



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



OCTOBER 2020



KNAPSACK

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

As if the COVID pandemic wasn't enough to deal with, the wildfires, the triple-digit temperatures and the unhealthy air quality have disrupted our lives even more. However, I hope by the time you receive this Knapsack, the fires have been contained, the weather has improved, and the air is breathable to allow us a respite of relief. It is important to remain optimistic, and going on our hikes when the air is good or at least moderate is a wonderful way to feel better, get some exercise, and fraternize with fellow members. Unfortunately, the Holiday Luncheon has been canceled. Do not despair. We will have a Spring Luncheon if the pandemic is under control and the authorities recognize that it is safe for us to get together. In the meantime, contact Jim or Mary to set up your autumn hikes. The weather will be cooler and the air quality will be better. Stay well and remain in good spirits. We will prevail.

Stew Perlman

SAVE THIS DATE

- December 9, 2020 - Holiday Luncheon, **CANCELLED**



Sadly, the CCHC 2020 Holiday Luncheon, planned for this December, has been cancelled due to the pandemic. Hopes are that next year we can gather together and celebrate our club's 101'st year with a Spring Luncheon in April.

OPEN HIKE DATES FOR JANUARY to MARCH, 2021

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

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

Open Sundays: January 10, 17, 24, and 31; February 7, 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

IS IT SAFE TO HIKE??? To check the air quality in your area use this site:

For current conditions wherever you are, go to <https://fire.airnow.gov/#/>



OUTINGS COMMITTEE SEEKS NEW CONTRIBUTING MEMBER



The Outings Committee has an opening for a contributing member. We meet the second Monday of each quarter, our next meeting will be December 14th at 10am via Zoom. In the past we have met at a local restaurant at noon for lunch. We are hoping to return to that when it is safe.

As a member of the committee, you will help suggest places to visit, schedule events, resolve date conflicts and evaluate outing plans. It is not required that you attend the outings or go on scouting trips. Familiarity with past outings is a plus.

Interested parties please email Edwin Osada at edwin@osadas.org



A HEARTY WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBER

Isabel Rogne of Hayward



CONSERVATION BAD NEWS

- ◆ **“Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” for Polluters:** The same day the United States became the country with the most confirmed Covid-19 cases in the world, the EPA put frontline communities at even graver risk by allowing chemical plants, oil and gas operations, and other industrial facilities to use pandemic as a reason to stop monitoring and reporting on their pollution – without alerting the public.
- ◆ **Passing on the Chance to Reduce Soot:** Just days after a Harvard study revealed that Americans living in areas with even slightly higher levels of air pollution were more likely to die from Covid-19, the EPA refused to tighten restrictions on industrial soot, at a cost of more than 12,000 premature deaths a year.

AND

- ◆ **Weakening Limits on Toxic Mercury:** Just two days later, the EPA prepared to undermine standards for mercury and other toxic air pollutants from dirty oil- and coal-fired power plants.

I thought that the EPA was supposed to protect people, not polluters!



Beryl Vonderheid for
the Conservation Committee



This is a big THANK YOU to Madge Dimmick for her many years on the Conservation Committee. People like Madge make all the difference!

~The Conservation Committee

Quotes from Ruth Bader Ginsburg

When a thoughtless or unkind word is spoken, best tune out.

Fight for things you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you.

I really concentrate on what’s on my plate at the moment and do the very best I can.

I’m a very strong believer in listening and learning from others.





**Thursday, August 20, 2020
Lafayette Ridge in lieu of Kennedy Grove
Leaders: Mike Branning & Patricia Derickson**



Started: Fran Leighty, Pat McDonald, Henry Chan, Mike Branning, Sylvia Kwan, Angela Chan · Ending group: Mike, Angela, Pat and Henry - photos by Patricia Derickson

After four days of lockdown due to extremely hot weather, a break was forecast for this date! As of six p.m. Wednesday, we had eight folks ready to burst forth and hike our little hearts out. At eight p.m. Wednesday, EBRPD closed its parks due to smoky conditions.

Looked out and saw clear skies and stars. Decided that we would be on EBMUD land and near the reservoir so decided to meet at the trailhead at Kennedy Grove [Editor's note: EBRPD park] and check out conditions:

Gate closed!

Tried Briones

Overlook. Gate

closed! Tried entrance

off Bear

Creek Road and

San Pablo Dam

Road: No Hiking

Allowed sign! Drove to Leigh Creekside Park in Lafayette and Mike led us up Deer Hill Road to the Lafayette Ridge Trail. Success! By this time, we were down to five hardy souls who hiked 4.7 miles ninety percent of which was uphill! I felt that we showed the same grit and determination that Harold French so gallantly embodied in founding the Contra Costa Hills Club! We've earned bragging rights. When the skies clear and the temperature drops a bit, we'll reschedule Kennedy Grove.



Patricia Derickson

**Thursday, August 27, 2020
Old Alameda Naval Air Station
Leaders: Beryl Vonderheid & Roberta O'Grady**

Alameda Naval Air Station was developed from wetlands in 1927 as Benton Field, an Army airport in 1930. It was

also the end of the Transcontinental Railroad. Pan American World Airways used the harbor for China Clippers until moving to Treasure Island in 1939 for the Golden Gate International Exposition. Naval operations began in 1940. The base was home port for aircraft carriers Coral Sea and Carl Vinson. The base was closed in 1997.



Lucy Perdichizzi, Mike Branning, Celeste Burrows, Mary Johnson, Patricia Derickson, Beryl Vonderheid, Roberta O'Grady, David Jackson, Barry Waldman, Dexter Barker, Darlene Choy; Purple tomatoes, Roberta at O Club - photos by Rita Poppenk

Our group of 12 entered the base at the old Main Gate. Here I shared memories of coming to the Officers' Club with my father, a Captain in the Navy Dental Corps during WWII. The salute

as we entered the gate always impressed me. We followed Redline Rd to Barbers Point, passing the former chapel and Officer's Club, now the 'O' Club. We visited the Community Garden to enjoy the flowers and vegetables. On to Alameda City Hall West we passed interesting murals and former Navy housing, now home to Alameda residents.



The City of Alameda has worked on redevelopment of the base, but since it's a superfund site, that has delayed development.



Lunch was near the park at City Hall West. Then we walked to Seaplane Lagoon to view the USS Hornet, given to the air station as a museum ship. On our walk back to Ferry

Terminal we enjoyed the views of the estuary, San Francisco in the distance and stopped at interesting artifacts - an anchor, steel cable, and anchor chains - from the history of this part of Alameda. Thank you, Beryl, for this lovely and nostalgic 4-mile walk.

Roberta O'Grady

Thursday, September 3, 2020
Quarry Lakes - Fremont
Leader: Sets Amman

Nine members and one guest rounded up at the main entrance to Quarry Lakes Recreation Area. Quarry Lakes is one of the newer East Bay Regional Parks, founded in 1997 on the site of the former Niles Sand & Gravel rock quarry. The City of Fremont reconfigured the old gravel



Hard to recognize: Darlene Choy, Pat McDonald, Jerry Ford, ?, Sets Amman, Barry Waldman (guest), ?, Patricia?, Dexter Barker; Catfish from Lake — photos by Rita Poppenk

pits, flooded it from Alameda Creek and opened it to the public in 2000. The park encompasses six separate lakes. As we followed Old Creek Trail our first stop was the aluminum floating fishing pier designed to accommodate disabled fishermen and boaters. We chatted with three fishermen who explained that the park stocked the lakes with trout, catfish and two kinds of bass. Our next stop was the EBRP demonstration garden where park personnel and volunteers have planted and identified flowers & trees suitable to varied climates with an emphasis on drought resistance. The Alameda Creek Trail led to our first restroom/water break, where Rita Poppenk spread a variety of 2021 calendars on a picnic table for anyone to take. Rita also deserves an honorable mention for sporting the most unique mask. She folded an EBRP map of the park into a mask with "Quarry Lakes" appropriately displayed over her mouth. The Wood Duck Trail led us back to Old Creek Trail that separates Horsehoe and Lago Los Osos Lakes. We happened upon a fisherman that had three 18-20" long, live catfish tied to the frame of his bicycle. The Western Pacific Trail along the BART tracks led us past the fruit tree peninsula where the park maintains a variety of fruit trees and berry bushes. Visitors are allowed to pick anything they can carry (no bags or pails allowed). The lunch stop was on a grassy knoll overlooking the swimming beach on Horsehoe Lake.

Jerry Ford



Tuesday, September 15, 2020
Huckleberry Botanic Regional Preserve
Leaders: Pat McDonald and Celeste Burrows

With the wildfire smoke abating somewhat, five intrepid masked hikers met leader Pat at the entrance to Huckleberry Botanic Regional Preserve. The hike began on the shaded and winding single track Upper Huckleberry Loop Trail. The pace was leisurely to allow for reading



Hikers: Gino Bossetto, Pat McDonald, Barry Waldman, Patricia Derickson, Yvonne Moss - Mary Ulrich taking photos; View of ridgeline, Beautiful old trees and lush ferns in Huckleberry

the botanic interpretive panels. Rather than completing the loop at this point, Pat led us to the Upper Pinecrest Trail which took us into Redwood Regional Park. A short loop on the East Ridge and Phillips Trails brought us back to the Upper Pinehurst Trailhead where we stopped for a socially distanced lunch break. We then crossed over to the Lower Huckleberry Trail to complete our loop, a strenuous uphill climb (lots of steps) to the parking lot. Overall, the hike was just over six miles with a total elevation gain of around 900 feet.

Huckleberry boasts a native plant community seen nowhere else in the East Bay.



Among the plants along the Interpretive Trail were manzanita (brittleleaf and pallid) with its beautiful red bark, Coast Huckleberry (but no berries), California Bay trees, four species of fern, Canyon Live Oak, Pacific Madrone and California Hazelnut. A feature of the park is that plants are in bloom almost all year long. We are all eager to revisit in the Spring.

Thanks to Pat and Celeste (who scouted the hike with Pat) for offering this "Sunday" pandemic hike. After the cancellation of so many hikes (Covid, heat, smoke), it was a relief for all of us to actually get out and hike. The



weather improved throughout the day ending with blue skies, little smoke and six very happy (if tired) hikers.

Mary Ulrich

Thursday, September 17, 2020
Berkeley Marina
Leaders: Celeste Burrows & Lucy Perdichizzi

Eleven hikers circled up at the Seabreeze Cafe on the Berkeley waterfront. We started



out walking through Cesar Chavez Park under overcast skies, but the fog soon lifted to provide us with near perfect conditions, and great views of Mt Tam and The City. A number of areas in this former City of Berkeley landfill are being groomed for burrowing owls, which have been seen here in the

past. Although we didn't see any owls, we did spot quite a few ground squirrels. We made an interesting stop at the solar calendar (<http://solarcalendar.org>), which Celeste explained was similar in design to Stonehenge. We continued our route along the perimeter of Cesar Chavez past Skates and the now (sadly) defunct Hs Lordships where CCHC had held a number of luncheons. A number of people were fishing from the shore, now that the Berkeley Pier has been closed. We crossed back across the meadow to Seabreeze for lunch. I've heard the crab sandwich is to die for! Thanks, Celeste and Lucy, for a great 5 mile hike on a lovely smokeless day.



Mike Branning



Starting out with Celeste in lead, City scape, Mt. Tam in distance as hikers head downhill - Sylvia Kwan; Hikers at rock calendar: Linda Margossian & Patricia Derickson kneeling, Sylvia Kwan, Mike Branning, Dorothy Kaplan, Barry Waldman, Lucy Perdichizzi, Celeste Burrows, Dexter Barker, Rosemary Johnson - Rita Poppenk taking photo; Berkeley Marina sign and rows of plants - Rita Poppenk



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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