

The Explorers Club

Northern California Chapter

September 2013

In color at our web site: <http://www.explorersnorca.org>

LOCATION

Note venues and dates with care.
In San Francisco, CA,
our next meeting is 6:30 pm
September 27, a FRIDAY,
at City Forest Lodge

Chairs Tell Tales

Former Chairmen and a Chairlady will present Brief Stories
The topics remain their tightly held secret; come to hear.

Capt Robert Schmieder FN'97
William F. Isherwood FN'70*
Lesley Ewing FN'93
Stephen E. Smith FN'96
Lee Langan FN'99
Alan Nichols FN'84*
Anders Jepsen FN'03

San Francisco—September 27, 2013

Our September meeting will once again highlight *Story Time*. All cultures have a fascination with tales, stories or shared experiences. A very real footnote is that legal cases in some parts of Africa are often won by the best story teller!

Who could ask for better candidates for the best story than our former Chairs? And so it shall be when we meet, relate our individual summer experiences over wine before dinner, then enjoy hearing tales spun by five or six of our past Chairs. Be prepared for a quality evening covering tales none of us have heard before. Even I, your Chair, am unaware of what their topics will be, although I tossed a secret challenge to each early in the summer.

As this evening will be anchored around our fortieth year as the NorCA Chapter, there may, indeed, be other surprises unfolding during the evening. With the help of our Board, look forward to an array of great speakers this year and through 2014. We have also planned field trips as well as the occasional world class, up close and personal look at emerging technology such as we experienced when visiting the "Solar Impulse" Across America flight this April.

Join us Friday, 27 September, and share a surprising evening.

NorCA Members, Sirdars, and guests are invited

*These busy emeritii may not be available due to prior committments.

On an island above the Marianas Trench — May 24 @ San Francisco



Nicole Crane expounding on her ethnologic research on Ulithi

Nicole Crane FN'97 listens, and when she speaks it is with clarity and enthusiasm. She has taken her marine science education into the realm of ethnology on a small inhabited atoll, Ulithi in Micronesia. On May 24, she shared with the Northern California Chapter the success of a rather effective approach to improving the conservation mentality of a local population. This was ground-roots scientific education brought to those who have a problem and were eager to understand why.

Nicole communicates: she speaks with the locals, she strives to learn their understanding of the impact of degraded resources on their daily lives, she does not preach, but she lets it be known she may be able to clarify. Knowing what bothers the residents of this far-flung Pacific island (one of so many) she set about to study the immediate marine environment with a team of scientists. They could see damaged reefs, the impact of the residue from World War II, the depleted fish population, the health impact of imported foods. They gathered these data.

Chapter Picnic on Angel Island It was 107°F in Livermore on the weekend of Northern California's annual picnic to Angel Island. The group arrived by way of the *Cordell Explorer* from Berkeley and the *Eagle* from San Rafael, courtesy Capts. Schmiieder and Saber. It was a typical Summer day on the bay and island: foggy, windy, 54°F! Bundled as aware explorers were, the party was great fun.

The invite said BYO food and drink—folks brought ample for their neighbors so adequate calories kept everyone warm. It was a splendid gathering, worthy of memory. Dede Whiteside Hicks decided everyone should take the 'tour' so most enjoyed her largess for a leisurely ride around the 7-mile perim-

Then, in conversation, they show the results to the native folks. Here were the data. They offered some alternatives that might improve the situation, but they left it at that. As Professor Crane points out: they know what they can do to make changes in their routine; we need not say. She and her team have great confidence that the measurements and data they developed, and shared, will influence the future of Ulithi. She is also warmed by the fact that many of the data gathering routines she established will continue so the non-scientists of the atoll can begin to see progress made.

The macro climate changes in ocean salinity, temperature, and rising levels may be influences that the locals cannot control. Crane chose not to focus upon these. Her counsel is that if the community can overcome local problem practices they are in a much better position to face even the need to move, should it arise.

Nicole Crane's approach to interaction with native populations is refreshing and encouraging. It has broad application!

eter; while many had walked portions it was pleasant to encompass the island's vistas from all vantages.

The whipped and frothy bay caused a slightly curtailed return, yet Schmiieder managed to skim along San Francisco, skirt around Yerba Buena and pass beneath the two Oakland-side Bay Bridges. Chair Saber braved the Golden Gate before returning to safe harbor. His Coast Guard compatriots (he is an auxiliary Coast Guard officer) brought their cutter about to challenge *Eagle*—they were looking for some of Rick's famous chili! Alas, all had been consumed by explorers.

The picnic continued aboard the vessels in harbor, so the skippers could partake. Another eventful outing to end another eventful year for the chapter.

May's Member Moment— USGS (retired) Geologist Art Ford FN'98 has spent long portions of his life in the Antarctic—he wrote 'the book' on the continent (at least 'the article', in the last printed edition of *Encyclopedia Britannica*). He is past-President of the Antarctic Society, and we heard from him in September 2008 about the impact of tourism on the Antarctic Peninsula. On May 24, he spoke about two moments of terror on the Ice.

The Age of Science slowly evolved from the Age of Exploration on the Southern Continent. In Art's time there, they did not even know where the mountains were! Be reminded is is a harsh place, and Mother Nature is not very tolerant. On one exploratory flight, over a region that surely had no mountains, they became engulfed in a cloud. The passenger scientists and crew voted to return to McMurdo. In their good fortune, as the pilot began the turn about, clear sky opened, and he reacted with a sharp bank. A sheer wall was ahead! Upon landing, the wing tip was visibly damaged. 'Shear' terror.

The second moment of terror was much more personal—and experienced by others. When trapped in a small tent for days on end by fierce frigid winds and drifting snow, nature still calls. It can be a moment of terror.

Art Ford points to the unknown.



Allan, Jim
Anderson, Caryn
Barrett, Reginald
Berg, Barbara
Blumberg, Marion
Bogardus, Peter
Boothe, Barry
Boothe, Joan
Breed, George
Cantini, Mary
Chase, H. Keith
Cheatham, Nonna
Clinch, Nicolas
Conway, Peterson
Cook, Sandra
Cooper, Alan
Crowder, Wendy
Day, Peggy
Durighello, Joy
Dutcher, Susan
Ellis, Scott
Estey, Sue
Ewing, Lesley
Faggioli, Richard E.
Ford, Art
Glantz, Gina
Glantz, Ron
Guzy, Michael
Guzy, Michael
Hamer, Michael
Hemming, Peter
Heydorn, William
Heyneman, Donald
Hicks, Harry
Higgins, Bob
Hirzel, David
Hodges, Eliot
Hurson, Jim
Hurson, Von
Hutchison, Alan
Hutchison, Ann
Isaac, Nancy
Jake, Krist
Jepsen, Anders
Jepsen, Kathy
Judd, Kathy
Klotz, Suzanne
Klotz, Suzanne
Komarmy, Margot
Komarmy, Margot
Kutz, Dida
Kvenvolden, Keith
Langan, Karine
Langan, Lee
Lapham, Ellen
Libowitz, Dan
Long, Elgen
Maroney, Robert
McGann, Mary
McPhail, Brian
Meniketti, Marco
Merdinger, Charles
Moyer, David
Neiman, Martin
Nichols, Peter
O'Kane, Teresa
Perkins, Shelby
Phelps, Laura
Prigoff, James
Ross, Sandy
Roush, John
Rygh, Char
Saber, Rick
Schmieder, Bob
Schmieder, Kay
Smith, Mark
Smith, Steve
Stewart, Zack
Taylor, Susan
Van Austen, Judy
Van Austen, Robert
Von der Porten, Ed
Walsh, Don
Wegst, Andy
Weil, James
Whiteside, Dede
Ziegler, Robin

The list is building.
Add your name!
Dues go to the cost
of our newsletter!
Send \$25. to
Joan Boothe



From the Chair— Chairman Anders Jepsen passed the gavel to me at our May meeting following two exceptional years of leadership. Our new Board, and those present, thanked Anders for his service and presented him with a plaque befitting Our Viking Explorer.

As I take the NorCA helm, it is impossible not to look back at the forty years of history and progress carved out by all former Chairs. It would take many pages to catalog the achievements of our active membership and to recount the highs and lows of their myriad worldwide explorations and expeditions. To say we simply support their efforts is missing the point. It taxes any Expedition Leader to resolve to go, to establish solid goals, gain financial support and solve unexpected challenges to get out in the field then return, hopefully unscathed. Their accomplishments are then shared with those of us who vicariously wish we, too, had been there. I salute all in our Chapter who have brought back and shared such a wealth of new knowledge and experience; often the catalyst for others to activate their own explorations.

We "NorCAs" are an extraordinarily diverse group of individualists, yet with a common thread. We marvel at the discoveries we make in our interactions when simply asking each other questions such as "what reef changes have you discovered on your last dives in Kosrae, Steve?" or "Capt. Schmieder, were you worried about an invasion of rats or crabs marauding through your tents when you set foot on the forlorn wilds of Clipperton Island?" With us, our usual cocktail conversation is significantly different from that experienced in the mainstream, and we relish it!

For our September meeting, following summer break, I have challenged each former Chair with a secret question. Their answers, covering an unusual facet of their explorations, may be surprising. To hear their responses, you must attend as the subject has been revealed ONLY to them. Lastly, thanks to all who elected me and Joan Boothe at our November 2012 meeting. Our new Team will work diligently to sustain Chapter momentum.

—Capt. Rick Saber MN'01

The new team (l-r): Dede Whiteside Hicks, Secretary; Chair Saber, Vice Chair Joan Boothe; Treasurer Steve Smith; Field Trip Coordinator Von Hurson. Webmaster Mike Diggles & Editor Langan missed the photo op.

BLACK DIAMOND MINE FIELD TRIP The morning of May 11 began idyllically with 30 fellow Explorers and friends gathered together, chatting amicably and excitedly over coffee and bagels. We were fueling up for a morning of mental and visual stimulation—led by a passionate-about-geography retired SF State professor, Dr. Ray Sullivan, and our own member-geologist, Rick Blake, the man who made this day happen (at right.)

Before heading underground, we gathered around a van festooned with maps and illustrations of local geological history and formations, enthralled by the knowledge and enthusiasm of both Rick and Dr. Sullivan revealing how the forces and events of hundreds of thousands of years had formed the area around us and the underwater world it had once been. We saw layers of history peeled back to reveal the physical world we observed around us—both on the surface and what we were about to encounter in the sand/coal mine deep in the earth.

Then we began our trek to the Hazel-Atlas entrance of the mine. While the mine was reasonably well-lit and, in places cavernous, we had been loaned helmets (found to be useful...) and LED flashlights which were invaluable for in-depth examination of some of the more subtle but stunning geological features. In addition to our own geology professor, clearly impassioned to be back in a mine he had studied and written about for years, we were also accompanied by a former miner and given first hand insight into what it was like to work hundreds of feet underground. Being explorers, we were taken far into the mine, well beyond the limits of other visitors, and in the two hours we spent underground we were treated to another world—a maze of tunnels with enough geological features to recall, with amazement, for years—including the "Sulli-vein" named after Dr. Sullivan himself and the ubiquitous *Ophiomorpha* trace fossil remains of sea creatures found scattered on the walls of the mine.

After two hours in the coolness of the mine, we surfaced into a bright, warm day for lunch – and not just any lunch! It was a catered, picnic-table lasagne feast, with more talk about the mine, geology and a myriad of other subjects.

After lunch, a stalwart group continued up to Rose Hill Cemetery for further insight into the lives and deaths of the miners and their families, their worn tombstones poignantly telling their stories.

As the day waned and we said our farewells – something Dr. Sullivan said keeps coming back to mind: "Geology has changed, and is continuing to change, the world we live in." Looking around us and recalling our day, one could only smile in agreement knowing that geology also brought us together for a remarkable field trip.

—Von Hurson MN'10



From the Board The Executive Committee of your Board met on July 2nd to consider matters that could not wait until the next full-Board meeting (at the Lowell Thomas Dinner in Washington, DC., in October.)

The most public decision brought us a new and outstanding Honorary Chairman: Senator John H. Glenn Jr., the first American to encircle the globe in space. Senator, Astronaut and Marine test pilot Glenn becomes the third exceptional explorer to hold this esteemed position leading our Club since this position was initiated.

—Lee Langan FN'99

September 2013



Chair: Rick Saber
415 457-0345
eagle@rsaber.com
Vice Chair: Joan Boothe
415 346-5934
hoodooskr@aol.com
Treasurer: Stephen E. Smith
925 934-1051
ecnc@oceaneearth.org
Secretary: Dede Whiteside Hicks
Webmaster: Mike Diggles
Newsletter: Lee Langan

September 27, 2013 – Stories on the 40th!

**Northern California
Calendar of Events**

(Venues are identified as soon as known.)

Our Next Event

September 27, 2013 Former Chairs
Selected Tales, 40th Anniver. City Forest Lodge

Upcoming Events (2013)

October 25-27, 2013 - Monterey Weekend
Dede Whiteside Hick's event
November 22, 2013 . Robert Christiansen Ph.D
Volcanology-Hazards City Forest Lodge
December 8, 2013 . Saber residence, San Rafael
Holiday Party
January-May 2014 plans available soon.
June 2014 NorCA Picnic

Earlier Chapter Events (2012/13)

October 26. City Forest Lodge
Cordilleran Blanca. Dr. Bill Straka
November 30. Prof. Michael J. Harner
Tribes of the Amazon and Shamanism
December 16. Annual Holiday Party
.. 'best expedition photo contest' Saber home
January 25, 2013. TEC Board visit
Board's Story Night Ferryboat, Pier 3, SF
February 22, Dr David Des Marais
Mars Exploration by NASA, Moffett Field
March 28, Susan Klotz
Northeast Nepal. City Forest Lodge
April 26 Bob Schmieder
Clipperton Isle City Forest Lodge
April 29, 2013 Solar Impulse visit
Moffett Field Mountain View
May 11, 2013 NorCA Field Trip
Black Diamond Coal Mine, Contra Costa
May 24, 2013 Nicole L. Crane
Conserving Ocean Resources City Forest Lodge
June 9, 2013 - NorCA Picnic
Angel Island "Expedition"

USE PAYPAL!

September 27, San Francisco @ City Forest Lodge

Date FRIDAY, September 27, 2013
Place: City Forest Lodge
254 Laguna Honda Blvd
San Francisco, CA 94116-1409
(415) 753-8326
Time: 6:30 - reception
7:15 - dinner — 8:00 - talk
Cost: \$49 in advance; \$60 after 24 Sep
Students: \$35. (2013 dues \$25!)

Reserve __ spaces for 27 Sep 2013
Cost: \$49 (for members and sirdars)
\$35 for card-carrying students
Name: _____
Address (if changed): _____
Companion: _____
Entrée Choice (select from below*): _____

Please mail information to Steve Smith,
email ecnc@oceaneearth.org, call (925) 934-1051
or mail to 402 Via Royal, Walnut Creek, CA 94597

Please reserve by SEP 21!

We have an established PayPal account.

For those of you who have an account, you can sign up and remit dinner costs to the NorCA Chapter by transferring money to: explorersnorca@gmail.com
There is a PAYPAL BUTTON on our website (www.explorersnorca.org); easy to use!

***September Meal Options (select your choice)**

Spiral baked ham with potatoes au gratin – Chicken Monterey
Vegetarian: creamy tortellini

In 2012, the City Forest Lodge was sought out as a meeting place in the heart of San Francisco. The lodge is hidden in a driveway just south along Seventh Avenue as it turns into Laguna Honda Boulevard. The Lodge has the catering and space needs we require, and our meetings this year have proved it is working!

Location details should be researched in advance

There is parking, and the location, while unfamiliar to some, is easy to find tucked away just across from the City's Laguna Honda Hospital. Once the lot is full, park within the neighborhood, just uphill to the west. Muni access is VERY easy from downtown via the light-rail Taraval 'L' Line and Ocean View 'M' Line. Exit at the Forest Hill station and walk a block north. These lines can be reached by BART and the Peninsula's CalTrain. (Forest Hill Station is located deeper underground than any other Muni Metro station; so much so that, unlike other stations, most people use an elevator to reach the platform at Forest Hill.)

Send address changes and corrections by email to Dede at dedewhiteside@aol.com