



FIRST CLASS MAIL

## CONTRA COSTA HILLS CLUB

### CCHC NEWSLETTER – JANUARY 2025 ISSUE

Dear Members

Happy New Year! For our members who have requested mail communication, here is the updated hike schedule for winter 2025, and a short newsletter. We recommend you consult the club website at <https://contracostahills.org/index.html> for updates and additional information. Also visit our safe section in groups.io for announcements, late updates, as well as pictures and write-ups from past hikes.

Thank you for your support of the club, and see you on the trail.

Dec. 11 - Holiday Luncheon!!!



Dec. 19 - Lafayette Reservoir/Bird Bell Hike



# CCHC NEWS – JANUARY 2025



December 12 – Concord Parks

## Happy New Year! Here is the President's Message:

It's 2025 and with a new year upon us let's hope that our lives and the world continue to surprise us with good things. There will be many opportunities to enjoy the Thursday and Sunday hikes, and I encourage all of you to remain steadfast to the Club's ethos of taking care of our environment. As I mentioned in the December President's Message, but now with more conviction, it is apparent to me and perhaps to many of you that those government agencies that protect and sustain our water, air and land will be diminished in funds and power for the next few years. And this means that nongovernment environmental organizations will need to be supported more vigorously. I want to thank those members who will be leading our hikes this year and to those of you who will continue to serve on our committees. Lastly, Happy New Year. Good health to all.

- Submitted by Stew Perlman

## NEWS AND EVENTS

The December 11, 2024 CCHC holiday luncheon at the Mona Lisa Mare E Monti restaurant in San Francisco was a huge success. Members are marking their calendars for the December 10, 2025 luncheon at the same restaurant.

**CCHC Overnight Outing PINECREST LAKE** and the area around Hwy 108 – June 1–5, 2025 – Save the Date!

**WELCOME** to our new member, Nori Hudson from Albany

### Hike leaders please note:

After the hike sign-up sheets are signed by the Thursday and Sunday hikers, they need to be sent to Lynne Vogensen by the hike leader for that hike. In addition, the sign-up sheet needs to state who will be doing the write-up for that specific hike:

**Lynne Vogensen**

**620 Mt. Olivet Court, Clayton CA 94517**

**Email: mslynne33@yahoo.com**

**OPEN HIKES:** Thank you, leaders, for stepping up! Thanks to you, the only open dates for the next three months are

2/2 and 2/23. Contact Marilyn Vihman (Sunday) or Jim Baranowski (Thursday) if you would like to lead a hike, or if you would like some ideas for hikes.

\*\*\*\*\*

**IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS:** A full set of write-ups and pictures can be found under CCHChikers on groups.io. Contact Rosemary Johnson with questions.



December 1 – Alameda in the fall

**ALAMEDA IN THE FALL, December 1.** Leaders: Beryl Vonderheid, Roberta O'Grady. Beryl and Roberta saw an open date in the schedule and filled it with their cancelled Thursday, November 21 hike. After all, a short hike is better than no hike at all! We started off in Lincoln Park, where Roberta filled us in on the history of the beautiful Fernside neighborhood, once the estate of Alfred A. Cohen, who made his fortune in the San Francisco ferries, Oakland/Alameda railroad, and the transcontinental railroad. First was a walk down Thompson, all decked out for Christmas even on a bright morning. Next high point was a stroll through the heart of Fernside, Gibbons Drive, full of interesting homes, beautiful trees, and bumpy sidewalks from the trees! Then past the grandeur of the old Alameda Hotel and Alameda High to the older section of town, filled with lovingly maintained Victorians. Lunch was under the ginkgo trees in Franklin Park at the 3.7-mile mark. All and all, a very pleasant fall day through an interesting and lovingly maintained town with good company and lively conversation. Thank you, Beryl and Roberta, for the excellent commentary and the trip as a whole. – Jim Baranowski



December 5 – Holiday Hike

**HOLIDAY HIKE – SF, December 5.** Leader: Sets Amann. On a delightfully warm, and sparkling clear, evening in SF, seventeen eager walkers gathered together in front of the Ferry Building on the

# CCHC NEWS – JANUARY 2025

Embarcadero. We fortified with some French madeleine cookies before beginning our walk toward our first stop at the base of the Pier 39 Christmas tree. There we rested among colorful sea lion sculptures and had our group photo taken. We proceeded around the wharf's enormous lighted Ferris wheel, and marveled at the possible views of the bay that might be seen from its very top. We continued on to North Beach and our restaurant destination of Piazza Pellegrini on Washington Square. On exiting we had the lovely experience of a colorful floodlit SS Peter and Paul Church with a rising moon over Coit Tower...a real photo op! We soldiered on through the colorful North Beach neighborhood and onto Grant Avenue in Chinatown, where many beckoning shops were open. Our final destination was Union Square which did not disappoint. An enormous, sparkling lighted Christmas tree in front of the Macy's building's windows decorated with wreaths and lights, as well as music and performers skating on the ice rink made for a spectacular ending to a festive evening. – Carol Savio

**PLEASANTON RIDGE, December 8.** Leaders: Colette Cussary and Diane Cannon. On a perfect day for hiking, we met at Foothill Staging Area in Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park. We took off on Oak Tree Trail with two guests and 14 club members. We hiked over 7 miles with an elevation climb of 1500'. Hiking Oak Tree we connected with Ridgeline and walked on olives fallen from the trees onto the trail next to the orchards. The orchards were planted between 1890 and the 1920s. From there we crossed over to the Thermalito Trail, named after the Thermal Fruit Company which operated from 1904 until the 1930s producing dried fruits. Non-irrigated orchards included apricot, cherry, prune, and almonds. At lunch some of us ate in the olive grove and others went to the top of the ridge where we could see Brushy Peak, Mt. Diablo, Mission Peak, Ohlone Wilderness Area, and the San Antonio Reservoir. Parallel faults lie on both sides of Pleasanton Ridge. To the west is the Stonybrook-Palomares fault and to the east are the Calaveras and Sunol faults. Although we had a spare the air day we could still see for miles from the top of the ridge. – Colette Cussary



December 22 – Oaks in the mist, Black Diamond Regional Park

**BLACK DIAMOND REGIONAL PARK, ANTIOCH, December 22.** Leaders: Diane Cannon and Laurie Lau. It's the mud, it's the mud! But we went anyway! What a brave, determined group we were! The fog was so thick, we couldn't see each other at times. But, there was no rain or wind, and the sun peaked out for a minute or two. We got plenty of exercise doing 8 miles, 1582' elevation gain/loss, and carrying around a couple of inches of mud on our boots, now and

then. The friendly chatter of our group followed us up hills and down into valleys. Artwork along the trail revealed interesting faces in the numerous cow pies. One was dubbed, "S—t for Brains"! We even listened to the song, "Waters of March," laughing at the verse about the mud. The quietness of the day accentuated the sounds of the meadowlarks. More birds were sighted: bald eagle, kestrel, white pelicans, says phoebe. At lunch we were treated to Marilyn's Viennese cookies and Mark's chocolate. Yum! We had a vote after lunch about which route to take back, the muddy one we had scouted, or a trail reputed to have less mud. All 11 of us voted for less mud. Guess what? You're right! It was just as muddy! But by now, we had the mud thing figured out: just put one foot in front of the other and don't waste too much time trying to scrape it off, because it will just be there again. Walking on the gravel road back to the cars did a good job of getting rid of the excess. Such positive attitudes and happy faces filled with exhilaration and accomplishment, made this a hike to remember. Oh, and the mud! – Diane Cannon [*Kudos to the group for hiking, mud or not! -Ed.*]



December 26 – New Years Hike

**NEW YEARS HIKE, December 26.** Leaders: Jerry Ford, Frank Martin, Stew Perlman. Twenty-eight hikers gathered at Coyote Hills in Fremont for what has become an annual end-of-year event. After we circled up and welcomed Lily's son and grandson, visiting from Boston, we took off on the Bayview Trail that skirts the bay and circumnavigates part of the Coyote Hills. Along the way, we saw egrets, a blue heron, mallards, and coots. There were a variety of birds flying above us, including hawks and a bald eagle. We continued on as we made our way through the tules. Once we returned to the picnic area, we were happy to see chocolates, donut holes, cookies, cakes, sparkling cider, etc. spread across the picnic tables that were handsomely covered with bright red tablecloths. Soon, we nourished ourselves with the goodies after Stew made a short toast welcoming 2025, our guests, our CCHC members, and wishing everyone good health and a Happy New Year. By now, the sun had appeared and we sat down to talk and enjoy the refreshments. The time was nearing to say goodbye and wish each other well. Thank you to those of you who brought the snacks and to Jerry, Frank, and Stew for continuing the tradition. Happy New Year! – Stew Perlman

\*\*\*\*\*

If you have a comment, or would like to have an item included in this newsletter, please contact James Baranowski at [brnw\\_th@yahoo.com](mailto:brnw_th@yahoo.com). Thank you.