



SPECIAL BULLETIN Mini-Goshawk AUGUST 2007

State of Clair Tappaan Lodge, Goshawks and Mini-Goshawks

Ernie Malamud, CTL Committee Chair

The Goshawk, Clair Tappaan Lodge's own newsletter, keeps our many supporters informed on the status of the lodge. In recent years issues have been less frequent, due to the urgent need to focus energy on increasing occupancy. Significant progress in the past year is making the lodge more viable financially and forestalling those in the Sierra Club who want to start the process of selling the Sierra Club at Donner Summit (SCDS). The SCDS is 94 acres of forests that includes old growth trees, two historic lodges, Clair Tappaan and Hutchinson and the Warming Hut.



The most recent Goshawk (Spring 2006) was produced under the leadership of Kathy Wells and Kathi Fowler and is available on the CTL web page. This nicely designed newsletters are full of interesting news and reminiscences of life at the SCDS.

A "mini-Goshawk" called a "Special Bulletin" was produced in December 2006 to inform our "base" of 1000 or so on the status of the crucial fight to retain the Warming Hut. This is the second such "mini-Goshawk." and contains the wonderful news that the Warming Hut parcel has been saved as an integral part of SCDS.

Also in this issue is an invitation by Peter Lehmkuhl for you to take advantage of the wonderful fall season at the Summit.

Thanks to the generosity of two anonymous donors the Warming Hut and its 23.4 acre parcel have been saved! That important portion of the SCDS now has a conservation easement on it which protects the land and its striking building in perpetuity. In this newsletter is the press release announcing this crucial success.

There are eight parcels in the 94-acre complex. Now

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The Secret Season of the Sierra

Peter Lehmkuhl, CTL General Manager

Clair Tappaan Lodge sees over 12,000 overnight stays each year. However, the majority of these visits occur either in summer or winter season. Rare is the guest who visits the lodge in both seasons.

The summer folks come for convenient "out the back door" or other nearby hiking opportunities. With destinations of Lytton Lake, Mt Judah, Flora Lake, Castle Peak, or Donner Lake it is easy to see why the hikers come. During summer, guests also enjoy the many opportunities for kayaking, swimming, fishing or biking that the area has to offer. Back at the Lodge guests enjoy the warm communal atmosphere that has been a staple at Clair Tappaan since it began in 1934. With the range of activities summer offers it is no wonder why Clair Tappaan is bustling with families, groups, couples and solo-adventurists during this time.

The winter crowd comes for a whole different set of activities which revolve around, what else, snow! Once the snow falls the landscape is transformed and so are the outdoor pursuits available for visitors. Some come for

the groomed x-country ski and snowshoe trails or safe sledding hill just "out the back door." Others take the shuttle to the nearby downhill ski resorts of Sugar Bowl, Donner Ski Ranch and Soda Springs (which also offers tubing). Others still come for the miles and miles of trails found at Royal Gorge, the largest x-country ski resort in the lower 48. Back at the Lodge, winter guests enjoy stoking the fire in the Lewis Clark Room and the same communal atmosphere that the summer folks enjoy too.



Are you one of these guests who only enjoy Clair Tappaan during one of these popular seasons? If so, you only know part of the great story that unfolds on Donner Summit over the course of the year. Summer visitors

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State of CTL

with one of them protected, there remain seven more parcels vulnerable to sale and eventual development. Will someone else step forward and raise the funds to protect one or more of the remaining seven parcels?

The first half of 2007 shows a significant improvement in occupancy and finances compared to the first half of 2006. But projections to the end of the year indicate we still may end up with red ink although we will come much closer to “break-even” than in 2006. There are still

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Secret Season

are missing out on the legendary snow of Donner Summit and all the activities and beauty that those snows bring. Winter guests are missing the wildflowers, alpine lakes and just how pleasant a summer can be at 7,000 feet. For all one-season guests I encourage you to see what the buzz is all about in whatever season it is that you have not experienced.

So what is the secret season of the Sierra? The secret season of the Sierra and Clair Tappaan is autumn, the time 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 entire landscape with the exception of the mighty pine trees and deep blue lakes and sky. Crisp mornings give

four months (Sept-Dec) to push that boulder just a little further, up to the top of the “break-even” mountain top. Jerry and Jane Risk are doing all they can to meet this challenge. They are using their contacts in the San Francisco school system and marketing school by school to encourage teachers and school administrators to bring groups up to the summit. Let them be an example.

Can you do the same in the community where you live? And, of course, come up to the lodge yourself, with your family, with a group from your place of work, bring scout groups, church groups, special interest groups. Come for the wonderful New Year’s Eve party.

way to warm afternoons, perfect for hiking and exploring in what feels like a whole new mountain range. Guests who have discovered this secret season have found it to be the perfect time to introduce new people to the Lodge with it’s even more intimate version of that Clair Tappaan staple, the friendly communal atmosphere.

Sound enticing? It should, but in case you need another reason, here is one that can be found very high on the list. Financially speaking, Clair Tappaan Lodge has had a good year so far in 2007. If you (whether you are a summer or winter visitor) were to give the secret season of the Sierra a try we could turn this good year into a great year. So, the secret is out and I hope you all can plan a trip to Clair Tappaan and understand what all the hush has been about. See you on the summit . . .



2007 Meteor Shower Weekend Fund Raiser a Success!

Olivia Diaz and Trudy Roegner, Co-chairs



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The Meteor Shower weekend (August 10-12) at Clair Tappaan Lodge was a great success. The Lodge was full to the rafters, an unusual situation during the summer. In fact, staff stopped taking reservations three days before the event. The weather couldn't have been better, it was sunny with a cool breeze and the air was perfect for viewing meteors and

general star gazing.

Ernie Malamud, Chair of the Clair Tappaan Lodge volunteer committee announced on Sunday morning, "This fund raising weekend, the third annual, has been highly successful! The preliminary total of money raised was \$20,700, which exceeds our goal by almost \$6,000 and is nearly twice what our 2006 fundraiser raised. We are all very pleased with the outcome."

Numerous donations flowed in from those who couldn't attend.

There were 117 items donated by local merchants and friends that were auctioned during the wine and cheese reception on Saturday. Music by Sherryl Tombouljian, Bill Lundgren and David Boyden added to the atmosphere during the silent auction and reception. Peak Adventures of Sacramento donated a white water rafting trip on the South Fork of the American River for up to 6 people. The trip, worth \$600, was raffled and the Kyle family of San Rafael won it. Blue Grass music by



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Mountain Fire followed a wonderful wild salmon dinner on Saturday night.

Participants enjoyed the hikes on Saturday morning, the

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Photos: 1, 4 Joel Brody 2,3 Diana Vanderburg



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Fundraiser

mixer on Friday night of s' mores and brandy, and the presentation on the Perseids meteor shower. Three amateur astronomers wowed the audience with information and cool telescopes. Everyone watching the sky sighted spectacular meteors with color and even a trail.

We are grateful to the many people who love the Lodge for their donations and wonderful auction items, which helped us exceed our fund raising goal.

Volunteers, many from Sierra Nevada Group helped put on the event. Don Rivenes, Don Harkin, Kathi Simonson, Allison Chin, Phil Sexton, Glenn Polochko, Jeri Merritt, and Jean Shannon led hikes. Alan Stahler made the astronomy presentation and Dan Chaplin, Ballard Bare and David Bennum shared their telescopes. Barbara Rivenes, Lois Shelton, Bob Johnson and Karen Cox or-

ganized and ran the auction; Ernie Malamud produced labels, the program, badges and lists. Star Carroll Smith, Leslie Kerns and Cathy Spector ran Children's Activities and set up the Lodge for this big crowd. Edith Lufkin and Carolyn Hinshaw (former SNG Chair) and Pat Mikkelsen staffed registration and helped with the hikes.

Herb Holden, David Boyden and Pete Rondoni gave the staff support for this unusually large summer crowd.

All of the proceeds go toward supporting the Lodge. Save the date for next year's Full Moon Weekend August 15-17, 2008 and be sure to reserve early.

If you don't want to wait that long to visit the Lodge, consider taking your family there for Thanksgiving dinner. Enjoy fall at Donner Summit with your family while Chef Michael cooks the turkey and fixings. The place is beautiful then, too.

Warming Hut Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE July 25, 2007
Contact: Perry Norris, Truckee Donner Land Trust,
530-582-4711 or 530-412-2438
Kristina Johnson, Sierra Club, 415-977-5619

Conservation Groups Protect 23 Acres on Donner Summit

TRUCKEE, CA -- The Sierra Club and Truckee Donner Land Trust announced today that 23 acres in the Donner Summit area will be preserved with a conservation easement which was purchased by the Truckee Donner Land Trust with the help of anonymous donors.

The 23 acres are located on the site of the historic Sierra Club ski run that was among the first in the Sierra and ceased operations decades ago. The conservation easement will preclude future development of the property while ensuring continuation of current recreational opportunities, preserving wildlife habitat and open space, and helping protect the Boreal Ridge watershed.

"This conveyance is another chapter in a 20-year effort to protect important recreational, historic and scenic open spaces at Truckee's doorstep," said Perry Norris, Executive Director of the Truckee Donner Land Trust. "Our work is not done. There are other chapters yet to be written in protecting the Donner Summit."

"Donner Summit is a key piece in the history of the Sierra range as well as the history of the Sierra Club. We're grateful to our generous donors and the Truckee Donner Land Trust for helping us protect this special place for generations to come," said Carl Pope, Executive Director of the Sierra Club.

The Sierra Club's members and supporters are more than 1.3 million Americans. Inspired by nature, we work together to protect our communities and the planet. The Club is America's oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization. For more information, please visit www.sierraclub.org.

The Truckee Donner Land Trust is a nonprofit organization that works to preserve and protect important historic, recreational and scenic open spaces in the greater Truckee region. The Land Trust was founded in 1990 when the picturesque and historical Coldstream Valley next to Donner Lake was about to be lost to logging. A small group of passionate hikers joined together, raised \$150,000, and purchased 160 acres in the Valley. Since then, TDLT has protected over 11,000 acres. For more information, please visit <http://www.tdlandtrust.org>.

Plans to Return the Warming Hut to Service

Diana Vanderburg

During the winter of 1954, a group of Clair Tappaan skiers decided that they needed a larger shelter than what was currently at the bottom of Signal Hill under the rope tow motor house. It was dark and damp with no windows. They imagined somewhere warm and full of light to gather around a cozy fire between runs up the hill. The rope tow was located at the bottom of Signal Hill just a short huff up from Clair Tappaan Lodge. Designed by Bay Area architects George Homsey and Donn Weaver, an A-frame was constructed by a team of incredibly dedicated volunteers.

It took more than hard work delivering the equipment and materials needed by dog sled and jeep up the old road to the site. It took dedication to the original founding ideals of the Sierra Club: a love and respect for the outdoors and a desire to enjoy it to the fullest.

But this hearty group prevailed, and in the one summer, they erected and completed the hut and were enjoying it by first snowfall. With steep roof sides and an enormous south-facing window, the hut was the most popular place to gather while skiing on Signal Hill. The tri lodge teams (Cal Lodge, Heidelman Lodge and CTL) would hold races on the hill, and the Warming Hut was the center of all the action. The history of this fantastic hut will be displayed at the lodge in the library as part of a series

of photographs and stories.

The hut warmed the toes and souls of many over the past 50 years, but in the last decade, it has fallen into a state of despair and neglect. The use of the rope tow was eclipsed by high-speed quads and large ski resorts, and in time, the hut was forgotten. In 2004 the hut was closed due to a rodent problem, and since then windows have been broken and kids have broken in to party inside and light illegal fires. When the Club wanted to sell off parcels, the Warming Hut was the first on the chopping block. Thanks to the grace of two anonymous donors, the building and surrounding acres are now safe in the hands of the Truckee Donner Land Trust.

Now it's time for the next generation of volunteers to rescue this sanctuary on the hill. Won't you join us? The initial work party, led by the Homsey and Talso families is scheduled for September 22 and 23. The focus will be on clean up and preparation for the winter. We will meet on Saturday morning after breakfast to head up to the hut. We will have all tools and cleaning gear for everyone's use, but please bring your own gloves.

Our goal is to have the hut up and earning it's own way by 2009. With such close access to the main lodge, this starter hut is a good practice trip for first time backcountry skiers. It will also serve as a day lodge for summer backpackers and educational groups. The hut has a history that we should cherish and pass on to future generations, come join us for a weekend of hard work, memories, and good cheer.





SIERRA CLUB

Clair Tappaan Lodge

P. O. Box 36, Norden, CA 95724

SAVE THE DATE



Fourth Annual Clair Tappaan Lodge
Fundraiser Full Moon Weekend
August 15-17, 2008



Five year Strategic Plan nears completion

The CTL Committee has created a 5-year blueprint for the future of Clair Tappaan Lodge and the Sierra Club at Donner Summit (SCDS). This 120-page report has over 40 photos, maps and figures, many in color. The report begins with an overview of the Sierra Club at Donner Summit and then continues with a discussion of the SCDS in a time of change including the impact of climate change. The many wonderful education programs that use the facilities and resources of the SCDS are summarized. There are chapters on interactions with other organizations and neighbors, marketing, public relations and advertising. Key to this document is a description of present governance and suggestions for improvement. There is a business plan showing operations from 2008 – 2012 and a list of desired capital improvements.

A limited number of copies are available at a cost of \$22.50 to help defray printing and mailing costs. If you are interested, please send a check made out to Clair Tappaan Lodge and send it to Ernie Malamud, 16914 Pasquale Road, Nevada City, CA 95959.

