



THE SIERRA CLUB NEWSLETTER FROM CLAIR TAPPAAN LODGE (CTL)

IN MEMORIAM

RICHARD A. JOHNS

Rich Johns passed away following a massive heart attack Saturday, March 1, at the age of 64. He is survived by his wife, Susan, and daughters Emma and Samantha. He was enormously proud of his daughters. Rich was the eldest of four brothers, born in Waverly, New York to Larry and Phyllis Johns. He spent a year as an exchange student in Sweden and later was a Peace Corps volunteer in Ethiopia.



As the owner of Coastside Physical Therapy, Rich had offices in Pacifica and South San Francisco. His commitment to helping others extended to his many volunteer activities, including the Terra Nova High School Band Boosters, St. Andrew Church, and the Sierra Club's Clair Tappaan Lodge.

- President - Coastside Physical Therapy
1980 - 2014
- Volunteer - Clair Tappaan Lodge
1977 - 2014
- Education
- Ohio State University
Post Baccalaureate, Physical Therapy
1974 - 1975
- Penn State University
Bachelor of Science - Chemistry/Biology
1968 - 1972

MEMORIAL SERVICE

A memorial service and celebration of Rich's life will be held on Saturday, April 12th at 1:00 pm at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, 1125 Terra Nova Blvd. in Pacifica. It is planned to be a joyous occasion where stories of his life will be shared for all to hear and for anyone to speak who wishes to do so.

SAN FRANCISCO - SEPTEMBER 15, 2001

Loma Prieta Chapter Member Rich Johns was among those receiving national awards from the Sierra Club this year.

Johns received a Special Service Award for helping run and maintain the Club's Clair Tappaan Lodge for more than 20 years. Johns served as chair of the Clair Tappaan Lodge Committee from 1983-1990 and has been a member of that committee for many additional years. He has done carpentry, plastering, painting, plumbing, tile work, roofing and electrical work on the lodge as well as planning several lodge changes and additions.



"There probably isn't a single portion of that lodge that hasn't benefited from Rich's handiwork at some point," said Mary Bernstein, then chair of the Clair Tappaan Lodge Committee. "Rich is an example of volunteerism at its finest."

Johns also taught cross-country skiing to guests at the lodge and led family hikes with his daughter Emma. He proposed to his wife, Susan, at the lodge at Christmas 1981.

REMEMBERING RICH

Diane Boyer

Rich Johns was the backbone of Clair Tappaan Lodge. He served on the CTL Committee for many years, had a wealth of historical knowledge, a huge collection of photos, and a quest for improving the place. He spent infinite hours there over innumerable weekends working through his carefully prioritized list of projects. He researched his ideas, consulted with knowledgeable people, bought materials, and worked diligently.

The most successful event at CTL has always been the New Year's celebration. Folks reserve a year in advance so they won't miss out on all the festivities planned and overseen by Rich and his family. Energy resonates from the walls as kids and adults practice their routines, skits, and presentations for the big "talent show." The living room is filled with guests who cheer on the efforts, and youngsters who clamor for piñata goodies. Then a midnight buffet with lively music and dancing welcomes in the New Year. All this amongst balloons, streamers, hats, and noise-makers.

All of Rich's efforts will be sorely missed at CTL and the place will never be the same without him. But I fully expect to meet him coming down the hall some dark night with hammer, saw, and paint brush in hand, joining in with all the other spirits at the lodge who have been responsible for carrying on the heritage of volunteerism, community, and adventure at CTL.

Jane and Jerry Risk

We find it difficult to believe and hard to accept that Rich is gone. He was dedicated and hard-working, a strong leader with so many innovative ideas and the energy to realize them. He was a good friend to all of us. We are going to miss him deeply.

Dick Simpson

Rich leaves an enormous void; almost every part of the physical structure has been touched by him several times. That doesn't count his contributions to things like New Year's parties and the CTL Committee, which he chaired for most of the 1980s (in addition to his recent acceptance of the co-chair position).



New Year's Eve 2011. Rich with ever-present camera in hand.

Olivia Diaz

I met Rich around 2005 when I joined the Clair Tappaan Lodge Volunteer Advisory Committee. He was a long-time member of that committee and had carved out a role for himself - The Repair Guy - and wrote reports titled TRG.

He also served as institutional memory for the Lodge Committee. Before my time on the Committee he had served as Chair for more than one term. One year, as publicity chair, I was trying to come up with a list of former members of the Committee. Rich gave me a huge list of people who had been leaders and what they had contributed. From that list I sent out invitations to our



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summer fundraiser and connected with a few important people.

I remember his upright posture, cheery smile, and characteristic nod. He seemed full of joy – and pride for the accomplishments of his girls and his wife Susan. The past few years Ernie and I received his Christmas letters and they were full of excitement and pride about his family.

At each of the face-to-face meetings of the committee, he would present a written report listing the repairs and tasks he had accomplished since our previous meeting. I was always astonished at the number of his repairs and improvements and at the work and time each represented. The list always included from 10 to 40 items. For more than 20 years, his contributions to the Lodge were consistent and steady.

In addition to repairs, he took photographs. He documented our summer fundraisers and posted the photos on Flickr so we could access them. He also tried to get us to use technology to assist the CTL Committee to communicate better and more easily.

Anytime we asked something of him he was ready to pitch in. There are nearly 40 members of the Clair Tappaan Lodge Support Team (formerly known as the CTL Committee) and Rich was hard-core. He showed up to meetings, participated in conference calls, and always made contributions to the conversations.

Clair Tappaan Lodge has a great New Year's Eve bash and for the several years that I attended, Rich and his family served what he called a midnight supper. The supper started at the end of the traditional "Talent Show" and went on until the food was gone, which was about midnight. I helped him on three occasions. It was a lavish feast, tray after tray of cheeses, cut vegetables, hot and cold hors d'oeuvres, chips, crackers, dips, cut fruit, little sandwiches, sweets, and punch and coffee. It took hours to prepare and then decorate and set out. There were decorations to the living room, and set up and clean up. He and his family were responsible for the planning and shopping and then preparation of food to feed 140

guests. The work and imagination and spirit was Rich's and his family's contribution.

I remember one New Year's Eve when he joined the "Talent" show to spin a yarn about the two Clairs Tapp'n at the window, a legend about the naming of the Lodge. He told it deadpan and we all groaned and then laughed when he came to the punch line.

We will miss his joyful countenance, his ideas, talent, and sweat that he contributed to the well-being of Clair Tappaan Lodge. Thank you Rich and goodbye.



Susan, Rich, Emma, and Samantha Johns.



Clair Tappaan, Photo by Rich Johns.



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RICH JOHNS' LEGACY: 20 YEARS OF IMPROVEMENT TO CLAIR TAPPAAN LODGE

Compiled from Rich Johns' TRG ("The Repair Guy") Reports to the CTL Committee, and contributions from his many friends in the Lodge community.

- Installed wooden cleats in small closet in cubicle men's bathroom in preparation for shelving.
- Installed new door locks and magnetic latches on toilet doors in men's cubicle bathroom.
- Reinforced the hot tub room wall that was pushed in last year.
- The work room has been cleaned.
- A dead tree at the end of the driveway as it comes into the front yard was cut down.
- The hot tub is up and running again.
- Art is on board and is keeping the Lodge in prime shape for cleanliness.
- A new cup and bowl cupboard has been fabricated and installed replacing the hobnobbed old white and blue shelving to the right of the dishwasher.

Above is a typical list of items that The Repair Guy listed on his quarterly reports to the rest of the volunteer Clair Tappaan Lodge Committee, bringing us up-to-date on the various repairs and projects he had worked on. These reports went on year after year. The Lodge, built in 1934, and host to more than ten thousand people a year, takes a beating and needs constant maintenance at the same time as being on a tight budget.

By driving from his home in Pacifica every other week, sometimes more often, and keeping up with repairs, Rich saved the Lodge huge amounts of money. He donated his time and recruited and coordinated the work of volunteers and staff to accomplish things economically and quickly. He often brought his wife and daughters along to assist him.

Many items were first fabricated or repaired in what he called the "Lodge Annex Workshop in Pacifica" (his home garage), then transported and installed at the Lodge on the weekend.

Rich donated many of the supplies. He shopped for good buys, thereby saving even more money out of the maintenance budget. He told us that he grew up repairing things and really enjoyed doing that kind of work.

Peter Lehmkuhl, General Manager for many years, said that before he arrived at the Lodge, Rich made a real improvement in the dining room by making and installing table tops. In 2007 he also built a batch of benches for the dining room.

Also around 2007, two safety issues were identified—a lack of consistent emergency lighting throughout the Lodge, and closure of the east exit from the dining room in the winter due to snow buildup. Rich took on these two projects over the course of two years.

He installed, rebuilt, repaired, and replaced exit signs and created emergency lighting throughout the Lodge. Peter thinks that this was the single most important contribution Rich made to the Lodge over the years.

Making the east exit from the dining room accessible during the winter required a major rebuild of the roofline, and that too was a large renovation. Rich had lots of help on that project but now with a new gable and roofline, the snow no longer blocks the exit. This makes the lodge safer.

In 2008, the Committee was given a budget by the Sierra Club to improve the path into the Lodge. After quite a bit of discussion and research, it was decided to improve a path from the north, past the other lodges, through the meadow, and into the foyer. This path was an improvement as it presents very little elevation change. The north path was a large project with different elements, which were performed by volunteers, staff, and contractors. Rich took responsibility for installing energy-efficient lights to illuminate the driveway. This required bending and laying conduit to get the electricity into the tall light towers.

Rich led another significant project by extensively remodelling the men's bathroom near the men's dorm. He and a group of volunteers tore out fixtures and removed walls down to the studs. They replaced



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plumbing and electricity, and installed new tiles, fixtures, walls, and ceilings. He even brought art to hang on the walls and installed a redwood wall bench. The slate floor matches the other three bathrooms. There are now two sinks, two new showers, and toilets

In the kitchen Rich installed new cabinets and new laminate surfaces in the various work stations.

Around 2010 Rich installed a hand-washing station with hot water in the dining room with a spigot for drinking water. Then, during the past two years, he mobilized staff and volunteers to remove the broom closet in the dining room to make it into a service space for drinks. He ran water to this new spot, and the hand-washing station and water spigot got a new home. This reduces the congestion in the dining room on a busy day.

Rich had big plans for the foyer, hoping to change the flow of traffic around the office, but didn't have the chance to get to it. He did, however, make cosmetic changes to the entrance of the Foyer.

Now you can see why the Clair Tappaan Lodge Committee and Bryan Allegretto, the new General Manager, will have a hard time keeping up the Lodge without Rich. Such consistent contribution of talent, time, sweat, and dedication will be hard to replace. It will take many people to do the work Rich gave to maintaining the Lodge.

SAVE THE DATE

August 15, 16, 17

10th Annual Clair Tappaan Lodge Fundraiser

Celebrating four important anniversaries:

- ✿ Clair Tappaan Lodge - 80 years
- ✿ Hutchinson Lodge - 90 years
- ✿ Peter Grubb Hut - 75 years
- ✿ Benson Hut - 65 years

We will be having an appreciation of Rich Johns at 4:30 Saturday afternoon, with a chance to share your stories about him. Please come and honor his work, his life, his family, and his dedicated volunteerism.

Already confirmed:

- ✿ Friday night bonfire with s'mores and brandy
- ✿ Saturday afternoon 3-4:30 - Music in the woods of Hutchinson Lodge
 - ✿ A return of Stephen Holland, the guitarist who captivated our guests last year
 - ✿ Wine and Cheese Reception.
- ✿ Special dinner at 6 p.m.
- ✿ 8:00 p.m. - David Scott, President of the Sierra Club Board
- ✿ 9:00 - Bluegrass Music by Mountain Fire for dancing in the living room

The highlight of this weekend will be the Saturday morning hikes around Donner Summit organized by Rick Ramos.

- ✿ Raffle
- ✿ Art Auction

Proceeds will go toward Lodge Operation and to support the Scholarship Fund

Would you like to help put on the event? We are recruiting helpers now. Call Diane Boyer at 707 538-8492 if you want to join the planning committee.

Watch for your invitation with the full program in the summer.



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