



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

FIRST CLASS MAIL

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



DECEMBER 2021



KNAPSACK

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

As we enter into the Holiday Season while finishing off the last morsels of our Thanksgiving meal, most likely you have been inundated with the end-of-the-year requests for donations to a variety of organizations. This year, however, I am asking you to make an extra donation to the CCHC Social Committee. The Holiday and Spring Luncheons have always been subsidized by a number of you who have added money to the cost of the events. The cost to these luncheons have increased significantly the past several months. And if we are going to be able to continue to enjoy our most worthwhile luncheons and to keep the cost more reasonable, we will need to generate additional funds for the Social Committee. Please consider making an important contribution if possible. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to wish you and your family a Happy Holiday.

Stew Perlman

SAVE THESE DATES

- Wednesday, December 8, 2021 Holiday Luncheon at Spin A Yarn in Fremont. **RSVP with checks must be received by December 3. See note on page 2 of this Knapsack.**
- March 6-11, 2022—Anza Borrego—Flyer sent with October Knapsack.



**A HEARTY WELCOME
 TO OUR
 NEWEST MEMBERS**

Welcome back!

*Peggy Cotie of Pittsburg
 Barbara Sullivan of Castro Valley*



HOLIDAY LUNCHEON UPDATE

There is now a waiting list for the luncheon (luncheon details in November Knapsack).

Please email Lucy lucyperd@sbcglobal.net **BEFORE** mailing your check.

OPEN HIKE DATES

There are many dates to choose from. *Please submit your hike as soon as possible*—detailed descriptions are optional as the times are so unsettled.

Open Thursday Hikes: May 12, 19, and 26; June 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30.

Open Sunday Hikes: January 2, 16 and 30; February 13; May 22 and 29; June 5, 12, 19, and 26.

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

For Sunday hikes contact: Fran Leighty, 925-944-9068, cchcleighty@gmail.com

From the Conservation Committee:

An important documentary on climate change, “The Science of Our Planet”, by David Attenborough is worth checking out. It can be found on Netflix or in print.



Grace Florence MacNeill

September 21, 1924 to October 20, 2021



Grace passed away in her home at age 97. A California native, she lived in her El Cerrito home for over sixty years. Grace met her longtime husband and lifelong friend, C. Don MacNeill, while youths in school in Oakland, and after graduation she worked locally for the war effort. She was an alumna of UC Davis and UC Berkeley, earning a masters in Library Science while raising a family. She went on to work many years as branch librarian in Contra Costa County libraries, including a bookmobile which served rural east county. As Head Research Librarian of her cherished town of El Cerrito for twenty-five years, Grace knew the people of the community and was loved and appreciated.

While working in the El Cerrito branch library, she met members of CCHC who talked her into going on a hike with the club. Grace joined CCHC in 1994 and played a big part in the club: she served on the Board of Directors, organized Sunday hikes, mailed the Knapsack, and led both Sunday and Thursday hikes. She treasured the friendships of the club’s members. A loss to the club and to all who knew her, she will be missed.

Grace enjoyed being with her three daughters and their husbands, five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She loved camping and hiking, taking yearly trips with family to mountains, redwoods, rivers, oceans, and California and Arizona deserts. Heading the annual book sale for Friends Of El Cerrito Library, Grace’s beloved presence was well-known, and she often spoke of her appreciation and affection for the dedicated Friends group. She was an avid reader, especially appreciative of the biological and natural sciences as well as local history, also finding interest in the local historical society. She was politically active, attending local meetings and donating generously to a great many groups and issues she felt strongly about. Grace also gave of her time volunteering many years at the Richmond Pantry of the Food Bank. When finally retiring from that she greatly missed her co-workers and the people they served.

In her last months Grace and her family were so very appreciative of the local Ace Hospice nurses and the Senior Helpers caregivers that helped her daughters surround her with loving care. No memorial is planned at this time. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to a favorite charity or Friends of El Cerrito Library.

Obituary published in the San Francisco Chronicle

CCHC CONTRIBUTIONS

The Contra Costa Hills Club Officers and Board extend their thanks to the following members who have generously made contributions to the club from May to November 2021.

May 2021

Contributions - Conservation

Angela Toy
Ellen Paisal
Herb Yonge
Kathy O'Toole
Lisa Parker
Sylvia Saunders
Wendy Neale

June 2021

Contributions - Conservation In Memory of Phyllis Faircloth

Barbara Mow
Connie Gee
Darlene Choy
Florence Yokoi
Georgette Armstrong
Linda Margossian
Lucy Perdichizzi
Silvia Akinaga
Stew & Audrey Perlman
Suzy & Jon Mark

Contributions – Holiday Luncheon In Memory of Phyllis Faircloth

Patricia Derickson

July 2021

Contribution – General Fund

Catherine & James Herlihy

Contributions – Conservation

Stew & Audrey Perlman (Jam donations)

In Memory of Phyllis Faircloth

Fred Mock
Rosalie Kingston
Sylvia Saunders

In Memory of Jerry White

Connie Gee
Silvia Akinaga

Contributions - Holiday Luncheon In Memory of Jerry White

Cameron Mitchell
Liz Howell
Patricia Derickson

Contributions – Spring Luncheon In Memory of Phyllis Faircloth

Liz Howell
Lucy Perdichizzi

Contributions – Spring Luncheon

David Jadeson
Frank Martin
Sue Elliott

August 2021

Contributions – Conservation In Memory of Jerry White

Barbara Mow
Chuck & Jo Brown
Darlene Choy
Rosalie Kingston
Suzy & Jon Mark

In Memory of Frank Belvin

Barbara Mow
Connie Gee
Silvia Akinaga
Suzy & Jon Mark

Contribution – Spring Luncheon In Memory of Frank Belvin

Patricia Derickson

September 2021

Contributions – Conservation In gratitude to Liz Howell for the 100th Anniversary Photobook.

Stew & Audrey Perlman

In Memory of Frank Belvin

Darlene Choy
Linda Margossian
Stew & Audrey Perlman

In Memory of Jerry White

Stew & Audrey Perlman

Contribution – Holiday Luncheon In Memory of Frank Belvin

Liz Howell

Contribution – Spring Luncheon In Memory of Frank Belvin

Liz Howell

October 2021

Contributions – Conservation In Memory of Frank Belvin

Beryl Vonderheid

In memory of Phyllis Faircloth Beryl Vonderheid

November 2021

Contributions – Conservation In memory of Grace MacNeill

Connie Gee
Darlene Choy
Silvia Akinaga
Sylvia Saunders
Suzy & Jon Mark
Linda Margossian

In memory of Frank Belvin Jo Anne Schultz

In memory of Phyllis Faircloth Jo Anne Schultz

In memory of Helen Ames McGregor Darlene Choy

Contribution - Holiday Luncheon In Memory of Grace MacNeill

Patricia Derickson

In Memory of Rocky Selez Patricia Derickson

Contribution – Spring Luncheon Lucy Perdichizzi



I thought I knew what
Happiness was until I heard the rain
After many days of drought

~author unknown



**Thursday, October 21, 2021
George Miller Regional Trail, Martinez
Leaders: Fran Leighty, Bea Wills & Mike Branning**

The morning started off pretty scary to some since the rain was coming down in buckets and many of the hikers were wondering if they should continue to hike or not. But all 14 of us arrived to the Nejedly Staging Area in



good spirits. Mike has some magical connections since it never rained on the hike.

The car shuttle worked out well since we divided up by people who wanted to leave early. In the end only two people left the hike early.



Just after entering Port Costa, we came across two women sitting outside next to a small book library and then I noticed that there were two book libraries on one block, while a lot of cities don't have any.

We ate outside a closed pub for lunch and Sylvia was very generous and brought me a cup of coffee at the pub after it opened.



The air was crystal clear because of the earlier rain storm which gave us spectacular views of the bay and the rolling hills. Also, there is a historical school in

town that we walked by. Thanks, Mike & Fran, for another wonderful day and hike.

Julia Cordell

View from trail (header), Mike leading, newt, Port Costa main street, Hikers at lunch - Sylvia Kwan



**Sunday, October 24, 2021
Morgan Territory Regional Preserve, Livermore
Leaders: Diane Cannon & Pam Littlejohn
CANCELLED due to atmospheric river**

**Thursday October 28, 2021
Pleasant Hill Hike, Lemonade & Lunch
Leaders: Patricia & Nidhi Derickson, Karen Arntzen, Diane Barde**

A group of 35 hikers met at Pleasant Hill BART on a sunny, warm day. We walked 2.5 level miles first on city streets and then for several miles on the lovely, wooded Contra Costa Canal Trail.

One of the most popular trails in the East Bay Regional Park District system, this 8.5-mile trail connects Martinez, Pleasant Hill,



On CCC Trail, Karen's back yard, Leaders: Karen, Patricia, Diane & Nidhi - all photos Sylvia Kwan

Walnut Creek, and Concord. The canal has been an important recreational

and agricultural feature of this area for nearly 100 years. Its construction began in the 1930s to supply irrigation water for local crops.

Water is pumped into the canal from the Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta and flows to Martinez, where it is treated to become the water supply

for that city and several other cities. For this reason, swimming and fishing in the canal are not permitted.





Anita & Jerry

We got off the canal trail, walked through a tree-lined residential area, and arrived at Karen's home for yummy lemon-

ade which we drank in her lovely, redwood tree-filled backyard. It really hit the spot after walking in the warm weather. We then proceeded 1.6 miles to Patricia's home, through another tree-lined residential neighborhood, for a delicious lunch of sandwiches, chips and fabulous homemade sweets. We relaxed in her delightful backyard and sunroom.



Larry, Nolan & Julia



Linda, Karen, Connie, Haruko, Frank, Liz, David, Marleen & Jo Anne

On the return, some of us walked to a nearby bus stop. Others of us got a ride to BART (thanks

to Karen and Jerry, and others!) Lunch and lemonade were such treats. Patricia and Karen, we really appreciate your generous spirits. And thanks also Nidhi and Diane. It was so nice to have such a festive occasion after months of isolation and worry. We all thank you!!

Fran Ternus



Rita & Dexter

**Tuesday, November 2, 2021
Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park
Leaders: Pat McDonald & Althea Wong**

First the good news. It was a mystical, magical walk through fog-shrouded giant oaks as we climbed 1345 feet to the ridge of Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park. We started at Castleridge, a new trailhead opened in 2018, to access the northern part of the park. Slow and steady, we ascended on the Courdet Trail to Ridgeline. The green grass had burst to 6 inches high thanks to the recent atmospheric river. Once on the ridge, we sat on the long arms of oak trees for lunch. Our promised view was of oak trees wrapped in mist. We continued on our 6.8-mile loop on the Schuhart Trail



to Bay Leaf, Shady Creek and back to Ridgeline and Courdet. The sun began to shine on our way down with views stretching for miles. The creeks were full as we forded them. The recent rains gave the day a lush, abundant feeling.

Now for the bad news. There are 15 parking spaces at the trailhead. Three of the cars parked there, including mine, were broken into. Nothing was taken from my car but my rear window was smashed. This set in motion insurance claims, major vacuuming, and window replacement. According to the Pleasanton PD, who called me on the trail, one of the three cars was rifled throughout. Apparently, none of my belongings interested the smash and grab crew. As an urban dweller, the only surprise was the location. Pleasanton? Hiking trailhead? It is a reminder that trailhead parking is not protected by the bucolic setting.



Castleridge Trailhead, Fog through the trees, Lichen on the trees - Jan Lecklikner

Despite the problematic ending, it was a great day. Thank you, Pat and Althea, for guiding us to a trail new to us that included a great work out and stunning beauty.

Jan Lecklikner

**Thursday, November 4, 2021
Brushy Peak, Livermore
Leaders: Sharon Wang, Wanda Fong & Ellen Chen**

Brushy Peak Regional Preserve is a regional park of the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) and the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District (LARPD). It is located in unincorporated land in Alameda County, north of Livermore, California.

As you drive on Laughlin Road you can see Brushy Peak Preserve on the right and housing developments on the left. The road then narrows to one lane with ranches on either side and you see horses and cows.

At the end of Laughlin Road, fourteen enthusiastic hikers gathered at the staging area. It had rained the night before which made for a muddy trail and so the first half of our



Hike leaders: Sharon, Ellen & Wanda



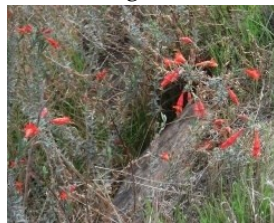
hike was dubbed "Mud Walk". Everyone was feeling an inch taller as mud collected at the bottom of their boots.



Altamont Pass wind farm, Open vista - Sylvia Kwan;
California Fuchsia, Dramatic view - Rita Poppenk

Second half of the hike, the trail was rockier and not much mud. Wonderful open vista views featured dramatic clouds

and green rolling hills with windmills peeking over. We laughed at the dried pond with the "No fishing and No swimming or wading" sign. Towards the end we actually did encounter an idyllic little pond with a duck or two. Lunch break was on large boulders with an expansive view, over the hilltops, of Livermore Valley.



Some wildflowers spotted were Hairy Pennywort, Yellow Wild Radish, California Poppy and California Fuchsia. Song of the Western Meadowlark was heard and the birds were sighted by some hikers.



As it is a very open and elevated area, the overcast skies and lack of wind made for perfect weather conditions at this particular location. The gentle, gradual changes in elevation made for an easy to moderate, very pleasant, Thursday morning hike.

Nadine White

**Sunday, November 7, 2021
Ferry Building to Sausalito
Leaders: Mike Branning & Fran Leighty**



We had such a beautiful day for this walk in San Francisco, over the Golden Gate Bridge and into Sausalito. Eleven members and one guest joined our leaders at the Ferry



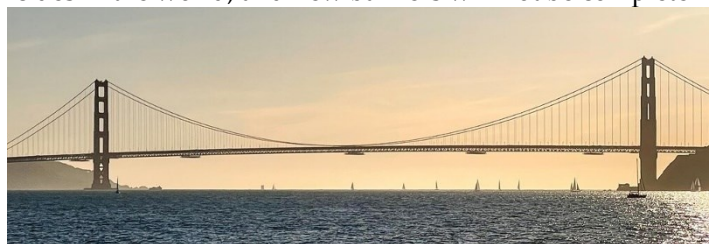
Building. Following the Embarcadero, we passed the Exploratorium and then viewed a magnificent cruise ship at the terminal. We enjoyed views of Pier 39 and Fisherman's Wharf and made a short climb overlooking Fort Mason which was bustling with a Farmer's Market. We continued on, passing the Marina District, once part of the bay that had been filled in for the Golden Gate International Exposition of 1915. The Palace of Fine Arts stands as a memory of that fair. We crossed Marina Green and followed the path through Crissy Field. This was a former military airfield, built over an ancient salt marsh and estuary. We



Ferry Building, Egrets, GG Bridge at sunset - Teresa Schwanauer
GG Bridge from Crissy Field, Fort Baker - Sylvia Kwan

enjoyed seeing a Great Egret and a Great Blue Heron.

We stopped for coffee at the Warming Hut, and went up the steps to a lunch spot just below the Golden Gate Bridge. There is an interesting history of the bridge on line. From the first design by Joseph Strauss in 1917 to its completion in 1937 was twenty years of struggle among competing interests of ferry and automobile companies. We also noticed the signs for crisis counseling. This bridge has the most suicides in the world, and new barriers will not be complete



until 2023. The walk from the bridge to Sausalito took us past Fort Baker and along a road past the lovely homes overlooking the Bay. There was a stop for ice-cream before boarding the ferry or bus back to San Francisco. Thank you, Mike and Fran, for this good walk and magnificent views of San Francisco and the Bay.

Roberta O'Grady

Thursday, November 11, 2021
San Francisco Civic Center
Leaders: Julia Cordell & David Jadeson



Twenty-four people were interested in learning something about Jewish history in San Francisco. At the start everyone received Ghirardelli Squares from David Jadeson. Our first stop was the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium. If you didn't know, Bill Graham was a German Jewish refugee, escaping Nazi Europe. It was named in honor of

"music promoter Bill Graham, who helped launch the careers of many prominent musicians in the mid-1960s... the psychedelic music he expounded has had global reach". Graham owned the Fillmore Auditorium in the Western Addition.

One of the next stops was Alice B. Toklas Street. It was where Alice actually lived in San Francisco before she met Gertrude Stein in Paris. She is famous for making special brownies and being part of the most famous lesbian couple of the 20th century.



The next stop was across the street at a Unitarian Church, where the sarcophagus of Thomas Starr King is located. Mr. King was not Jewish, but a Unitarian Minister and very much a humanist.

He was notable for influencing the vote for California to stay in the Union during the Civil War. On August 1, 1860, Starr King gave a speech at a celebration for free black people. In his speech, he declared that the divine



mission of the church was to "proclaim equality of the races". His was one of two statues in D.C. representing California, until replaced by a statue of Ronald Reagan.

Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, SF City Hall, Thomas Starr King sarcophagus, CCHC hikers - photo taken by Sylvia Kwan and 5 year old



Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, SF City Hall, Thomas Starr King sarcophagus, CCHC hikers - photo taken by Sylvia Kwan and 5 year old

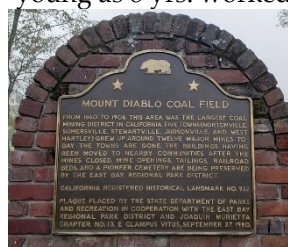
mission of the church was to "proclaim equality of the races". His was one of two statues in D.C. representing California, until replaced by a statue of Ronald Reagan.

Lunch was at Raymond Kimbell Playground where we had a cute 5-year-old take our group picture. The hike ended in the Fillmore neighborhood which used to be a Jewish neighborhood in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It had a Yiddish Cultural Center, kosher bakeries and butcher shops.

Julia Cordell

Sunday November 14
Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve
Leader: Dorothy Bradt

It was a foggy morning at Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve when 18 hikers met for a 6-mile loop hike. It went through Rose Hill Cemetery where there are an estimated 235 graves of people from the five towns that once held 10,000 people, many of Welsh ancestry. The towns of Somersville, Nortonville, Stewartville, Judsonville, and West Hartley disappeared after the coal mines closed in the 1920s. As many as 900 men and boys as young as 8 yrs. worked in the coal mine tunnels. Many children died of diphtheria, smallpox, and scarlet fever. Women died in childbirth. Miners died of accidents in the mines. The cemetery was victim to much vandalism over the years before East Bay Regional Park District came in and bought the property. Silica sand for glass making was mined till 1940. The park district began acquiring the land in 1973. The preserve opened in 1976 and now has 8,349 acres. There is a very interesting Visitor Center located in a sand mine tunnel with many photos and a video to see. The fog limited the magnificent views that can be seen on the Ridge Trail but there are many rock formations and sandstone slabs that make this area so beautiful.



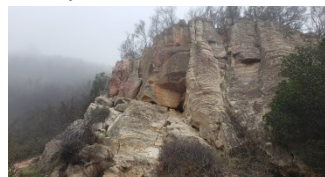
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Dorothy Bradt



Photos by Sylvia Kwan

Thursday, November 18, 2021
Quarry Lakes Park, Fremont
Leaders: Jerry Ford, Frank Martin & Stew Perlman

While I waited for several hikers to arrive at the Union City BART Station due to a BART delay, the other twenty-one hikers made their way to Quarry Lakes Park about one mile away. We finally all got together and circled up, while I distributed delicious Oreo cookies (thank you, Jerry) to the group. We headed out to the Environmentally Sustainable Demonstration Garden after Jerry pointed out some interesting features like the floating dock that sits in Horseshoe Lake. The Demonstration Garden is a wonderful site to visit, especially if you are looking for flowering



Demonstration Garden, Accessible fishing pier, Lipstick sage, Trail along the lakes - Sylvia Kwan

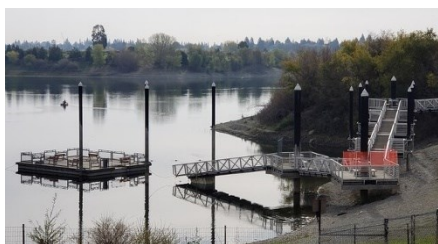
plants, succulents, and grasses to add to your home garden. We continued on our way bisecting two lakes heading for the Alameda Creek Flood Channel to see the recently constructed fish ladders that will hopefully enable the steelhead to make its way up through the creek to spawn. Next, we hiked to a grassy green



knoll where picnic tables awaited our arrival to enjoy our lunch. After we were satiated, we returned to BART and home. The Park was once the home of Native Americans who inhabited this region for many generations. Furthermore, gravel quarried from Shinn

Pond, one of the water features of Quarry Lakes, was used to build UC Berkeley in the late 1800s. Thank you to Jerry, Frank, our trustworthy sweep, and Stew for an enjoyable late morning and early afternoon hike.

Stew Perlman



Celebrate Winter Solstice
Tuesday, December 21!

This is the solstice, the still point of the sun, its cusp and midnight, the year's threshold and unlocking, where the past lets go of and becomes the future; the place of caught breath, the door of a vanished house left ajar.

~Margaret Atwood



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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•Jim Baranowski, **Thursday Chair**

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