



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



JUNE 2020



KNAPSACK

Co-Editors: Silvia Akinaga, Rosemary Johnson
Circulation: Grace MacNeill, Chair; Agnes Chen
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

It has been close to two and a half months since we began to shelter-in-place and by now we have witnessed the devastating effect the pandemic has had on the world's economy and on the loss of lives in every corner of the globe. The disruption to what we remember as normal may never be the same. However, we have been most fortunate in many ways to live in the San Francisco Bay Area whose public officials recognized earlier than many other regions that there needed to be government intervention to mitigate the deadly pandemic. Many of us have been adhering faithfully to the mandates, but we know that we along with millions of others are getting restless. We are eager to return to a greater sense of what our lives were before the coronavirus. As a hiking club, we certainly want to be on the trails again. The board will continue to monitor the situation and with prudence, best health-related practices, and government mandates we will establish guidelines for our future hikes. We all look forward to seeing each other again. Remain optimistic, wear facial covering when required, show gratitude, follow social distancing protocol, and above all know that we will eventually get through this.

Stew Perlman

OPEN HIKE DATES FOR
OCTOBER to DECEMBER, 2020

The deadline for submission of hike descriptions is July 31, 2020

Open Thursdays: October 1, 22 and 29; November 5, 12, 19, and 26; December 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31.

Open Sundays: October 4, and 11; November 1, 15, 22 and 29; December 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



SAVE THESE DATES

- September 4-7, 2020—Oakland Feather River Family Camp, **CANCELLED!**
- December 9, 2020 - Holiday Luncheon, **HOPEFULLY!**

NORMA MARTIN

August 12, 1938 - April 24, 2020

Norma passed away suddenly after contracting pneumonia with complications. She was a beautiful and gentle soul who touched many with her generous and caring way. Norma was born in Leadville, Colorado, and spent her early years living in Missouri before moving to California. Her family settled in Union City (then called Decoto) in the early 1950s, where she attended and graduated from Washington High School. After marrying her high school sweetheart, Frank, they moved to Fremont to raise their family. Norma joined CCHC in 2011.



Norma was never happier than when surrounded by her family and friends. By becoming a travel agent, she was able to share her love of travel to others for 35 years. She was a talented photographer and she never turned down the chance to pull the handle of a few slot machines. Norma was a caring volunteer for the American Cancer Society since 2007, and a cheerful deliverer for the Fremont Meals on Wheels program for sixteen years.

She is survived by her husband of 63 plus years, Frank Martin; her two devoted children Terri Landon, David Martin, and son-in-law Steve Landon; her three grandchildren Melissa and Sarah Landon, and Kraig Martin; and great-grandson Ryder Yearly-Stocum.



To Our Friends in the Contra Costa Hills Club,

A simple thank you doesn't seem quite adequate for the outpouring of beautiful, heartfelt words of comfort and condolences my family and I received with the passing of Norma. Every card, email, and phone call I received and shared with my family brought on the start of tears but also so much comfort. I don't know what else I could say but thank all you very much.

Frank Martin and Family

From the Conservation Committee

MOUNT TAMALPAIS

The Miwoks considered Mt. Tam so sacred they wouldn't climb to the summit. Not so, the intrepid hikers of CCHC and many others who make an annual New Year's pilgrimage to the top to pay homage to this iconic Bay Area treasure.

Hiking on Mt. Tam has long been an exhilarating experience for CCHC members. We believe that its flora, fauna and views must be protected for generations to come. To this end, we support two organizations that seek to do just that.

The Tamalpais Land Collaborative (also known as One Tam) was formed in 2014 to combine and coordinate the expertise and resources of the five agencies that are responsible for the management of different parts of the mountain: California State Parks, Marin County Parks, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, Marin Municipal Water District, and the National Park Service.

Our annual membership fee of \$40 supports One Tam's projects and programs, among which are signage and information at trailheads and intersections; habitat and wildlife protection, including invasive plant monitoring and wildlife inventories; school programs and internships for students and young adults to prepare them to be stewards of the environment; and roving rangers to provide information and safety.

CCHC has had a long and special relationship with the Tamalpais Conservation Club (TCC) since its inception in 1927. This all volunteer organization is dedicated to protecting Mt. Tam's plant and animal life, building and maintaining hiking trails, and aiding and encouraging acquisition of lands for parks and public open spaces. We support TCC with annual donations of \$100.



Because I could not step outside
Outside stepped in for me
My body shook and coughed and sneezed
I've no immunity.

Alone, I played my records loud
Some Drake and Miley Cyrus
My labours and my leisure lost
To the Coronavirus.

.....by John Boyne
Parody of a poem by Emily Dickinson

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 April 2019 to January 2020.

April 2019

Donations to Conservation

Barbara Mow
Connie Gee
Diane Barde
Dorothy Bradt
Ellen Paisal
Fred & Jean Mock
Grace MacNeill
Kate Steinel
Kathy O'Toole & Herb Yonge
Linda Margossian
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Wayne Anderson
In Memory of Rita Kizziah
Beryl Vonderheid

Donations to General Fund

Carol McInery

May 2019

Donations to Conservation

Suzy & Jon Mark

In Memory of Rolande Pettier

Darlene Choy

June 2019

Donations to Conservation

Catherine Herlihy

In Memory of Jean Mock

Grace MacNeill

Kate Steinel

Liz Howell

Patricia Derickson

Silvia Akinaga

Donations to General Fund

Chris Smith

Sophia Garcia

July 2019

Donations to Conservation

In Memory of Jean Mock

Agnes Chen

Anita & Jerry Ford

Barbara Mow

Connie Gee

Darlene Choy

Fremont 5

Jerry & Anita Ford

Frank & Norma Martin

J.J. Libbon

Stew & Audrey Perlman

Syliva Kwan

Linda Margossian

Lucy Perdichizzi

Rosalie Kingston

Suzy & Jon Mark

Sylvia Saunders

Donation to Spring Luncheon

In Memory of Jean Mock

Cameron Mitchell

October 2019

Donation to Spring Luncheon

Patricia Derickson's catered lunch

November 2019

Donation to Conservation

Susan Ginsky -In Honor of JoAnne Schultz

Donation to General Fund

Anonymous - Donation to cover partical cost of research of Harold French Biography.

January 2020

Donation to Conservation

In Memory of Victoria Triemer

Darlene Choy

Donation to Spring Luncheon

Lucy Perdichizzi



Recognizing a fellow CCHC member

Pat MacDonald and I met at Las Trampas to see the poppy super bloom that Bill Chen had mentioned on the groups.io site. We weren't sure which way to start, but decided to go in the direction opposite of where most of the people went. It was a hard climb up, but we made it onto the ridge, and after a while this woman coming the other direction just stopped. I looked at her, and said 'Do we know you'? She had a hat, sunglasses, and face mask on (neither Pat or I had our face masks on). Then Pat said "Ellen!" (as in Chen). So, we got to chat for a while. After we continued our walk, I asked Pat how she recognized Ellen, and she said by the jacket and the walk. Sometimes it's a small world.

Lois Switzer



View of Mt Diablo from Las Trampas, Profusion of poppies - photos by Sylvia Kwan

Tree in Albany

It always amazes me that I can walk down the same street many times, and all of a sudden see something that appears to be new. How could I have missed it? I walk down my block in Albany to Trader Joe's or the Farmers Market at El Cerrito Plaza probably about twice a week. It's just one mile one way. I don't know whether it is the lighting, the time of day, the side of the street I'm on, or just my state of mind that lets me either ignore or see my surroundings. The other day, this tree (sorry, I don't know what it is), just looked like it was in its full glory. I have seen it before in years past, but for this year, this was the day it stood out. Just wonderful.

Narrative and photo by Lois Switzer



IN THE HIKERS' FOOTSTEPS

A Walk on El Cerrito's Hillside Natural Area

El Cerrito's Hillside Natural Area provides a welcome and needed escape during this time of shelter-in-place; a real treasure! Luckily, I can access the area/trailhead just steps from my home, near a preschool, but there are several other trailheads to choose from. Some uphill, over single track and fire roads, before the trail levels out and I reach the labyrinth, which is always a goal. For good luck, I walk to the center and leave a



carefully selected trinket. Often, I see fellow hiker, Jo Lee, at this point on the trail, adding to the hike's pleasure. Enjoying the cool breeze and panoramic views of the bay and El Cerrito, I realize how good it is just to be out in the fresh air with my feet on a trail. A bit more uphill before exiting at King Court and decide, just for the heck of it, to



add a few extra steps and have a look at the Humpty Dumpty House, which always makes me smile. Then down through trails in the open grassy area next to

Moser. From there, a short walk to the Recycling Center and up the hill again to eventually exit where I started. A short but satisfying walk of around three miles. Thanks to the El Cerrito Tail Trekkers for keeping these trails in such good shape.

Narrative and photos
By Silvia Akinaga

I told the teller,
I have a gun, give me cash
or I swear I'll sneeze.

~ Haiku by Ramon Presson, PhD

The true story of Hammie, my hummingbird
By Sue Elliott

Hammie started buzzing around some time in February and I couldn't figure out why since I don't have a feeder. I soon realized that she had built a nest and when I had a chance to peek (she was gone), I saw two eggs. Imagine my delight and it was right outside my dining room window and easily viewable. I loved it.

I read up on hummingbirds and found that the nest takes 5-7 days to build, they only lay one or two eggs each time, but five times between October and June, and seldom return to the same nest. I'm becoming an expert IF I remembered all that right! She sat on them longer than I expected (15-18 days) and I soon felt that they weren't viable any longer. I then wondered how long she would sit on them, if they weren't going to hatch.



One day I saw a dove a bit too close to the nest and chased it away. I just happened to peek again and there was only one egg now. Sad. I couldn't see that it had fallen out. Hammie kept sitting on the nest. Next time I peeked, no eggs. UNTIL I saw movement and realized I was looking at two bundles of feathers that were moving with their heart beats. They were so tiny. It was so exciting ... I felt like a new mama!

Hammie still sat on them, but mainly at night, and they kept growing and growing. Once I saw her feeding them from the side of the nest ... their cute little beaks were reaching up so high. They wanted food and now! They grew so big that they were filling the nest and she didn't have room to sit on them any more. I wondered ... when do they leave the nest, will they know how to fly automatically or will she teach them. OR would they possibly fall? I knew they'd leave the nest soon because they were almost as big as she was, but when and would I see them fly? In order to

watch them I peeked thru my vertical blinds partly closed to give them privacy. One day I was taking a picture of them and all of a sudden one of their little bottoms raised up and it pee'd on me!! Luckily, I had the window to protect me. I laughed so hard! Guess they didn't like me spying on them.

Finally, I had to go into the back yard to water my plants and apologized to them for disrupting their quiet time. They stayed in the nest and let me turn on the water right below them. When I went back to turn off the water (apologizing again), they got startled and flew away! YES, they knew how to fly (maybe to their surprise), but Hammie was nowhere to be seen. Oh, no, would she be mad at me for scaring them away or happy that I helped them to flee the nest? They didn't fly far, landed on my fence where I could watch them. They sat there for a while, but then one disappeared. Hammie must have taken them one at a time to teach them where to go and what to do. After a bit the second little one was also gone. I've not seen them again. I sure hope all is well and wish them the best. They certainly entertained me and helped pass the time during the CV Shelter-in-Place.



Just a note to those who are concerned about passing others on trails...

Not only have the experts been saying for the last few weeks that outdoors settings are less conducive to virus spread but a doctor on Amanpour & Co.'s May 23rd show answered a question I have wondered about. Since we now know that joggers are breathing heavier and, thus, potentially putting out more virus droplets, how concerned should one be passing those that have no masks on. Again, the answer is that since it is outdoors and the "contact" is only momentary, it is unlikely that the virus could be contracted in this manner.

Rosemary Johnson



Brushy Peak Sheep —
Lois Switzer

Shinrin-Yoku

I often think when I am on my rambles of this Japanese philosophy shared by Sophia Garcia, especially now that we are forced by circumstance to stay indoors so much. The literal translation is “forest bathing”. It means to find peace and calm in the natural environment. I find that I can’t do without it. In the last two months I have visited parks over 20 times in 15 different locations. This is aside from my neighborhood rambles and urban parks. I find I need the green calm of the outdoors. And to see my birdy friends.

Since I am living alone, I don’t have much human contact. I substitute watching the fascinating little creatures of the woods. This time of year is excellent for viewing new friends. The migrant warblers and flycatchers are traveling back north or stopping over in the Bay Area. I only wish that I was more familiar with their calls so that I could know who I am hearing. And I hear quite a lot. It has been written in the news how wildlife is taking over now that the humans are less prevalent, and I find that to be true with the birds too. The woods are quite noisy with their song if you care to listen. Of course, this is the time of year for the males to be singing their songs of love. And maybe I am just less distracted by human voices.

But I don’t have a camera good enough to capture them so I content myself with photos of the spring flowers. Not a bad trade off. Since I travel slowly to look for birds, I also find new blooms of even the tiniest flowers. More food for the soul.

Enjoying what small pleasures I can.

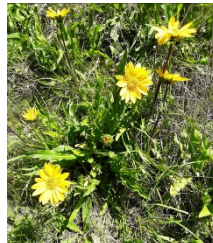
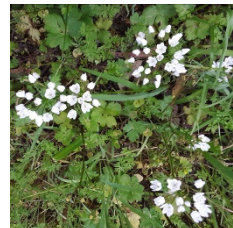
Rosemary Johnson

Curran Trail,
Tilden , May 4

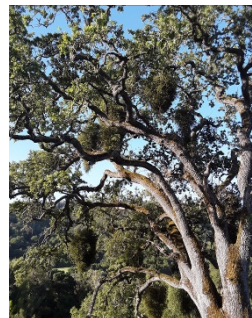
Cow parsnip,
Coyote mint, Mt.
Diablo Sunflower,
Lineseed



Diablo Foothills, April 27
Mt Diablo from Shell Ridge,
Elegant Clarkia, Gray Mule’s Ear



Oursan Trail, Briones Reservoir, May 9
Reservoir (saw 3 Caspian Terns here fishing),
Ithuriel’s spears, Mistletoe aplenty



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 sakin-nec@aol.com by the middle of the month to appear in the following month’s issue.

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