



THE CONTRA COSTA HILLS CLUB
PO Box 2056, El Cerrito, CA 94530
Website: www.contracostahills.org

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Founded February 22nd, 1920
100 YEARS OF
CONSERVATION—COMPANIONSHIP—HIKING



AUGUST 2020



KNAPSACK

Co-Editors: Silvia Akinaga, Rosemary Johnson
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

For the past several months we have been experiencing a terribly unusual situation that has affected all of us in a variety of ways. Unfortunately, as a hiking club we have seen a severe reduction in our hikes. As much as we miss hiking on our regularly scheduled Thursday and Sunday hikes, the pandemic, as it still exists, makes that reality difficult to say the least. Hopefully, August will present us with a better outcome than what we have been experiencing lately. Please continue to check the website and your emails for the latest information. And kudos to Lois Switzer for helping to create the Self-Guided hikes onto the club website. Furthermore, I want to remind everyone that there are good things happening. I know of five women who are pregnant at this time - three who are closely related to me and two who are the daughters of close friends. I tell you this because at times it seems as if the world is not moving in directions that we can celebrate. It's been a hardship for so many, but we will prevail. The human spirit endures.

Stew Perlman

*Vaccine's coming soon
 Don't hold your collective breath
 Or maybe you should*

~ Mike McNamara, Springfield



**OPEN HIKE DATES FOR
 JANUARY to MARCH, 2021**

The deadline for submission of hike descriptions is October 31, 2020.

Open Thursdays: January 7, 14, 21, and 28; February 4, 11, 18, and 25; March 4, 11, 18, and 25

Open Sundays: January 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31; February 7, 14, 21, and 28; March 7, 14, 21, and 28.

For Thursday hikes contact: Jim Baranowski ,
 925-577-1022, Brnw_th@yahoo.com

For Sunday hikes contact: Mary Ulrich,
 925-937-2932, cchcsundays@gmail.com

SAVE THIS DATE

- December 9, 2020 - Holiday Luncheon, **HOPEFULLY!**

NEW: SELF-GUIDED HIKES NOW AVAILABLE ON Contracostahills.org UNDER THE HIKE SCHEDULE TAB!

To submit a Self-Guided Hike route, simply email Chuck Browne, at cebrowne6@yahoo.com, with "Self-guided Hike" in the subject line and the route sheet/map in an attached PDF file.



*"One Touch of Nature
makes the
Whole world kin"
William Shakespeare*

Submitted by Sue Elliott



From the Conservation Committee...

Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

Thank you to all the wonderful CCHC people who gave an extra donation to conservation this year. We really appreciate it.

April 2019 to March 2020 CONSERVATION CONTRIBUTIONS

Bay Area Ridge Trail Council	\$100
Berkeley Partners for Parks	\$100
California State Parks Foundation	\$300
Citizens for East Shore Parks	\$100
CWF/California Oak Foundation	\$150
Earth Justice	\$200
El Cerrito Trail Trekkers	\$100
Friends of Sausal Creek	\$100
Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy	\$200
Lindsay Wildlife Museum	\$205
Marine Mammal Center	\$100
Mt. Diablo Interpretive Association	\$50
Muir Heritage Land Trust	\$250
National Parks Conservation Association	\$200
One Tam	\$40
Point Reyes National Seashore Association	\$200
Regional Parks Foundation	\$200
San Bruno Mountain Watch	\$100
SF Parks Alliance	\$100
Save Mount Diablo	\$200
Save-the-Redwood League	\$300
Save San Francisco Bay	\$100
Solano Land Trust	\$100
The Trust For Public Land	\$300

TOTAL FOR THE YEAR: \$3,895

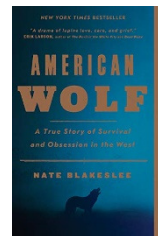
Book Recommendation by Ron Van Dette

American Wolf: A True Story of Survival and Obsession in the West

Paperback – July 31, 2018, by Nate Blakeslee

Before men ruled the earth, there were wolves. Once abundant in North America, these majestic creatures were hunted to near extinction in the lower 48 states by the 1920s. But in recent decades, conservationists have brought wolves back to the Rockies, igniting a battle over the very soul of the West.

With novelistic detail, Nate Blakeslee tells the gripping story of one of these wolves, **O-Six**, a charismatic alpha female named for the year of her birth. Uncommonly powerful, with gray fur and faint black ovals around each eye, O-Six is a kind and merciful leader, a fiercely intelligent fighter, and a doting mother. She is beloved by wolf watchers, particularly renowned naturalist Rick McIntyre, and becomes something of a social media star, with followers around the world.



The story takes place in Yellowstone National Park over a 20 year period.

WISH

The weeks go by, the fourth, the fifth,
And normalcy's become a myth.
I want to hug, I want to hold,
I want this deadly scourge controlled.
I want to walk amidst a crowd.
I want to lift this morbid shroud.
I sit, sequestered in my home,
And yearn to mingle, travel, roam.
My energy is out of whack –
I want my normal problems back.

Erika Fine, Brookline, MA

IN THE HIKERS' FOOTSTEPS



Las Trampas Geology

Bay Nature is one of my favorite magazines as it always enriches my understanding of the geology, plant and animal life of our parks. A recent article brought back memories of some great hiking in Las Trampas Regional Wilderness. This is 'The Stories Rocks Tell' by Timothy Lesle; Bay Nature, Winter, 2020, pp. 52 - 55. In reading this, I found I had missed some of the most important features of the Park. We all remember climbing up Rocky Ridge Trail and going down to Devil's Hole. Those who did the 11-mile hike to Chabot followed the same trail into EBMUD land on the Ramage Peak Trail. Taking off from the west side of Bollinger Creek Road we made loops, including Sulphur Springs, Virgil Williams and Corduroy Trails, climbing Eagle Peak or going further along the Madrone to reach Las Trampas Peak. Many years ago my hiking group called this our 'training' hike; one of three longer hikes to get ourselves in shape for the Ohlone Wilderness '20-miler'. We knew that Las Trampas, the Traps, was a name given by the Spanish who thought that the Ohlone used the canyon to drive in elk and antelope for easier hunting.

What I learned in this article is the amazing geologic history of Las Trampas. The East Bay hills were covered by a shallow Pacific Ocean, 12 million years ago, which has left the rocks filled with mollusk shells. This is part of the Briones Formation, described by Doris Sloan in her book, Geology of the San Francisco Bay Region, University of California Press, 2006, p. 235. What I never noticed ascending Cuesta Trail was the difference in the rocks and plants on the east and west canyon walls. Looking up at Rocky Ridge we remember the gently rolling hills covered by grass. It is especially beautiful in the spring when the grass is green. The reason for this is an interesting part of the Lesle article. This is due to sedimentary rock. On the opposite side, Las Trampas Ridge, the vegetation is thick chaparral growing on older rock called Neroly Sandstone. This formation is described in Sloan's book (p. 246) as volcanic sediments. It is an example of older rocks rising above younger rocks, and is due to movement of the Hayward and Calaveras Faults, folding the ground up and down and pushing rock from different geological periods next to each other. The different rocks cause the growth of different plants and that will lead to different habitats for birds and other creatures. It is thought that the difference in plant life may be due to increased moisture retention in sedimentary rock. The next time we find ourselves in Las Trampas we can look for the marine fossils in the rocks along our trails and remember the ancient ocean that once covered this park.

Roberta O'Grady

Photos were taken by Sylvia Kwan in Las Trampas in April, 2020 - (Above) View of Mt. Diablo from Rocky Ridge with strong uplift in foreground, Rolling hills on Rocky Ridge Trail. Great illustrations of Roberta's information.



**Thursday, June 25, 2020
Albany Bulb - Still Artsy**

Lily Ho gathered a few local CCHC hikers for a walk to the Albany Bulb on a sunny, breezy, not too warm day - just right. Starting at the Sprouts parking lot, we headed down city streets and over the freeway to reach the bulb. We passed a burrowing owl nesting area, off limits to humans and dogs. Unfortunately,



there were no burrowing owls to be seen. Continuing along the shoreline, we contemplated crossing a narrow spit of land that rings a lagoon during low tide, but thought better of it. Maybe another time. The bulb is still a place to experience a lot of creative art work. We paused to examine a sailboat put together with bits and pieces of whatever. Painted rocks and sculptures caught our eyes. A work-in-progress, on large concrete slabs, features portraits of victims of police brutality. A lot to see and take in on an enjoyable walk of around four miles. Thanks, Lily, for suggesting it.



Silvia Akinaga



Sailboat, Abstract female figure, George Floyd portrait - photos by Silvia Akinaga

The Albany Bulb is a magical chunk of land in the Bay Area, one of the few that still allows creativity to run free, with some of the best views in the world. The Bulb was previously a construction debris landfill site until operations were ceased in 1984. The Regional Water Quality Control Board worked with the City and community members to achieve the requirements of a landfill closure order and establish the area as a public park.

**Thursday, July 2, 2020
Sibley Volcanic Preserve from
Old Tunnel Road Staging Area**

On Thursday, July 2, Rosemary Johnson led Fran Leighty and me on a lovely hike. We started at the Old Tunnel Road Staging Area and proceeded up Old Quarry Road, Volcanic Trail, Round Top Loop Trail and Overlook Trail, where we inspected Harold French's Bench! It's still in good shape, and it seems a lifetime ago that we had the dedication. We had a snack and returned to our cars via the Bay Area Ridge Trail/Skyline Trail where we went forest bathing! It's a lovely 3.5-mile hike, and I recommend it to our CCHC buddies.



Fran and Rosemary at Harold's Bench - by Patricia

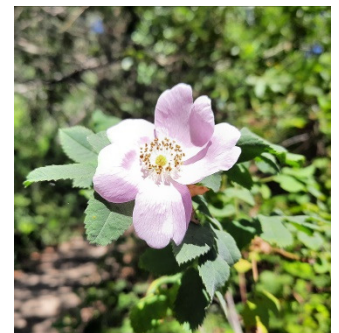
Patricia Derickson

Although Quarry Road is a gradual, 300-foot elevation gain, it seemed like more. My corona hikes have tended to be level so this was a case of "use it or lose it". We detoured at top to overlook Highway 24 and view the Berkeley Hills. On the bit of Round Top Loop Trail that we did and when we briefly visited the restroom at the main parking lot, we saw a number of people but otherwise we saw very few folks which was the purpose of starting from Tunnel Road rather than Skyline Blvd. Fortunately, Skyline Trail is heavily forested so it was a delight to return on when the temperature grew a little warmer.



Rosemary Johnson

Asters and wild rose — Rosemary Johnson



**Thursday, July 9, 2020
Lafayette-Moraga Trail**



Linda Malm, Fran Leighty, Karen Arntzen and I met at the Olympic Blvd. Staging Area on Thursday, July 9, at 8:30 a.m. and walked west on the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail. We passed a yard full of chickens (feed is available to purchase for five cents) and a tree full of handmade birdhouses! There are folks on bicycles most of whom kindly call out when they pass, mothers pushing baby strollers with little tots on

Social distancing selfie by Karen; Bird houses — Patricia

trikes and lots of dogs being walked on this lovely shady trail. We walked an hour out and an hour back. I hope CCHC hikers in other areas can band together, mindful of wearing masks and social distancing, to do local hikes. It really lifted our spirits. Please email me at cchchikergal@sbcglobal.net if you would like to join us on a Thursday that the club is not offering a hike.



Patricia Derickson

**Thursday, July 16, 2020
More Lafayette-Moraga Trail**

Karen Arntzen, her sister Sue (visiting from Connecticut), Fran Leighty, Suresh Gadad and I walked from the Lafayette Community & Senior Center to St. Mary's College on Thursday, July 16. It was a lovely summer day with a bit of a breeze. We encountered the usual dog walkers, moms with strollers, bike and trike riders along the way and mostly enjoyed each other's company. Reminiscing of past hikes along this trail, I looked for the waterfall, but was so engrossed in picking up trash that I missed it! We walked four miles out and back along this mostly shady path. One bonus for hiking with us is that we tend to bring books that we've currently read and enjoy sharing with fellow hikers. We drive to the trailhead and wear masks as we're hoping to be alive when the club hikes resume! We hope you're enjoying hikes close to your homes.



Karen, Fran, Sue & Suresh — Patricia taking photo

Patricia Derickson

NOTE: The Board and Conservation Committee are currently not physically meeting due to COVID-19 shelter in place orders. CCHC members should contact Stew Perlman with any concerns so they can be discussed at the meetings. Conservation issues should be addressed to Beryl Vonderheid.

Please submit your hike write-ups of up to 300 words as soon as possible after each hike to Rosemary Johnson at compasros@comcast.net. All other submissions should reach Silvia Akinaga at sakinec@aol.com by the middle of the month to appear in the following month's issue.

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