



**THE CONTRA COSTA HILLS CLUB**  
**PO Box 2056, El Cerrito, CA 94530**  
**Website: [www.contracostahills.org](http://www.contracostahills.org)**

FIRST CLASS MAIL

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



**JANUARY 2021**



# KNAPSACK

**Co-Editors: Silvia Akinaga, Rosemary Johnson**  
**Circulation: Grace MacNeill, Chair; Agnes Chen**  
**Printing: Courtesy of Fred Mock**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

As we say goodbye to 2020 and eagerly welcome 2021, I am more than certain and hopeful that the new year will be filled with promise and optimism. The COVID -19 Pandemic has affected just about every aspect of our daily lives. However, some things are enduring in spite of the hardships. We should not only dwell on what has been lost, but what has been gained. The courage and tenacity of our health workers, those on the front-line, should be praised and remembered. Those families who have had to endure the pain from real loss - death, hunger, joblessness, poverty, displacement, need to be supported by those of us who have been fortunate not to have to endure those tragedies. As a Club, the inconvenience of canceled hikes or the necessity to have to adapt to a changing hike schedule and to enforced COVID -19 protocols is a very small price to pay if that has been pretty much the extent of your losses. This past July, my third grandchild was born, and Audrey and I have not yet seen him in person. However, his birth is a reminder that life goes on no matter the global situation. I am grateful to all of you who have ventured out to the limited hikes and have recognized the necessity to adhere to the public health mandates. As you know the December and January hikes were canceled as was unanimously determined at the December Board meeting. It is ever more important to remain vigilant and to do the right thing regarding the

pandemic and not to become complacent about its continuing spread. When we will be able to return to our hike schedule and to a greater sense of normalcy are a bit ways off; however let's hope that by late spring or summer we will be circling up, passing out treats, sharing hugs and maybe even be free from face masks. On behalf of the Board, I wish you and your family, a HAPPY NEW YEAR.

Stew Perlman

## SAVE THESE DATES

- **October 10-14, 2021— Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park**  
If all goes well, sign ups may start NLT April, 2021  
Vaccination and/or testing may be required
- **March 2022—Anza Borrego**

Information on the above Overnight Outings will appear in future *Knapsacks*.

happy  
new year!





## OPEN HIKE DATES FOR FEBRUARY to JUNE, 2021

Unfortunately, December and January hikes had to be cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions, but our schedulers are hoping for the best and encouraging leaders to sign up for February and March dates, and asking everyone to remain positive and look at April, May, and June.

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:** February 4, 11, and 18; March 4, 11, and 18; April 1, 8, and 29; May 6, 13, and 27; June 3, 10, and 24.

**Open Sunday Hikes:** February 7, 21, and 28; March 7, 14, 21, and 28; April 4, 11, 18, and 25; May 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30; June 6, 13, 20, and 27.

**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

## A NEW WAY TO LOOK AT A FOREST

In the New York Times Magazine of Sunday, December 6, I noted an article, The Social Life of Forests, by Ferris Jabr. I wondered what had I been missing in all my hikes in our nearby forests and National Parks. To me, the great trees seemed to stand alone, fed by their own roots. This article presents the research of Suzanne Simard, Professor of Forest Ecology at the University of British Columbia. Her studies began with the observation that loggers were replacing diverse forests with new trees, evenly spaced and stripped of underbrush. She wondered why they were more vulnerable to disease. She found the answer buried in the soil. The tree roots and fungi form a partnership, a symbiotic relationship known as mycorrhizae. Thread like fungi envelop and fuse with the tree roots and help them extract water and nutrients. In return the fungi benefit from the carbon rich sugars produced by the trees through photosynthesis. The idea of a social life in the forest came from Dr. Simard's discovery that the fungal threads link every tree in the forest, including those of different species, passing water and nutrients from the oldest and biggest trees to the newer and smaller ones. She also describes how a germinating seed taps into this underground "community of interspecies partnerships". Dr. Simard will soon publish her book, Finding the Mother Tree which describes how the forest is more than a collection of trees.



Roberta O'Grady

## GOODBY 2020—WELCOME 2021!!!

- ◆ "An optimist stays up until midnight to see the New Year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves." — Bill Vaughan
- ◆ "New Year's Day — now is the accepted time to make your regular annual good resolutions. Next week you can begin paving hell with them as usual." — Billy Crystal
- ◆ "Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right." — Oprah Winfrey

# IN THE HIKERS' FOOTSTEPS



## Thursday, November 19, 2020 Tilden Park Loop Leaders: Jo & Chuck Browne, Celeste Burrows, Mike Branning

Five hikers joined the four leaders for this 4-mile hike in the hills of Tilden Regional Park. After circling up at the parking lot for the Tilden Botanic Garden, we began



walking up the paved South Park Drive, which is presently closed so that cars won't smash newts crossing the Drive on their seasonal migration. Although we didn't see any newts, we did spot a

handsome Cooper's Hawk keeping an eye on us.

Because of the Tuesday rains, we decided to continue on South Park to avoid the steeper and muddier Tower Trail, using the gravel road to the Gillespie Youth Camp to access the Grizzly Peak Trail. The Grizzly Peak Trail roughly parallels Grizzly Peak Blvd, so at one point we took a short detour out to the road to see some spectacular views of The City peeking through the fog.



We continued on the very pleasant Grizzly Peak Trail to its junction with the Selby Trail, using the Selby to return



Header: Viewpoint on Grizzly Peak Blvd., Up South Park Drive, Up Grizzly Peak Trail, On a flat section: Celeste, Mary Johnson, Rosemary Johnson, Patricia Derickson, Mike B., Barry Waldman, Pat McDonald, Jo in lead & Chuck taking photos

back down the canyon to our starting spot at the Botanic Garden. Thank you to Jo, Chuck, Celeste, and Mike for showing us what I think are some of the lesser used but very enjoyable Tilden trails.

Mike Branning

## Tuesday, November 24, 2020 Berryessa BART to Chinese Cultural Garden Leaders: Rita Poppenk and Dexter Barker

This hike started directly across from Berryessa BART in North San Jose on the Penitencia Creek Trail. After a bit of walking on city streets, we entered Overfelt Garden. It has



Hikers at BART: Dexter Barker, David Jadeson, Yvonne Moss, Ben Hui, Lucy Perdichizzi, Beryl Vonderheid, Noël Siver, Rita Poppenk, Jan Lecklikner, Barry Waldman - by Sylvia Kwan

beautiful paths and a pond with Canada Geese and ducks. As we

meandered, we came to the large arched entrance of the Chinese Cultural Garden called the Friendship Gate. The park has many statues and Chinese architecture. The most impressive was Confucius (551-479 BC). I guessed about 30 feet high. It was an apt size as he is known as the greatest educator of all time. An advocate of courtesy, generosity, good faith, diligence, virtue and morality, all of which we could use during these turbulent times.

Through the garden we came to Sun Yat-Sen Memorial Hall. It was dedicated to San Jose in July 1984. Along the way was another statue of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen (A.D. 1866-1925) who is the founding father of the Republic of China. As we followed the paths, we

came to a black stone engraved with Chinese letters. Together they form the word "loyalty".

During a normal year, this garden hosts many events including the Moon Festival in September and opera in spring. Who knows, maybe these events will be back next year?



Confucius - Rita Poppenk



Sun Yat-Sen Memorial Hall, Autumn Foliage (next page) - Sylvia Kwan



To learn more about the park and garden just type in Overfelt Park or Chinese Cultural Garden for information on events and activities, and on

the statues and buildings.

From this garden, we walked a short distance to another nice park for lunch. Lots of places to sit and socially distance. After lunch we made our way back to BART and home. Beautiful day and a lovely hike.

Yvonne Moss

**Friday, November 27, 2020**

**Briones Regional Park**

**Leaders: Celeste Burrows & Pat McDonald**

Nine CCHC-ers knew the best bargains were to be found hiking with friends on this Black Friday. After Celeste reminded us of Briones ranching history, she led us out onto the Seaborg Trail. Pat was sweep and made sure we did not get lost. A canopy of trees filtered the sun and provided a soft carpet of beautiful golden yellow Sycamore leaves, Coyote Brush in full bloom lined the trail side, and acorns and Bay Laurel nuts crunched under our feet. A flock of Golden-Crowned Sparrows greeted us in



Pat McDonald, Rosemary Johnson, Henry & Angela Chan, Linda Margossian, Barry Waldman, Celeste Burrows and Dorothy Bradt - Patricia Derickson

song as we reached the Crescent Ridge Trail. The chatter of hikers ceased as we ascended up, up, up stopping to view the Archery Range along the way. Then it was down, down, down on the Yerba Buena to the Valley Trail, through a meadow where a Say's Phoebe was keeping watch atop a bush in the distance. Soon we were on the Briones Crest Trail, up, up, up to reach our lunch spot atop Briones Peak. A cloudless sky allowed us spectacular views of the hills. Celeste identified all the peaks in view from Redwood to Wildcat, with Mt Tam in the background. After lunch we continued on the Briones Crest Trail past the Sindicich lagoons. The lack of rain this season was evident, not only in the brown hills, but the absence of water in the lagoons. A short stint on the Mott



Pat McDonald, Angela Chan, Dorothy Bradt, Henry Chan, Linda Margossian, Celeste Burrows and Barry Waldman - Patricia Derickson

Peak Trail took us to the Black Oak Trail, where we went down, sighting a grove of trees with yellowing leaves. Are these the Black Oaks after which the trail was named? Upon reaching the Old Briones Road trail, it was like horses to the barn, full of appreciation and gratitude for a wonderful day. Thanks, Celeste and Pat, for giving us a great hike.

Linda Margossian

**Thursday, December 3, 2020**

**Heather Farm Park Loop Hike, Walnut Creek**

**Leaders: Fran Leighty & Sylvia Kwan**

**Cancelled by Leaders due to concern about the health & safety of members due to the spike in coronavirus infections**

**Thursday, December 10, 2020**

**San Francisco Holiday Hike**

**Leader: Sets Amann**

Six hikers met at the Hyatt Regency; then proceeded to the Ferry Building for open restrooms. Throughout the day, we were struck by the beauty of San Francisco.

Absent the usual crowds, the canvas was cleared for our viewing delight.

As we walked The Embarcadero, we encountered beautiful figures of sea lions, celebrating Pier 39 Aquarium's anniversary. At Pier 39, we viewed the



sea lion community. The colony was smaller than usual as mature adults had departed for Jenner, where the Russian River flows into the Pacific. Those left behind are sometimes cranky being deprived of the joys of mating

season. A couple of them were coughing, spewing out visible flecks of recently consumed fish. They forgot their Covid masks.





Each stop featured modest Christmas decorations and menorahs honoring Hanukkah. I found the simpler displays quite pleasing.

We then climbed a modest hill (compared to the other 42) into North Beach and waved at Coit Tower. We admired St. Peter & Paul Church, enjoyed a brief break in Washington Square and then moved on into Chinatown. We passed Kerouac Lane and strolled an almost-empty Grant Street (SF's oldest). The many closed shops and restaurants spoke painfully of the pandemic's toll on our economy. Five T-shirts for \$10.99. Wow!

Arriving in Union Square, we observed a peaceful demonstration. Participants asked for the release of Hong Kong and Taiwan from slavery. Several policemen and SFPD Ambassadors stood nearby but there was no call for their services.

Our last stop was Macy's windows with videos of cats and dogs; alas, no live puppies this year.

Gratitude to Sets for a delightful outing, albeit in bizarre circumstances. We have memories of an empty, gorgeous City, basking in warm December sunshine and the joy of being with friends, six feet apart!



Sets Amman looks at seal statue, Christmas wreath on Embarcadero, Union Square Christmas tree, Jan Lecklikner watches virtual puppies and kitties in Macy's window - Noël Siver

Mary Johnson

**Tuesday, December 15. Sunol Regional Park  
Leader: Roberta O'Grady**

**Thursday, December 17 Lafayette Reservoir**

**Patricia & Nidhi Derickson, Georgette Armstrong, Karen Arntzen & Diane Barde**

**Thursday, December 24 Point Pinole – Atlas Road Staging Area  
Leader: Rosemary Johnson**

**Thursday, December 31 Coyote Hills, Fremont  
Leaders: Beryl Vonderheid and Roberta O'Grady**

**All other December hikes were canceled due to the Bay Area Shelter-in-Place order by the counties Public Health officials due to a surge in coronavirus cases and hospitalizations**



Karen Arntzen shared these photos of Patricia placing her seed bell at Lafayette Reservoir, Diane & Patricia with other gifts of the season.



**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](mailto:compasros@comcast.net). All other submissions should reach Silvia Akinaga at [sakinec@aol.com](mailto:sakinec@aol.com) by the middle of the month to appear in the following month's issue.

**OFFICERS & COMMITTEES 2020—2021**

**President**

•Stew Perlman

**Vice-President**

•James Baranowski

**Treasurer**

•Suzy Mark

**Recording Secretary**

•Cameron Mitchell

**Membership Secretary**

•Connie Gee

**Corresponding Secretary**

•Patricia Derickson

**Board of Directors**

•Gino Bossetto

•Mike Branning

•Chuck Browne

•Anita Ford

•Lois Switzer

**Hiking Schedule**

•Mary Ulrich, **Sunday Chair**

•Jim Baranowski, **Thursday Chair**

**Hiking Schedule Editor**

•Noël Siver

**Knapsack Editors**

•Silvia Akinaga

•Rosemary Johnson

**Knapsack Mailing**

•Grace MacNeill, Chair

•Agnes Chen

**Knapsack Printing**

•Fred Mock

**Extracurricular Coordinator**

•Lois Switzer

**Nominating Committee**

•Cameron Mitchell, Chair

•Reyanne Freeman

•Lily Ho

•Liz Howell

•Fran Leighty

**Social Committee**

•Lucy Perdichizzi, Chair

•Patricia Derickson

•Reyanne Freeman

**Overnight Outings Committee**

•Ed Osada, Chair

•Bill Chen

•Helen Wong Johe

•Rosemary Johnson, minutes

•Mindy Svorny-Moore

•Lynne Vogensen

•James Watson

**Conservation Committee**

•Beryl Vonderheid, Chair

•Barbara Mow

•Sylvia Saunders

•Jo Anne Schultz

•Kate Steinel

•Nancy Stout

**Audit Committee**

•April McMahon

•Linda Margossian

•Herb Yonge

**Historian**

•Yvonne Moss

**Website Group**

•Gino Bossetto

•Chuck Browne

•JJ Libbon

•Fred Mock