



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

FIRST CLASS MAIL

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



September 2022



KNAPSACK

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

Although it wasn't everything many environmentalists were hoping for to fight climate change, billions of federal dollars will go to combat its dire effects on our dear planet. And if you are feeling kind of blue and overwhelmed by the variety of events taking place, I would suggest you go on a road trip. I returned not too long ago from a trip through coastal Northern California and Oregon. Sure, I have been to a number of familiar places before, but the ubiquitous gray skies, cooler temperatures and the beautiful new spots I had not been to before can certainly brighten your mood. I had never seen so many recreational vehicles before either. Another place to consider in our own backyard is to head up to the Lawrence Hall of Science, where we were on a recent Thursday hike. Looking across the East Bay toward San Francisco and Golden Gate is awesome.

On another note, I want to thank Sue Lai for joining the Website Group. And I am most de-

lighted to see Marilyn Vihman busy coordinating our Sunday hikes.

September is usually a pretty hot month, so stay cool, happy and optimistic.

See you on the trails,
 Stew Perlman

A HEARTY WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS



Keith Deutsch of Oakland

Margaret Riley of San Ramon

SAVE THIS DATE

- Sunday October 16—Thursday October 20—San Luis Obispo outing

We have a Sunday Hike Coordinator!

Hello! It is my pleasure to take on the job of organizing the Sunday hikes! I would like to ask whether anyone is willing and able to propose a hike for Oct. 16, Oct. 23, or Dec. 25? Those are the only gaps in our 4th quarter schedule, as you will see.

Looking forward to seeing many of you soon! -
marilyn vihman (marilyn.vihman@york.ac.uk)

Marilyn Vihman

OPEN HIKE DATES FOR JANUARY TO MARCH 2023

The deadline for submission of hike descriptions is October 31, 2022.

At this time there are two open 2022 4th quarter Thursday hikes: November 24 and December 29, and three Sunday hikes open: October 16 and 23, and December 25. If you would like to lead a hike on one of these dates, please get the description in as soon as possible.

Open Thursday Hikes: January 5, 12, 19, and 26; February 2, 9, 16, and 23; March 2, 9, 23, and 30.

Open Sunday Hikes: January 1, 8, and 29; February 5, 19, and 26; March 5 and 26.

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

For Sunday hikes contact: Marilyn Vihman: 510-708-3853, marilyn.vihman@york.ac.uk

Check the on-line version of the Hike Schedule (www.contracostahills.org) for updates to the printed hike schedule—changes will be indicated in **RED**.

A NEW STATE PARK FOR CALIFORNIA

DOS RIOS RANCH

At some point in 2023, locals, as well as travelers, will be able to enjoy the incredible beauty of California's newest state park (the first new state park in California since 2009). Dos Rios Ranch, is located just outside the Bay Area in Modesto, CA in an area which was once a heavily farmed and flood-prone valley. The river valley has undergone years of restoration in hopes that it can once again be the home and bastion to wildlife that it had once been.

Hopefully the plans include hiking trails!

– source: <https://inhabitat.com/meet-dos-rios-ranch-californias-newest-state-park/>

TWO DAYS TO CELEBRATE IN SEPTEMBER

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE SEPTEMBER 21, 2022

The International Day of Peace takes place on September 21 and has since 1982 after the United Nations created it. It is supposed to be a day where people in charge throughout the world promote peace with peaceful acts. It is also supposed to be a day when no one fires weapons at each other. Let's hope it works this year!



AUTUMNAL EQUINOX—SEPTEMBER 22

Every year in September, the Earth and sun align in such a way that the Earth does not lean toward or away from the sun. This means that it is virtually half day and half night all around the world during the equinox. Every area of the Earth gets close to 12 hours of day and 12 hours of night.



SUMMER LUNCHEON 2022

What a lovely summer luncheon! Fifty-one participants gathered to celebrate summer at Duende restaurant in downtown Oakland. There was time to socialize before we settled down to enjoy our delicious paella. After dessert it was door prize time and an interesting variety of prizes were claimed by the lucky ticket holders. A good time was had by all. Many thanks to Lucy Perdichizzi and her crew for all the planning that went in to this event.



Now, that's paella!



Décor at Duende



Patricia Derickson & Lucy Perdichizzi



Mike Branning, Cameron Mitchell, Noël Siver, Ray Alberti, Marie Alberti, April McMahon, David Jadeson, Roberta O'Grady, Robin Dean



Joy Wilson, Frank Martin, Suzy & Jon Mark



Jerry & Anita Ford



Dexter Barker & Rita Poppenk



Jo Anne Schultz & Liz Howell



Fran Ternus, Yvonne Moss



Connie Gee, Lily Ho, Kate Steinel, Nancy Stout



Beryl Vonderheid & Ed Osada



← Photos courtesy of Lorena Kai

IN THE HIKERS' FOOTSTEPS



Thursday, July 21, 2022
El Cerrito Motorcycle Hill
Leaders: Lily Ho, Mary Huang,
& Dorothy Kaplan

We began the hike from BART, with 13 participants, to the Motorcycle Hill trailhead. This trail is so named after the dare devil racers of a bygone era (90 years ago), The National Motorcycle Hill Club, who attempted to climb the hill straight up on motorcycle. Few made it to the top, but we did as our trail, although steep, zig-zags its way up. We then traversed to the 98 steps stairway leading up to our highest point and a great view of the bay. Our last late hiker found us here.



El Cerrito Trail Trekkers on WordPress.com

We then traversed to the 98 steps stairway leading up to our highest point and a great view of the bay. Our last late hiker found us here.

We entered the Hillside Nature Area once again and hiked down to the El Cerrito Recycling Center where we were greeted by Mario who was waiting to give us a tour. It was so informative as Mario explained to us the processes utilized for a proper and clean recycling program.

He gave us a "backyard" tour to show us how their employees get the recyclables ready for shipping.



Our lunch, and final stop, was at the nearby park in the warm and sunny afternoon.

Thank you, Lily and Mary, for this hike. Thank you, Lily, for getting together our visit to the recycling center.

Dorothy Kaplan

View across the bay (header), Mario talking to CCHC hikers, Group photo - Sylvia Kwan; Historic motorcycle pic from EC Trail Trekkers



Sunday, July 24, 2022
Bernal Heights Earthquake Cottages
Leaders: Liz Howell, Jo Anne Schultz,
& Jan Proudfoot

Liz led the hikers to see historic cottages in Bernal Heights. Jo Anne and Jan provided interesting facts along the way. They started along the Bernal Cut Pedestrian Garden Walkway. They searched for small cottages among larger Victorians in the area. After the 1906 earthquake and fire, there were 5,300 cottages, or "earthquake shacks", built for those who lost homes.



They had sizes from 10'x14' to 16'x18', six-paneled windows, and shingled roofs. They were placed in various communal camps until 1907.

As the city began rebuilding, some intact cottages were removed by horse and wagon and placed on private lots. Today only 28 remain - all protected by strict codes. Over the years owners have remodeled, added rooms, used colorful paint and trims, but all maintain a simplicity of design that is recognizable.

The hikers had lunch at Holly Park or bought food on Cortland Avenue. One bakery sold sour dough pizza, pastries, and BLT sandwiches. At the library, they saw a display of old photos of Bernal Heights after the earthquake. Then they hunted for more cottages.



Should anyone be interested in buying one of these so-called "shacks", one on Anderson Street listed at \$849K. Another on Bocana Street listed at \$900K. These are not your typical shacks. They're historic treasures -- and nice places to live.



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Linda Malm

20 Newman St., 43 Carver St. (two cottages with central connection addition) - Sylvia Kwan; Sidewalk & garage door art - Laurie Lau

Thursday, July 28, 2022
Benicia to Carquinez Vista Point
Leaders: Mike Branning & Patricia Derickson

Mike was nominated by popular acclaim for leading one of the most flexible, interesting hikes in recent memory; Patricia for her five-star gourmet banana bread; and Roland, a hiker whose motto is "It doesn't hurt to ask" -- for obtaining the poshest lunch site any hiker could imagine.



The hikers met in Benicia's historic downtown. They headed east toward the yacht harbor and Carquinez Straight. Mike offered several options to

leave early should anyone want to. Only a few did. The group wanted to have an earlier lunch. Mike was fine with that. They entered the Arsenal Historic District, a former U.S. Army site (1851-1964). The old arsenal building has a clocktower. Nearby is the Commandant's home, a white columned mansion on steroids. The group walked through a gate to find yet another luxurious mansion, the former Executive Officers Quarters. A sign now reads "Wedgewood Weddings." There were rows of chairs set up outdoors under a pergola



covered with flowering vines. There was a tent for outdoor receptions. The hikers looked longingly at the lovely set-up. There was no other place nearby to sit down for lunch. Roland had the

moxie to knock on the door of the mansion and ask if the hikers might sit on the chairs outside. Surprise! The staff said it would be fine.

During lunch, a French Bulldog named "June-Juin" socialized with the hikers. The woman who owned the dog said the hikers could tour the mansion when finished eating. The group entered, not quite believing their luck, speaking in low voices. They went through all the beautiful rooms, and even used the very nice bathrooms. Next, they hiked to the Carquinez Vista Point for the views. Then they went for ice cream. It was a great way to end an unbelievable day.



Linda Malm

Benicia Marina, 1063 Jefferson St.. - Sylvia Kwan; Posh lunch spot, Vista point - Ben Hui

Sunday, July 31, 2022
Mt Tam: Bon Tempe and Lagunitas Lakes
Leaders: Carol Savio & Sets Amann

On this lovely last Sunday in July, twelve of us got together for a hike around two of the lakes at the foot of Mt. Tam that are part of the watershed area which supplies drinking water to most of Marin County. We started off about half-an-hour late, due to some confusion about



meeting places (it's critical not to confuse El Cerrito Plaza with El Cerrito del Norte!),

but all went smoothly thereafter. The first hike, which circled Bon Tempe Lake, was about 4 miles long; we stopped for lunch before returning to the parking lot, sitting on logs in a lovely redwood grove a little way back



View of Bon Tempe Lake, Group photo on bridge - Noël Siver
 Lunch spot, Bridge over creek which was start & finish - Suchi Lee

from the lake. Then most of us found we had the energy for the second, shorter trek, around Lake Lagunitas. Here we began seeing a bit of wildlife – turtles, a Great Blue Heron and some ducks. There were only very few wildflowers; we are all hoping to do the walk again in the



spring – but there was bird-song and, thanks to the gentle gusts of warm air that constantly wafted toward us, a lovely scent – source unidentified, but of dry grasses perhaps. As the photos show, it was also very beautiful to be here even in this dry season!

Our thanks to Carol Savio and Sets Amann for organizing and leading the hike. Marilyn Vihman



Thursday, August 4, 2022
Rodeo to Hercules on the San Francisco Bay Trail
Leaders: Rosemary Johnson & Helen Johe

The San Francisco Bay Trail is a walking and cycling path that rings San Francisco and San Pablo Bay. The plan for the Bay Trail was adopted by the Association of Bay Area



Governments in 1989. It includes 9 counties, 47 cities and 7 toll bridges. Presently it is about 350 miles with a goal of 500 miles. Twenty-five hikers joined our leader, and Helen who agreed to be the sweep, at a recently completed section of the trail which begins at Lone Tree Point Staging Area in Rodeo.

This section is 0.5 mile and connects with the trail in Hercules. Lone Tree Point borders San Pablo Bay where we had a preview of the beautiful bay views

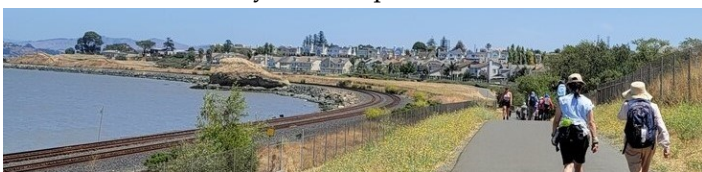


to come on this walk. It was lovely sunny day, with cool breezes from the Bay. Between the path and the Bay are busy train tracks, for freight, the Capitols and Amtrak's



California Zephyr. Rosemary pointed out three White Pelicans in the Bay which she said was unusual for the birds that usually feed in fresh water. Soon we had left Rodeo and were in Hercules, admiring

the new homes that overlook the trail. An impressive building on a bluff above the trail was Bio-Rad Laboratories which produces products for life science research and clinical diagnostics. After passing over Refugio Creek, we left the Bay Trail to make our way to Duck Pond Park for lunch. This is a lovely, shaded park with tables and



Amtrak goes by, Wreck at old marina in Rodeo, Large frog statue at Frog Pad Park, children's playground in Hercules, Bay Trail view - Sylvia Kwan

benches. After walking through the neighborhoods of Hercules, we made our way back to the Bay Trail and returned to Lone Tree Point Staging Area, completing about 5 miles. Rosemary served some delicious cookies at the beginning and end of the hike. Thank you, Rosemary, for introducing us to the new section of the Bay Trail and the lovely city of Hercules.

Roberta O'Grady

Sunday, August 7, 2022
Tilden Park
Leaders: Mary Ulrich and Sophia Garcia

Twenty hikers gathered together in the Little Farms parking lot of Tilden Regional Park in the Berkeley hills. It was a nice, not-too-hot day to explore just a piece of this big, beautiful park.

Our adventure began on the Wildcat Peak Trail where we climbed up



to Nimitz Way. The elevation gain was approximately 1000 ft but it traversed so it was a gradual climb. And the sky was clear (no fog!) so the views of the San Francisco Bay were spectacular, varying at different angles all along the way.

The first stop the views changed to the other side of the hill—we could now see the San Pablo and Upper San Leandro Reservoirs to the East.



We took our group picture at a very special bench that our own club dedicated to a past president, George Halloran. This spot too had a great view. What a wonderful way to be remembered! Once on top of the hill we connected with the ridgetop Nimitz Way trail. We traveled it to our lunch stop at Inspiration Point. Here it became a little cooler with a slight breeze, so several of us took to the sunnier benches to enjoy our lunch.



View of bay and SF from Wildcat Peak, Top of the hike on Wildcat Peak, Lots of happy CCHC hikers - Suchi Lee

We returned via the Curran and Wildcat Gorge trails, taking us into the more wooded part of the park. It took us down to the stream that is now but a trickle, and then back to the parking lot clocking in at approximately 6.5 miles. Thank you to our leaders Mary and Sophia for scouting this hike and knowing exactly which way to go. It was a lovely day!

Pam Littlejohn

Thursday, August 11, 2022
The New Presidio Parkway S.F.
Leaders: Suzy & Jon Mark

A picture-perfect day greeted 43 of us as we began this hike at the Arguello Gate to the Presidio. We rounded up at Inspiration Point Overlook for a group photo, then continued down Arguello past some of the old officers housing. New paths took us past the National Cemetery and



pet cemetery as we approached the Main Post. Our leaders pointed out the free movie theater and numerous buildings that were

army barracks late in the 19th century which house a lodge and museums today. The most notable was the Walt Disney Museum. After a short stop at the visitor's center, we continued on the

Presidio Promenade where we caught our first views of the two sets of tunnels



that serve Doyle Drive and the Golden Gate Bridge approach. Battery Bluff gave us a look at four-gun batteries built in the late 1800s to protect the Golden Gate harbor.

We stopped at an overlook, then continued to Crissy Field, site of the old base airport. What was once a waste dump for the base has been transformed into a beautiful open space for the public. The transformation involved removing 90,000 tons of



contaminated materials and replacing it with 18 acres of sand dune habitat. A channel was opened to establish the tidal marsh where

flocks of brown pelicans entertained us. Our leaders saved the best for last as we climbed a stair-

case to the new Tunnel Tops Park, a nine-acre mixture of playgrounds, picnic areas, food trucks and uninterrupted views of the bay and Golden Gate bridge. We returned to BART aboard the Presidio Go free bus.



Main post, Bridge across marsh - Ben Hui; Bunkers and GGB, Brown Pelicans - Laurie Lau

Additional photos on page 8

Jerry Ford

Sunday, August 14, 2022
El Cerrito Hills
Leaders: Mike Branning & Helen Johe

A beautiful Sunday morning brought together seventeen hikers who started out walking through the streets of El Cerrito to an entrance into the Hillside Natural Area, land preserved for all to enjoy and with many trails. Our trail was one that was climbing up while mostly under Coast Live Oaks. Nature signs were placed intermittently with one picturing a mountain lion and another a dragonfly. The only live creature we saw was a tick. Once we reached some height a view of the bay opened up.

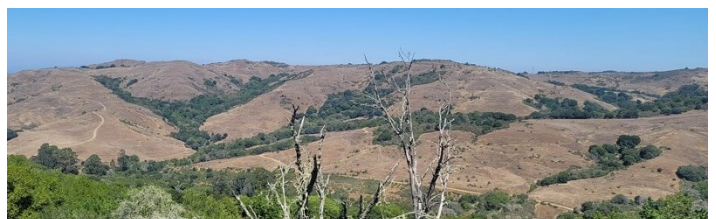
We walked up two flights of stairs, passing backyards, and reached Arlington Park. Here we had our lunch alongside all the families who were spending a sunny Sunday in the park. After lunch our leaders wanted us to see Wildcat Canyon so we walked up to the Boy Scout camp called Camp Herms and still up to the ridge for the fabulous view of Wildcat Canyon. We headed back down to another entrance to the natural area. It was time to say "it's all downhill from here" but the plan was to walk up to and through the shady Canyon Trail Park and back to where we began.

Thank you, Mike and Helen, for a lovely day through the El Cerrito hills.

Dorothy Kaplan



Shady trail, entrance to Camp Herms, Uphill from there, View to Wildcat Canyon Reg. Park - Sylvia Kwan



Thursday, August 18, 2022
Lawrence Hall of Science to Berkeley BART
Leaders: Patricia Derickson & Jo Anne Schultz

It was a sunny day in Berkeley. Some hikers arrived early for a coffee at Paris Baguette, just outside the BART station. Patricia passed out her famous carrot cake muffins and Milano cookies. The group made their way to the bus and headed up the hills behind the UC Berkeley campus. There were lovely homes along the route, with glimpses of the bay and San Francisco beyond. The bus stopped at the Lawrence Hall of Science,



with a large cement viewing deck outside. Far below, the trees lining the streets of Berkeley looked like a green grid. One hiker, inspired by the views, did a spinning Julie Andrews imitation -- "the hills are alive with the sound of music."

Next, they went uphill to the Simons Laufer Mathematical Sciences Institute. Jo Anne gave a talk about

mathematician Shiing-Shen Chern in front of his life-sized statue. Chern was called the "father of differential geometry." Then everyone took a trail across the hills and down through a forest including evergreen, oak, eucalyptus, and bay trees. Some trees had fallen across the trail and been partially removed. Near the campus, they passed the Cal baseball diamond and rugby field. At the foot-

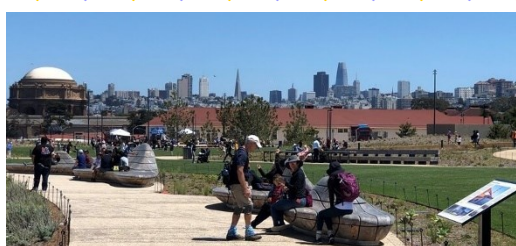


Starting from Lawrence Hall of Science, Up the stairs with a view, Fire trail - Laurie Lau



ball stadium, they turned right toward Haas School of Business. They had lunch outside, near a statue of two bears. Afterwards, they went through the campus and got caught up in large groups of students, some carrying placards. It turned out it wasn't a protest, but an orientation for new students. Some hikers stopped for ice cream at Baskin Robbins. They reminisced about their own college days and how they were some of the best days in their lives.

Linda Malm



Tunnel Tops playground with view of Golden Gate Bridge, Seating made from downed eucalyptus at meadow area with city view, Marsh, playground & amphitheater - Laurie Lau



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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