



THE SIERRA CLUB NEWSLETTER FROM CLAIR TAPPAAN LODGE (CTL)

P.O. BOX 36, NORDEN, CA
95724 – PHONE: 530-426-3632

Email: ctl@sierraclub.org
Web page: ctl.sierraclub.org

From the Chair

By Diane Boyer

Clair Tappaan Lodge continues to remain fairly steady in these rocky economic times. Frequent smaller snow storms this winter, enticed skiers and back country hut users. Several youth groups took advantage of the season to learn about snow packs, winter environment and conditions, and even to build and sleep in their own snow caves. Five schools totaling 172 participants have benefited so far this year from grant funds provided by donations to the Clair Tappaan Lodge account in the Sierra Club Foundation.



A late spring will bring wildflowers into bloom in June and July, as well as several national outings. Weekend hikes offered at the lodge include Donner Summit highlights, full moon, and family hikes. The July 4th holiday weekend celebration will offer a naturalist guided wildflower hike, a guided family hike, and a traditional barbecue.

Volunteers are hard at work planning the 6th annual fundraiser on August 13 -15 when a lively weekend provides themed hikes and fun for all. Fall will bring the “secret season” with fewer tourists, warm days and cool nights and the perfect time for a mountain getaway or family reunion. (Check out the bargain fall specials elsewhere in this issue). And Thanksgiving is a great family weekend with the traditional turkey dinner cooked by our chef.

I encourage each of you to think of CTL as your home away from home and help us keep Clair Tappaan Lodge as our Sierra Club heritage. It is always a great bargain and a fun place to enjoy nature and great camaraderie. Make your reservations today!

SAVE THE DATE and PLAN TO ATTEND

By Ernie Malamud
August 13 - 15, 2010
Sixth Annual

Clair Tappaan Lodge August Fundraiser

Join us in

- Celebrating the history of the Sierra Club on Donner Summit
- Encouraging year round use
- Expanding the center for environmental education

We begin with stories, s' mores and brandy around the campfire Friday evening. During Saturday and Sunday are a number of wonderful hikes, many with themes, organized by Rick Ramos. Among them are a Geology Hike, “The Natural and Unnatural History of the Donner Summit” led by Sue Graf, hikes to Castle Pass, Andesite Peak, the Judah Loop, the Peter Grubb Hut, and swimming at nearby Lake Flora. Author David Lukas, a bird song specialist, will lead a nature hike, and John Svahn from the Donner-Truckee Land Trust will introduce us to the Donner Lake Rim Trail.

During the day on Saturday will be fun and interesting activities and demonstrations including lunch at the historic Warming Hut organized by Diana Vanderburg and George Homsey. Susan Barry who painted the wonderful mural in Hutchinson Lodge will lead a water color painting class.

From 3 pm - 5 pm will be our traditional and always popular wine and cheese reception. After dinner from 8:00 - 9:30 pm will be an evening program in the Dining Room

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with wonderful pictures and story telling by the Donner Summit Historical Society. And after the program there will be music in the Living Room and another campfire.

This is only a preview of what will be another great weekend. More hikes and activities are being organized and added to the menu. Keep an eye on our web page for frequent updates.

The cost for the entire event is \$155 for adults and \$75 for children 13 and under. Part of your participant fee helps operate and keep the lodge open. However, this kind of donation is not tax deductible.

If you can't make the event this year or if while you are there wish to make an additional contribution you can donate to the Clair Tappaan fund in the Sierra Club Foundation. These funds support our growing Environmental Education

IN SHORT

By Pat Mikkelsen, Goshawk Editor and member of the CTL Committee

2009 FINANCES

The year 2009 was good for Clair Tappaan, considering the overall state of the economy, with the lowest loss in at least 15 years. Thanks to all of those who visited CTL, Hutchinson Lodge and the Backcountry Huts. Making visits to these facilities is the single best way to ensure these facilities will still be here when your children want to bring their families.

Lodge supporters donated over \$10,000 in 2009 to Clair Tappaan Lodge's account with the Sierra Club Foundation to provide grants to youth groups for environmental education. These groups promote year-round occupancy and shift the emphasis from recreation to education while instilling interest in the out-of-doors for our future Sierra Club supporters.

2010 FINANCES

2010 got off to a great start. The Summit received plenty of snow this season and many youth groups have participated in winter outings and environmental education programs at the lodge. Over 20 youth organizations created about 1,200 user nights the first quarter. Several were school groups specifically involved in environmental education.

OUR APPRECIATION

We would like to honor Diane Boyer who has been an active member of the CTL Committee and is its current chair. Her efforts in support of the lodge are tireless and we are all grate-

programs. See the next page of this newsletter for more details.

Please contact the lodge to make your reservation and choose the events you want to participate in (helps us provide tentative counts for our leaders.)

Phone: 530-426-3632 or 800-679-6775 or email: ctl@sierraclub.org.



Photo: Hal Schmidt

ful. Thanks also to Olivia Diaz who served as CTL co-chair last year and continues as a committee member.

A big thank-you to Ernie Malamud who has been designing and updating our webpage and doing a really great job. Peter Lehmkuhl, Lodge General Manager, will be taking on the task as Ernie oversees preparation of our next fund raiser and moves on to other activities.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Clair Tappaan Lodge was built by Sierra Club volunteers during the summer of 1934. The massive timbers used to support the Lodge can't be missed as you walk down the main hall. Today, in addition to those original timbers, the Lodge is still supported by a force of volunteers.

Volunteers come in all forms, from talented handymen and women to creative graphic artists to local historians to event planners to firewood splitting, hut stewards to pavement pounding marketers and trail pounding hike leaders, tablers advertising the Lodge at special events such as Earth Days, School Resource Fairs, and other fairs and picnics to name just a few. Some volunteers pitch in from their homes as well as at the Lodge while serving on the CTL Committee and working on long term projects. Others volunteer at the Lodge for a day, weekend, month or even a full season to help with maintenance projects and daily operations.

For more information on how you can take part in this tradition please contact CTL Committee Chairperson Diane Boyer or CTL General Manager Peter Lehmkuhl.

The Environmental Education Fund - Beneficiary of the August Fundraiser

By Olivia Diaz

Last year's highly successful Gala Anniversary of the two lodges, increased our Environmental Education fund in the Sierra Club Foundation. As a direct result, the Clair Tappaan Lodge (CTL) Committee proudly announced a new scholarship fund to help groups of youth come to Donner Summit for environmental education programs at Clair Tappaan Lodge. The scholarship's aim is to expose young people to the beauty, ecology, history and need for conservation of the Donner Summit area of the Sierra Nevada, thus preparing future members of the Sierra Club and the next generation of conservationists.

A few examples of the impact are the letter from the Presidio Community YMCA (this page), the SnoCave Experience on page 5 and Peter Mayfield's article on page 6 describing Environmental Education programs in 2009.

HOW TO APPLY FOR A GRANT

To qualify for a grant from these funds, contact CTL committee Chair Diane Boyer, dianeboyer@directv.net to obtain an application. Fill it out and send it to the mailing address on the form for review. The funds must include at least one overnight stay for environmental education at Clair Tappaan

Lodge. A grant from the EE fund can be used to augment funds raised by the school or group itself.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Groups that come in the fall can use the Fall Special Rates to help get a real bargain. If you would like to help youth groups learn more about the environment, please share this information with local school teachers, leaders of boy or girl scout troops or other youth groups, to inform them about the Lodge and the wonderful program offered there.

Letter from Presidio YMCA

Thank you so much for the Environmental Scholarship Grant for Clair Tappaan Lodge youth. Many Earth Service Corps youth had never seen snow and were extremely grateful to be given an amazing new experience. Your donation also allowed youth to understand the value of our natural resources. Our appreciation for your gift goes beyond words! Earth Service Corps, *Presidio Community YMCA*

Another way to help is to make a tax-deductible contribution to the Clair Tappaan Lodge fund in the Sierra Club Foundation. Please make your check payable to Clair Tappaan Lodge - Sierra Club Foundation and send it to Peter Lehmkuhl at the Lodge at PO Box 36, Norden, CA 95724.

IMPROVEMENTS AT CLAIR TAPPAAN

By Olivia Diaz

There have been several important improvements to CTL in the past year. If you haven't visited the Lodge recently, you will be surprised to see the improved access. The main entrance now is through the Tri-Lodge road.

As you drive up the hill you will see a beautiful new sign professionally designed by volunteer Wendy Armstrong and installed by staff and volunteers.



There is an unloading area just beyond the sign and from there the walk to the Lodge is fairly level and much easier than the south path.

There are carts or sleds available at the Lodge entrance to help you carry your gear.

Rich Johns a long-time member of the CTL committee has continued to make repairs and changes in the Lodge to fix broken things, improve safety, and accessibility, as well as, cosmetic changes. Rich fabricated and installed an attractive functioning sink in the dining room with a separate outlet for drinking water.



Rich and volunteers did extensive remodeling of the men's bathroom near the Men's Dorm. They replaced plumbing and electricity, and installed new tiles, fixtures, wall and ceilings. This important and long-awaited improvement is described on the next page.

Photos: Rich Johns

The Forgotten Bathroom

By Richard Johns, Clair Tappaan Lodge Committee

Before 1989 when the Donner Summit Public Utility District began providing sewer service, discussions focused on sewer issues. Not long after 1989, the committee's focus changed to, "We really need to remodel those bathrooms."

About four years ago the Club provided capital to renovate four bathrooms, but funds only stretched to three, and the men's bathroom over the kitchen was ignored. About two years ago I developed a staged project plan using volunteers, staff and the maintenance budget to renovate that last bathroom.

Two years ago in the fall we began with the wall facing Cal Lodge. Stripping the interior wall to the studs, my crew and I installed new water and waste lines with GFI protected wall outlets. We "furred out" the wall to allow for improved insulation, then sheet rocked, and installed a new counter and two new sinks.

CTL male guests had to put up with the remainder of the bathroom untouched for another year. In fall of 2009 we geared up. The staff jumped in, mainly James (or el De-structo). The ceiling and wall facing the highway were demolished creating a vaulted ceiling. All new plumbing was installed, both water and waste, along with wall outlets and two sinks, and two new showers with expert help of Will Dolman from Nevada City.

The 20-Mile Museum

(Excerpts from the Donner Summit Historical Society newsletter) By Ernie Malamud

Donner Summit is grand and unique and the Donner Summit Historical Society has embarked on a project to highlight the history and beauty of the Summit.

The 20-mile museum will consist of a series of interpretive signs placed on private commercial property along historic Highway 40 from the Eagle Lakes exit to over the Summit and below Rainbow Bridge. The goal of this project is to encourage visitation to Donner Summit by highlighting its unique history and natural beauty.

Each 2-ft by 2-ft sign highlights the history of the location, displays historical photographs and quotes, tells a good story, and lists activities for that location.

Not only do the signs share and so highlight the unique history of the Summit but through the listed activities, they share the beauty of Donner Summit, encourage visitation, and help revitalize the Summit economy which has been on a down hill slide for decades.

Next!! We remodeled the urinal area, installed new cubbies, grounded the lights, removed the hump in the entrance, installed two new toilets, fabricated and installed a redwood wall bench. A slate floor now matches the other three bathrooms. As of now, the counter tops are waiting to have tiles installed.

Many ADA and environmental features were included in this renovation. They include shower and sink handles that arthritic and very weak hands can use. The door knob was replaced by a door handle. The toilet stool is seventeen inches high (regular is fifteen inches) facilitating seating for those with stiff and/or arthritic knees or perhaps those with hip or knee replacements. The door is a sound door reducing bathroom noise into the men's dorm. Dual flush toilets save water and sewer. An occupancy sensor controls the ceiling lights. The final item will be a lithograph of area water fowls by Michael Jeneid donated by Susan and Richard Johns.

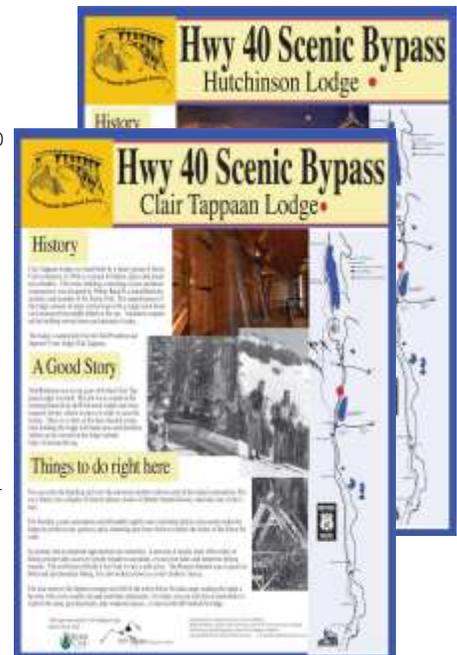
All work was completed by staff and volunteers with the exception of laying the slate and the mud work on the drywall. Andy Sexton painted the bathroom. Jonas Clausen and Tim Molinare assisted James in demolition. Marcel Stieber worked with Rich in the reconstruction of the wall facing Cal Lodge. A few more volunteers contributed whose skills and time were invaluable to make the bathroom happen. I personally want to thank the volunteers who jumped in when the call came as well as the staff as they put in considerable time as well on this project. It's like the old days!!

The project will also include a booklet listing all of the signs along with additional locations and historical information and stories. Eventually, over subsequent years, the project will grow including a dozen or more additional signs.

Shown are our 2 signs of the more than 20 to be erected in June.

(Note they will be removed when winter snow arrives) To preview all the signs go to:

<http://www.donnersummithistoricalsociety.org/pages/20milemuseum.html>



A CHARTER SCHOOL EXPEDITION

(Editor's note – the class that came later, on March 16, was also a 4/5th grade but the teacher was Alex Ezzell.)

Grass Valley Charter School at Bell Hill is one of a growing number of schools in the country formally affiliated with the nationally recognized Expeditionary Learning Schools Outward Bound® organization, which blends traditional studies with meaningful expeditions, hands-on project work, community service, and adventure (from their webpage.)

A February expedition took Merry Byles-Daly's fourth/fifth grade class to Clair Tappaan. Immediately upon arrival, they set to work building two large snow caves and two igloos. That night the entire class, together with their teachers and parents, slept outdoors.



This is what the kids had to say after their adventure:

We had a lot of fun building snow caves. It makes you feel like an Eskimo, and when they are finished it feels like you're in an igloo. I feel lucky that I was able to go on this trip.

The best thing about Clair Tappaan was all the snow outside! We could not have built our snow caves without snow.



I'm happy that I stayed at your Lodge, even though I slept in a snow cave. The food was great (Loved those pesto noodles and the hash browns) but the hot chocolate was even better.

I thought your Lodge was cool and I want to take my family there too.

We just found out that we got a scholarship to help pay for the trip. Wow, thanks! We had so much fun.



SNOWCAVE ADVENTURE

A poem for two voices by Grace and Halley

We walk up the hill
 I'm falling from tiredness
 I jump up the hill joyfully
 I watch as they work
 I dig in the snow
 I boss them around
 I work as hard as I can
 At least we agree on one thing
 It's COLD!
 I like working... It's fun
 I like free time... It's fun
 You don't have to do anything
 I want to sleep in the snow cave
 Why wouldn't you?
 I want to sleep inside
 It's warm and cozy
 I didn't
 Oh yeah, you didn't
 At least we had fun



We are so very grateful for your generous donation of a scholarship to help our two fourth and fifth grade classes have a wonderful adventure in the snow at Clair Tappaan Lodge. The students have learned a lifelong lesson about perseverance and snow survival skills.
 Merry Byles-Daly, teacher

Spring 2010

GATEWAY MOUNTAIN CENTER ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAM AT CLAIR TAPPAAN LODGE

Improving ecological literacy, health and empowerment in today's youth

By Peter Mayfield, Gateway Mountain Center Executive Director

We had a fantastic winter, our busiest to date, with lots of snow and many great days in the field serving 6 schools and over 120 students.

We were able to adapt our forest carbon survey curriculum to a snowshoe based experience, enjoyed visits to the UC Snow Science Laboratory, spectacular snowshoe hikes and fantastic times taking all of these youth out for skiing and snowboarding experiences at Sugar Bowl.

Special thanks to all of our partners, the Sierra Club and the staff of Clair Tappaan Lodge, Randall Osterhuber from the Snow Lab, the fine staff at Sugar Bowl, and a big shout out to Bay Area Wilderness Training who provided all of the winter clothing from their gear lending library that we needed to outfit all of these students for the big snow storms!

For all Teachers and their friends! We are busy booking the 2010-2011 school year, and we still have scholarship funding! Get in touch and we will work with you to bring your students out in the Sierra next year.

Parents! We have a great schedule of Summer Camps this July and August details at www.sierraexperience.org

Following are highlights from this past winter:

Sierra Green Job Corp – run by Fourth Sector Strategies, is a fantastic program funded by Federal Stimulus funds. Young adults spend 4 months getting experience in solar energy, energy auditing, green building, sustainable forestry, landscape restoration, bio-fuels, and organic agriculture. Each of the three courses in 2010 begins with a three-day program in eco-literacy and teambuilding with Gateway Mountain Center at Clair Tappaan Lodge! www.fourthsectorstrategies.com



We all enjoyed the bountiful snowstorms this winter and so did the staff and students of three high schools who were total troopers dealing with blizzard conditions and all that entails: tire chains, stuck cars, (even a stuck bus!), gorgeous snowshoeing through frosted fir trees, perfect powder, and the vivid tracks of a rare Pine Marten that we all saw leaping through the woods. *Gateway High School* from San Francisco (25 students) enjoyed the spectacular hike from the UC Snow Science Lab back to the Lodge.

New Leaf – Briones School – Environmental Studies Academy from Martinez (38 students) did a great job surveying the forests behind the lodge and calculating



the amount of carbon sequestered in the forest plots up around the old water tanks. *Thurgood Marshall Academic High School* from San Francisco enjoyed a first time snow experience while learning how different animal species adapt to winter conditions.

Peak Health and Empowerment for Young Women Our year-long program at Sierra Continuation High School held its spring retreat in May at the Lodge. Fifteen young women and five babies enjoyed a fantastic retreat with warm weather and snowy trails. We



were able to rock climb on School Rock (belaying on snow), practiced yoga and meditation in the living room, and worked on the “recipe book for wellness” project.

Gateway Mountain Center has a very busy summer ahead, with 55 8th graders coming up from the K.I.P.P. Academy from San Francisco, the Re-mix Foster Youth Program in June, the P.A.C.E Program (150 students!) from Sacramento, the Woods Project (60 students for two weeks) from Texas, and Beale Air Force Base family retreats for parents recently returned from deployment in Iraq and Afghanistan enjoying time in nature with their kids. Once again we are offering Summer Camps in partnership with Sugar Bowl, and our own Donner Climbing Camp the first week of August. Special Thanks to all who contributed to the CTL fund at the Sierra Club Foundation, to those who participated in the August fundraiser, and to Diane Boyer and Jane Risk, who so quickly and professionally handled the grant requests which made it possible for these schools to partake of these educational adventures!



Clair Tappaan

Service Trip to reduce forest fuels and build a trail/

By Peter Lehmkuhl, CTL General Manager

During the summer of 2009 Suzanne Valencia and Tom Brown led a Sierra Club National Service Outing at Clair Tappaan Lodge. We would like to thank the leaders and participants of that trip for improving the health of the CTL forest and increasing the recreational activities available right out of our backdoor. The major accomplishment of the outing was the construction of a brand new hiking trail. While the trail, named "Valencia Vista" by the volunteer trail builders, is less than one mile long it does bring hikers to an outstanding and secluded view overlooking the Van Norden Meadow.

Participants came from all over the country with nearly half of the participants being part of Sierra Club's Inner City Outing program. Another Sierra Club National Service Outing is scheduled for 2010.



We Need Your Email Address

By Olivia Diaz

It costs the CTL Committee about \$500 to produce and mail the Goshawk to nearly 900 CTL supporters. We want to keep friends and donors of Clair Tappaan Lodge informed about what is going on at the Sierra Club campus at Donner Summit but we are concerned about cost and about the trees we cause to be cut down to create the paper. What can we do?

Goshawks going back to 2006 are archived at the bottom of the first page of the CTL website <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/lodges/ctl/>. We would love it if you downloaded a favorite issue and shared it with friends who might be interested in learning about the Lodge and the wonderful opportunities offered there to experience the high Sierra all year round and to introduce young people to its beautiful and fragile landscape.

Everyone we talk to advises us to "go electronic." But we can't because we don't have your email address.

Goshawk Editor Pat Mikkelsen will gather the addresses to be used for the next issue of the Goshawk. Please send your email address to her at patplus10@gmail.com

Would you please send us your email address so we can email you when the next Goshawk is posted on the CTL website? Of course, if you prefer to have it mailed, we will do so gladly.

We would appreciate your help in our efforts to "go green" and to reduce costs of printing and postage.

The Secret Season is also a Bargain

By Peter Lehmkuhl

So what is the secret season of the Sierra? Autumn -- after Labor Day and before the first big snowfall (usually just before Thanksgiving) -- a time between the summer and winter crowds, a time when you feel like you have the Sierra to yourself. Fall colors take over the landscape except for the mighty pine trees and deep blue lakes and sky. Crisp mornings turn

into warm afternoons, perfect for hiking and exploring in what feels like a whole new mountain range.

Clair Tappaan Lodge offers a fall special to groups of 5 or more. For just \$38/person/night (including 3 meals/day) eligible groups can experience the secret season of the Sierra. So whether your activity is hiking, kayaking, cycling, mountain biking, or rock climbing Clair Tappaan will serve as the perfect base camp.

Summer Outings 2010

There are many wonderful opportunities. A list is on page -8 of this newsletter but the most up-to-date information is on the web page. <http://ctl.sierraclub.org> and then click on "Activities"



Photo: Joel Brody



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UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

(go to <http://ctl.sierraclub.org> and click on "Activities" for more)

June 27–July 3, Introduction to Backpacking
July 2–4, Holiday Weekend Celebration
July 5–11, All in the Family - A Multigenerational Family Adventure
July 9–11, Family Hike Weekend
July 10, Mt. Judah Loop - Wildflower Hike
July 11–16, Just for Grandparents and Grandkids
July 18–24, Family Fun in Tahoe National Forest
July 18–24 Sierra Nevada Adventures for Families with Teens
July 23–25, Donner Summit Hiking Highlights
July 24, Full Moon Hike
July 25 - 30, Make the Mountains Glad: an Intergenerational Adventure
July 25–31, Work and Play at Clair Tappaan Lodge
August 1–6, Gateway Mountain Center Youth Rock Climbing Camp
August 1–7, Mountain Medley, Tahoe National Forest
August 6–8, Family Hike Weekend
August 7, Long Lake Hike and Swim
August 8 - 13, Make the Mountains Glad: an Intergenerational Adventure
August 13–15. Sixth Annual Clair Tappaan Lodge Fundraiser
August 20–22, Donner Summit Hiking Highlights
August 22–28, Painting Along the Sierra Trails
September 11, Donner Summit History Hike
September 12–18, 50+ Ridgetop Rambles



Northern Goshawk, a medium-large bird of prey, widespread in the temperate parts of the northern hemisphere. Juvenile (left) and adult by Louis Agassiz Fuertes (Wikipedia)