed a sigh of relief. Our sponsors taught an excellent introduction to rockwork and backcountry dry stone masonry class. Armed with single and double jacks, rockbars, and determination Lil' Yose hit the trail and began, in pairs, the arduous, head scratching, bone jarring, addictive 3D puzzle that is rockwork. YEAH!

On a bittersweet note, we waved goodbye to our fearless leader, resident medical expert, and universally loved sponsor Anna Asp who leaves to continue her studies in Sweden. Thanks for everything, Anna. Good luck and don't forget that we love you! At the same time, we welcomed Long Distance Dan into our sponsor team and into the CCC Backcountry cult. Bienvenidos Dan!

What's not to love about a month that begins with Christmas? That's right; a midsummer night's Santa Claus came to town bearing a stocking full of candy and gifts of all kinds. Good boys and girls even got a chance to sit on hairy old Santa's lap. Presents were shared in a riotous white elephant gift exchange held underneath our nicely decorated Christmas Manzanita. Highlight was the hotly traded, one of a kind, hand-embroidered Yosemite patch made by Hammes the Hammer herself. Thanks to our party planning committee for helping us kick the July funk.

We were fortunate to have Professor Carl Menconi drop the trails knowledge during an excellent daylong class. We learned about erosion, trail construction, and how to measure grade and tree height, extremely informative and worthwhile. Plus Carl kept it lively and humorous all week in camp and on the grade working and staying with us. Thanks Carl! Andy taught a fascinating class on industrial beef processing from personal experience. Mikey taught us the ins and outs of a proper argument so we can all be right(ous) for the rest of the season. Anna finished up her total back health class. We shared more

life stories. And Christmas was to be rivaled by none other than... Halloween! Ghoulish otherworldly visitors crept around our camp that night and partied down! Best costume went to Javan who dressed as super animal. Emily and the crew created and executed a bangin' Yosemite T-shirt design that is guaranteed to rock the t-shirt contest at debriefing. Thanks, Emily! Thanks also to the T-shirt committee and the "democratic" process.

The crew has finally discovered their long distance legs and weekends stretch for many miles ranging to the very boundaries of Yosemite herself. Out to Tilden Lake and Tower Peak, down Jake Main Canyon and up Tiltill Mountain, through Bear Valley and out to Kerrick Canyon, across Mt. Gibson to Laurel Lake, cross-country to Tiltill Valley to rest. Anna took a crew out on an epic 60-miler to Smedberg Lake and peaks galore. Woohoo!

The crews' social fabric changed significantly in early August when we said goodbye to Amber who is back to Montana and off to better things hopefully.

Special thanks to ...You! For reading this and living vicariously through our season. Thanks to Karlson for the pickup and dropoff. Much thanks to our sponsor team for giving the Red Dawn General a much needed break. And finally thanks to the 2011 Yosemite crewmembers for being so darned good on so many levels!

Moms: send more cookies please!

That's all for now folks. See you in September!

Love,

Lil' Yose

CREW QUOTES FOR AUGUST:

Javi - Rooock.

Loni - Before you decide where you are going next you have to have both feet on the ground where you are.

Dustin - "I like rocks too."

Aaron - "Excuse me, do you have legs sir?"

Javan - "Rock lobster."

Erin - "Who wants pocket bacon?"

Morgan - "Geronimo, oh sh*t!"

Mira - "Jam it out."

Emily – “You can’t hide in the backcountry, you can only seek.”

Mikey – I guess that’s why they say,...every rose has its thorn.”

Andy – “Get some!!!”