



May 2018



THE SIERRA CLUB NEWSLETTER FROM CLAIR TAPPAAN LODGE (CTL)

ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

JULY 6 - 8, 2018

BUILDERS OF THE FUTURE

This year, we are honoring the people who built Clair Tappaan Lodge in 1934, and all the students today who benefit from environmental education at the Lodge. The Clair Tappaan Lodge Environmental Education Scholarship Fund helps bring those students to an outdoor environment where they learn and practice the Sierra Club mission—to explore, enjoy, and protect the planet.

There will be plenty of good food, with vegetarian options, congenial company, music, art, and great hikes. Meet 100-year-old Milton Hildebrand, who helped build the Lodge when he was just 16, and his son Ross. Students and teachers who have been a part of environmental education at the Lodge will talk about their experiences. If you can't make it to the fundraiser, donations to the Education Fund are gratefully accepted; please make your check out to Clair Tappaan Lodge, with a notation to environmental education (not tax deductible). Thank-you!

Please join us for a wonderful weekend of activities:

- Friday
 - Afternoon hike
 - Dinner
 - Report on the Lodge
 - Campfire with evening brandy and s'mores
- Saturday
 - Breakfast, lunch, dinner
 - Hikes - easy, moderate, or strenuous
 - All day art auction
 - Afternoon - Gathering of Old and New Friends - meet the Hildebrands and Environmental Education students/teachers
 - A showing of the 1934 video of the Lodge being built
 - Evening - Music by the Zen Mountain Poets
- Sunday
 - Breakfast and lunch
 - Hike; swim in a high-Sierra lake

Cost is \$210 for two nights and all meals and activities. Phone 530-426-3632 for reservations.



More on the Fundraiser – Page 2
 Milton Hildebrand – Page 3
 1935 Article on Building CTL – Pages 4-5
 Stills from Building CTL Video – Page 6
 Groups at CTL for Environmental Education
 – Pages 7-10

HIKES

You can take a tour around the Lodge, take an easy hike to Flora Lake and jump in, or go for a strenuous hike up Castle Peak. We have experienced hike leaders who can tell you plant names, take you to amazing views, and just generally entertain you.



CAMPFIRE



MUSIC



“Our music holds a unique sound and a moving power that enriches and contemplates life, bringing awareness to our reality living on this planet. We are fans of being alive in this marvelous universal ecosystem!”

Listen to Zen Mountain Poets’ music at:
<http://zenmountainpoets.com/music/>

ART

Every year, local Artist Susan Barry takes donated art from her *Painting along the Sierra* classes, and auctions them off, with all funds going to environmental education at CTL. Thank you Susan!



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MILTON HILDEBRAND

In 1934, as a 16-year-old boy, Milton Hildebrand helped build Clair Tappaan Lodge. A group of ski enthusiasts decided they needed a place to stay in the Sierra. One of the skiers was an architect who designed the Lodge, a subscription list was started, and a 99-year lease on the property was obtained from the Forest Service. Construction started in 1934 and was finished by 1935. Read a great story about the initial idea for a lodge by Milton's father Joel, with great ski cartoons by Milton reprinted from the 1935 *Sierra Club Bulletin* on [page 4](#). A video was made as the Lodge was being built and will be shown Saturday evening at the fundraiser. A few stills from it are on [page 6](#).

Milton Hildebrand was born on June 15, 1918 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, son of Joel Henry and Emily J. (Alexander) Hildebrand. He got his Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degrees from the University of California, Berkeley. His teaching and research career was at UC Davis where he was Professor of Zoology in the College of Biological Sciences. Besides teaching, he authored an important book, *Analysis of Vertebrate Structure*. He has written: "We should not expect anything so wonderfully complex as the moving body to lend itself to simple analysis."

In 1973, he was awarded the Distinguished Teaching Award by the University. He retired as Professor Emeritus in 1986.

Milton married Viola Memmler and they had three children—Ross, Kern, and Joan.



Milton Hildebrand talking about "Being 96" to family and friends on his birthday at Clair Tappaan, 2014.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWVvk-5FnegY>



Milton's brothers Roger and Alex, with friends, staying cool in the Sierra., ca 1940s. Photo by Milton Hildebrand



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Here is an excerpt from Milton's father Joel's lovely write-up about how the Lodge came into being, with some great cartoons by young Milton.

SIERRA CLUB BULLETIN



VOLUME XX

NUMBER I

FEBRUARY, 1935

BY JOEL H. HILDEBRAND

CARTOONS BY MILTON HILDEBRAND



“ . . .the Sierra Nevada, or snowy range . . . must be sought by devoted pilgrims not only in July, but also in January, to be known in the fullness of its glory; that winter at high altitudes is not bitter, but is warm and friendly, for the thin air easily transmits the radiance of the sun to bare brown backs; that twelve feet of snow affords a smoother path than even a national park trail, and runs anywhere you wish to go; that the purple shadows of the trees and the pure rose of the alpenglow are colors as rich as those of columbine and heather; that the smooth folds of sparkling virgin snow, the glitter of icicles, and the living green of firs showing beneath their heavy white mantles-all constitute an enchanted world which can be entered by the magic of the ski.”

‘The southern members [of Sierra Club] have been fortunate in leaving a mountain lodge, the Harwood Lodge, situated amid the snow and accessible for winter use; but the Parsons Lodge, at Tuolumne Meadows, is practically inaccessible in winter, and the northern devotees have been homeless wanderers, sponging on the hospitable Auburn Ski Club, renting Boy Scout camps, or sleeping like tramps in the abandoned railroad-station at Soda Springs.’



“ . . .in February, 1934, a couple of dozen enthusiasts hired a bus for a two-day trip to Soda Springs and Norden. It cost \$3.50 each for the round trip of three hundred eighty miles, and the food cost so little that the whole trip was almost cheaper than staying at home. There were two fine days of skiing; but the historic event was the trip home. No one slept, for there was too much to talk about;



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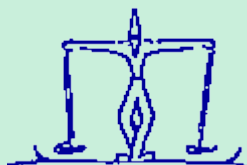
skiing technique, waxes, boots, equipment, all afford as much conversational material to the skier as do rods, flies, and the size of fish to the angler. The most serious question, however, was where to spend the night on future trips. The obvious answer was a ski-lodge, owned and operated by the Sierra Club, and the Clair Tappaan Memorial Lodge then and there became an air-castle. Architect Walter Ratcliff was one of the party, and offered his services to pull the air-castle down a little below the clouds where we could see it. He had already designed one ski-lodge (the Sierra Ski Club at Norden), and knew how to do it. A subscription list was started. Bestor Robinson, chairman of the Winter Sports Committee was there and got the idea with a bang, and when he sets out to accomplish anything all obstacles just fade away. He managed to get some hooks onto that air-castle as soon as Walter Ratcliff drew it and pulled so hard it just had to come down to earth.”



“ . . . Horace Breed had already acquired a lease from the United States Forest Service on an ideal location in this vicinity, and with the enthusiastic cooperation characteristic of Sierra Club members offered to transfer it to the club. The Forest Service consented, and also gave permission to fell the trees needed for construction. Subscriptions came pouring in; the directors of the Sierra Club caught the enthusiasm and voted money from the treasury; the Southern California Chapter donated the fireplace and hood, the San Francisco Bay Chapter the plumbing and stoves; "benefits" were held, and the fund continued to grow. Lewis Clark rounded up workers and girls to cook for them, and every weekend all the spring and summer groups of ardent, if sometimes unskilled, workmen might be seen digging, chopping, sawing, pounding, and Ñyes, eating. Some workers spent their entire vacations on the job. Joe Staudinger, master workman at all crafts, deserves honorable mention.

The lodge is now a reality, awaiting only a permanent roof, to be added next summer, to be called finished, and enough members have signed up for the Christmas vacation - this is written November first - to fill up two or three such lodges. It will not stand idle.

Eventually, the club should have several outlying small shelter-huts, where fuel and blankets would be available for more extended tours. Just give us time-and money!”

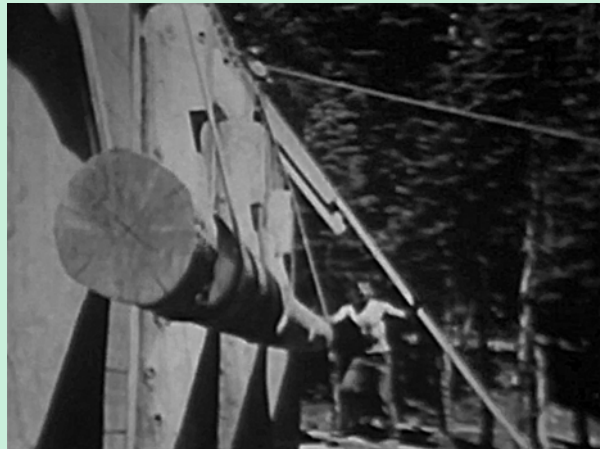


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BUILDING CLAIR TAPPAAN LODGE - THE VIDEO

Here are some stills from the 1934 video:



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And 84 years later, Gateway Mountain Center and Clair Tappaan Lodge make it possible for students and other groups to enjoy the Lodge, the snow, and all the Sierra has to offer.

CASTLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS VISIT THE LODGE

(Photos courtesy Greg Bernstein, Gateway Mountain Center):

Program Overview

Gateway Mountain Center programs balance field science instruction, hiking, and reflection. They emphasize active learning that is cooperative, fun, and provocative. Destinations are chosen by their staff to illustrate themes and concepts and to provide a meaningful outdoor experience. Group safety, trail conditions, group cooperation, and fitness levels (including adult chaperones) are taken into account in determining a day's activities. Groups will be made up of 10-12 students and one or two chaperones to one guide. The daily schedule is as follows:

Friday, April 20th, 2018

- Snowshoeing and Forest Ecology, Forest Carbon Survey

We hike through the forest behind the lodge, searching for animal tracks and learning how animals adapt and survive with the climate at Donner Summit. We also learn native tree species and other elements of the forest habitat, emphasizing the many benefits these forests provide, such as recreation, beauty, timber resources and carbon storage. In addition, students get hands-on practice conducting an assessment of the carbon sequestration capacity of local trees. In small teams, students learn to identify tree species, measure their height and diameter, and use this information to calculate the amount of carbon sequestered in each tree and how this relates to students' carbon footprint.

Evening Program: Night walk and animal adaptation activities or Environmental Films



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• **Saturday, April 21st, 2018**

Snowshoeing, Weather, Snow Science

We shuttle to the UC Snow Science lab to learn how Sierra snowpack is the “water bank” for California, and how this water bank is likely to be affected by climate change. Students learn of the latest climate research conducted by the lab and they do a hands-on activity to measure water content in different layers in the snowpack. The students also do a water chemistry survey of the snow, learning about different pollutants and where they come from. The group then hike back to the lodge on the snowshoe trail, with a grand overview of the unique geology of the area.

Evening Program: Final evening campfire with skits/talent show and s’mores

• **Sunday, April 22nd, 2018**

Snowshoeing, History Loop and Solo Hike

As a group, students hike to Stewart slab, a granitic dome on Donner Summit with spectacular views of Donner Lake and the east slope of the Sierra Crest. They learn about the people who have passed through this area, referred to as “The Richest Square Mile in California.” After group reflection and discussion, each student embarks on a silent solo hike from Stewart Slab to Donner Ski Ranch, taking time to reflect on their experiences during the trip and lessons learned.

The core curriculum is rounded out with nature games, team-building games, art, sensitizing and reflection activities, and creative writing.



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SUNRISE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Sunrise Middle School is a public charter middle school founded seven years ago to serve an east/central San Jose neighborhood where there was no district middle school, and many of the students were walking three miles each day to attend the nearest school.

Name of Program: Snow Science Camp at Gateway Mountain Center.

Gateway staff provided environmental education and outdoor leadership to the students as described above.

Dates: February 20-22, 2018

Activities: Snow/science exploration

The purpose of the snow adventure was to introduce the students to snow (most will be seeing it for the first time), to learn about environmental science, to build teamwork, to explore the natural world, and to provide a meaningful alternative to electronics during the students' winter break.



(Photos courtesy Teresa Robinson)



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INSPIRING CONNECTIONS OUTDOORS

Sierra Club's volunteer-run nationwide *Inspiring Connections Outdoors* (ICO) conduct more than 900 outings for approximately 14,000 participants each year. By introducing participants to the transformative power of nature, ICO serves a key function within the Sierra Club and supports John Muir's assertion that people who experience wilderness firsthand are much more likely to preserve it for future generations.

This January, an ICO group had a wonderful experience during their stay at Sierra Club's Hutchinson Lodge, next door to CTL. Photos courtesy Michael Fischer who said: "We had a wonderful time. The folks at Clair Tappaan couldn't have been nicer and I always talk up this trip with all of the other ICO leaders. Hope we'll see you again next year."



CONTACT THE LODGE FOR RESERVATIONS
530-426-3632
or email
reservations@clairtappaanlodge.com



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