



March 1, 2018



**SIERRA
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Angeles Chapter Awards Banquet for Outstanding Members 2017

By Delphine Trowbridge

Save the date of May 6 for this special event where two of Verdugo Hills Board members will be receiving awards. The Keynote Speaker for the evening will be Adam Schiff. He is a Congressman representing the 28th district.

There will be a silent auction with books, pictures, jewelry and much more and the profits benefit the banquet. There will be a patio reception before dinner. There ceremony will begin at 7 pm.

The Awards given are: Extraordinary Achievement, Weldon Heald Conservation plaque, Chester Versteig Outings, Phil Berneys Service, Irene Chernock Office volunteer and Linda Hoyer Office staff awards. There is the Lifelong Service Award (which I was awarded in 2010), Lori and Robin Ives Excellence in Media, Political Service, Donna Spect Funraising award and awards for Conservation, Outings and Special Service.

CAROL HENNING will be receiving the Political Service Plaque for her diligent work finding suitable environmental candidates to endorse for the significant local elections. She reports back to our group by newsletter articles and entertaining verbal accounts of the monthly Chapter meetings. Carol usually has a letter on some issue that needs to be addressed and we all sign during our monthly meetings. Congratulations on a well-deserved award.

Special Service Award goes to **CHARLOTTE FEITSHANS** who wears many hats. She is Verdugo Hills secretary, Chapter Delegate Alternate, Conservation Round Table member/worker and hike leader. Charlotte has been a member of Sierra Club for many years and was active in Hundred Peaks Section as leader and hiker. We are so happy she will be getting an earned award.

Note: To reserve a seat at the Verdugo Hills Banquet table, email [David Eisenberg](mailto:David.Eisenberg@sierraclub.org) to reserve a spot. Then send \$40 (Verdugo Hills Group) to David Eisenberg (510 N Maryland #307, Glendale 91206)

Grayson Power Plant Updates

We still need to work on this. In spite of over 1000 comments and over 500 people at the rally, the Glendale City Council is proceeding with the environmental impact. We will be updating you via email whenever there is action needed on this issue. See p 4-7 for updates and information.

A Taste of Westwood

By Evelyn Alexander

On January 6 a group of about 16 of us visited the Hammer Museum and the Westwood Cemetery. Unfortunately we arrived between special exhibitions at the museum. We did however get a chance to see their permanent collection which is small but very nice.

After lunch at a nearby Thai restaurant we walked over to the cemetery. There we saw the graves of many Hollywood Stars and Los Angeles celebrities. A tiny place that's hard to find, the cemetery is the final resting place of such well known luminaries as Marilyn Monroe, Hugh Hefner, Natalie Wood and Dean Martin. Bruce Hale even found the grave of one of his UCLA Law Professors.



NEWS & NOTES

Namaste from Nepal

By Bruce Hale

Namaste to all our VHG readers. The Nepalese greet everyone with this salutation and with a little bow and folded hands. Namaste means something like this:

My soul honors your soul,
I honor the place in you where
The entire universe resides,
I honor the light, love, truth,
Beauty and peace within you,
Because it is also within me.
In sharing these things
We are united, we are the same,
We are one.

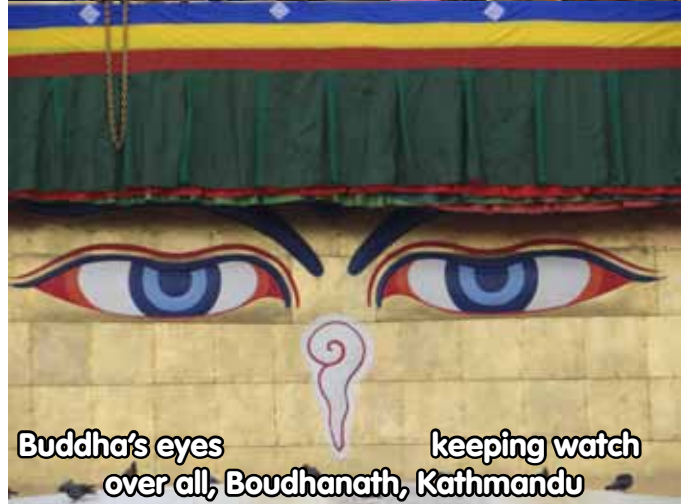
This article is Part II of my account of the Chapter-sponsored trip in 3 parts to Nepal and Bhutan in fall 2017 led by Fred Dong and Stephanie Gross. After a week in Bhutan, we returned to Kathmandu, Nepal, to do sightseeing for a week.

Kathmandu, capital of Nepal, population 2.5 million, still shows major earthquake damage from the quake in 2015. Many temples in the old district have not yet been restored. The country, and Kathmandu in particular, survive on tourism, the second main source of revenue. [The first source is remittances sent from Nepalese who are working outside the country]. While staying in Kathmandu, I often walked in the Thamel District, the prime, bustling tourist area of the city. There are innumerable tour & trek operators, gear outfitters, and tourist shops set in narrow streets with chaotic traffic. Lots of motorbikes add to noise, dust and fumes. But there are streets where the use of horns is strictly prohibited. Crossing major intersections was complicated and hazardous. I would follow the lead of locals crossing. Our hotel in Kathmandu was centrally located for walking to many historic sights. Sightseeing in Kathmandu begins with walking around the Old Kathmandu District called Durbar, with its numerous temples and shrines and monuments. The Chinese have a presence here helping to restore the structures damaged in the quake.

In the following days we tour temples and shrines in outlying areas or suburbs of Kathmandu. Temples here



Hindus making their devotions, Durbar Square, Kathmandu



Buddha's eyes keeping watch over all, Boudhanath, Kathmandu



Monkeys at Swayambhunath, "the Monkey Temple," Kathmandu

are Buddhist or Hindu or shared by both religious groups. According to our guide, 70% of Nepalese are Hindu and 10% Buddhist. The Pashupatinath, a Shiva Temple, dating back to the 11th century, is noted as a cremation site right by the river. We see a body being burned upon

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a pyre. A festival is also going on during which Hindus come to make offerings to Shiva. Marigold flowers are strung on ropes over the river and many candles are floating down the river for the occasion.

On a hill on the other side of town, the Swayambhunath, known as the “Monkey Temple,” gives us a panorama of the whole city and displays a restored, gold-domed stupa gleaming in the declining sunlight in the late afternoon. The red-bottomed monkeys which dwell at this site scamper around everywhere. The official count is 465. They seemed quite harmless, but we had been warned that they are likely to snatch hats, purses or cameras. Our group kept their stuff secure.

After visiting Patan and Bhaktapur (historic royal cities and once separate kingdoms, but today suburbs of Kathmandu), and Panauti (a little town time has forgotten), we drive to Chitwan National Park.

Chitwan is a grueling 7.5 hour bus ride from Kathmandu. The distance is only 150km [about 200 miles] but road conditions and traffic are the worst I’ve ever seen. The road crossing the surrounding mountains which outline the Kathmandu Valley is dirt and rocks and ruts. The monsoon rains wash out the roads. The government is trying to improve the roads but the project will take years. You can’t imagine the dust, fumes and traffic. Driving the dirt roads was so bumpy it was virtually impossible to read on the bus. Many big, slow vehicles on the road cannot be easily passed. The air quality is terrible from fumes and particulates from diesel exhaust and dust. Surrounding vegetation had a thick layer of dust on leaves. Some people wear cloth dust masks. I thought such simple masks would not do much good. As we left the Kathmandu Valley, we passed by rubble and squalor aggravated by the ‘15 quake. There is a lot of poverty in the outlying areas. We saw inhabitants living in the ruins of their collapsed houses which still are in a state of rubble.

Once we finally arrived at Chitwan for our two-night stay, we found the park really special. Our hotel was a simple but adequate jungle lodge with spacious, lush grounds. Their wi fi connected well on my phone. We did several wildlife excursions [on foot, by canoe, and on top of elephants] into the jungle. Nepal, like Bhutan, is subtropical and warm at the lower elevations, so the terrain is jungle.



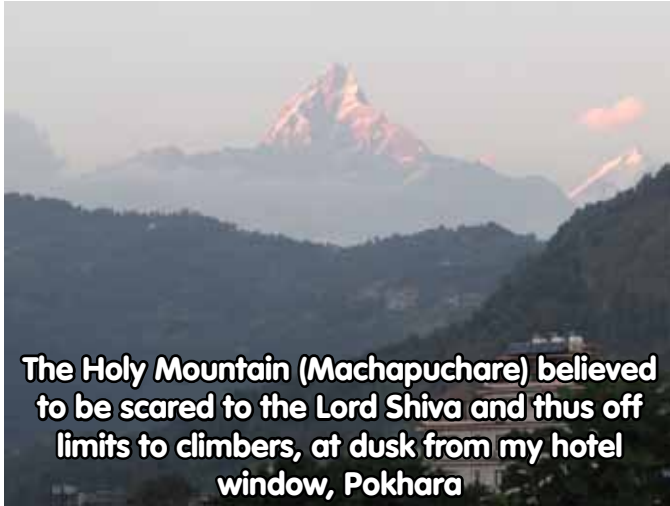
Elephant drivers with load of elephant grass, Chitwan



Boarding for the elephant ride, Chitwan NP

Elephants play important roles here. We saw many captive elephants which the army uses daily in patrolling against poachers and which locals use to transport all sorts of stuff, including elephant grass. Elephants are also a popular method for tourists to look for jungle wildlife. There were 4 of us sitting on and gripping each platform on each elephant’s back for a 2 hour ride. The seating arrangement was uncomfortable, and some platforms tended to list, but during the 2 hours we did spot a rhino. My elephant was much slower than the others carrying our group. It seems that he was 50 years old, while the others were around 20. The early morning canoe ride down the Raptu River was easier. From the canoe we saw five thick-snouted mud crocs. Eyes scarcely above the water, these crocs can be extremely vicious. Everyone was careful not to rock the canoes. An early AM bird walk was quite successful in that we saw a number of colorful birds, including the hornbill.

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The Holy Mountain (Machapuchare) believed to be scared to the Lord Shiva and thus off limits to climbers, at dusk from my hotel window, Pokhara

Our final stop on the Nepal sightseeing tour was Pokhara, a popular, attractive tourist lake-side resort about 200 miles (more than a 6 hours' drive) from Chitwan upon road conditions described above. Upon our arrival in the evening, we enjoy glorious views of the Annapurna Range right from our hotel window with a prime view of the distinctive peak called the Holy Mountain. A highlight of our stay was the early AM hike up to a viewing platform to see the Annapurna range as the sun comes up. There are multiple Annapurna peaks; Mt. Annapurna I, the 10th highest peak in the world, is 8091 m [26,538 ft].

Pokhara is the gateway to trekking in the Annapurna Range. The following day our trek in the foothills of the range began. Part 3 of this series will cover our trek.

A Lot of Hot Air

By Michael Beck

On February 6, some 500 local citizens showed up at Glendale City Hall to urge the Council to vote to place on hold the proposed carbon-spewing, natural-gas Grayson Power Plant Expansion, so as to allow an independent study of alternatives.

That was our team.

The opposing team consisted of Glendale Water & Power General Manager Steve Zurn, a dozen fossil-fuel experts in suits, and 100 utility workers who were told their jobs were on the line.

The five-member Council probably leans in our favor, but the mayor is one of the two members who

seem visibly annoyed at all this citizen activism. And the mayor sets meeting agendas.

So guess who sat in the catbird seat? In spite of the 500-person record turnout of angry citizenry, GWP General Manager Steve Zurn took the speaker's podium first, right after routine City matters. He then held on to it for two and a half hours straight, benumbing the chamber with chart after chart of acronyms, technical data, and numbers loaded with decimal points. From time to time Mr. Zurn yielded the podium – not to the Council, and certainly not to the public – but to another expert suit to repeat some technicality in need of further expounding. At last he allowed questions from the Council (not the public), each of which required a detailed answer from himself or one of the experts.

Finally around 9:30 it was the public's turn. Except by now most of the public had evaporated, being regular citizens with small children and/or jobs early the next morning. Of the nearly 100 who held on hoping to speak, almost all were limited to one minute (instead of the more usual three to five) because it had gotten so late.

Check off Mr. Zurn's first mission: Accomplished.

Our speakers were forced into hurriedly ticking off all the huge problems with the Expansion. Some highlights:

- It will greatly increase Glendale's carbon emissions just when the state is dialing them down.
- It includes zero new alternate energy sources.
- California is already saddled with a glut of gas-fired plants.
- Most new natural gas comes from fracking, which is almost as dirty as coal mining.
- Within nine years of the new plant's completion, California law slashes carbon emissions by 40%, with a rapid track towards a near total ban expected to follow. Glendale ratepayers could be left holding the bag for hundreds of millions in stranded assets.

Naturally since the majority of protesters had left before they could hear these points, they only heard GWP's perfectly packaged defense of the Expansion as the only possible solution to the City's future power needs.

Check off Mr. Zurn's second mission: Accomplished.

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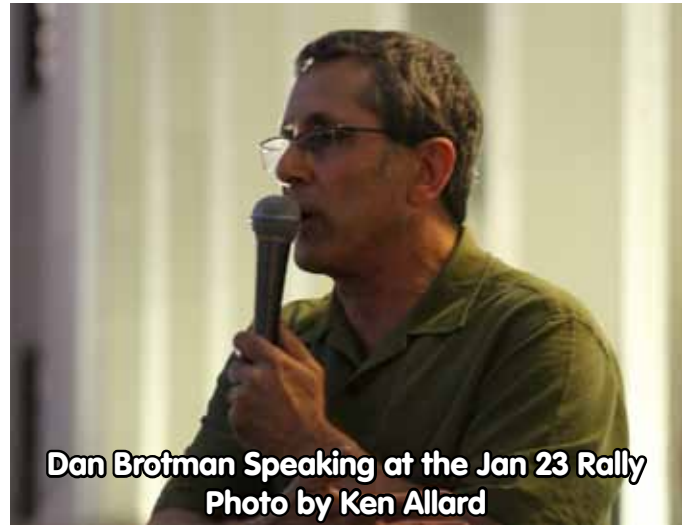
I was so offended by the time I got to speak that I tossed out my prepared comments (which there wasn't time for anyhow), and simply noted that the GWP's two-and-a-half hour snow job easily qualified for Mark Twain's third rank of lies. To wit: "There are lies, there are damned lies, and then there are statistics." The remaining audience laughed, glad at least for some comic relief.

It wasn't until well after midnight that the Council could at last address the overall Project and entertain a motion to place it on hold. Councilman Sinanyan gamely made the motion, but by now they was so tired, edgy, and divided that the motion died for lack of a second.

Check off Mr. Zurm's third mission: Accomplished.

The Grayson Expansion, however, is far from decided. The Department has until late March to address the over one thousand objections to their EIR that were submitted last year. At that point the Council is planning to again look at the Project's feasibility.

Stay tuned.



Report on the February 6 Glendale City Council Meeting

by Dan Brotman

We had a record breaking turnout last night of close to 500 people in opposition to the Grayson gas plant expansion. Over 300 wrote comment letters and something like 70-80 made oral statements, but who's counting?

The meeting continued until after midnight. Everyone was exhausted. The Council deliberated for over an hour. Councilmember Sinanyan - the champion of our cause - raised a motion to pause the review process for the gas plant and immediately launch an unbiased study of clean energy alternatives. It was a strong motion, with everything we could have asked for. Unfortunately, there was a bit of confusion on the dais, and he didn't manage to get a second to the motion. So the opportunity passed. For now.

Note that all Council really agreed to do was to let GWP stick to their original plan for completing the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and presenting it in late March. This means we don't get our pause - although to be honest the EIR is almost done so it doesn't mean all that much. But we still have a good chance to get Council to set the completed EIR aside without certifying it or approving the project, and launching the study we want at that time. So we really haven't lost much. We hoped to get a win now so it's disappointing, BUT we can get our

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January 23 Rally. Photo by Ken Allard

win in March. So long as we all stick together and keep the pressure on.

Council also agreed on some language about having GWP come back with a smaller gas alternative coupled with storage or other renewables. They were already working on this. Our guess is they'll come back with a 200 MW plant (vs. 250 MW in the original plan) plus some solar and storage. But this will still be 200 MW too much. Or at least too much until they've turned over every stone to see if we can replace the old plant without new gas. That's our goal - get an unbiased matrix of the options that can get us to a clean energy replacement.

It was still a big win - maybe a half win - in that we got Council to realize people are watching very closely now. And the union men who showed up realized that we want jobs for them at an energy source that won't be outdated and banned by the State soon. This fight is not a one night battle. We will just have to come out again in bigger numbers next time to support Zareh and convince two other Council members to back his motion with their votes. And we know who they are and will remember who was on the right side of history and who wasn't.

In the meantime, give Councilmember Sinanyan your love and tell me we appreciate what he's doing. zsinyan@glendaleca.gov

Help Save Paper

Get your Verdugo Views by email

See pictures in full color. Use the search feature (Requires Acrobat Reader)

Send an email to Verdugo Hills Group:
VerdugoHillsGroup@gmail.com

Grayson Power Plant Talking Points in Council:

By Susana Reyes

Good evening
I'm Susana Reyes, a resident of our beautiful city of Glendale since 1987.

I am the Vice-President of the Sierra Club – the nation's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization with more than 3 million members and supporters. We are here to support and add to the voices of our residents and communities calling for Glendale leaders to move away from dirty fossil fuels and towards a clean energy economy that benefits all of us.

Today, clean energy is just as if not cheaper than gas. Why not explore alternatives? Now is the time to evaluate them.

Building a gas plant in beautiful Glendale is out of step with where the state is going and will ultimately stick the community with a polluting gas plant it does not need and does not want.

As energy storage becomes cheaper, it can store the power from solar and wind when the sun isn't shining and the wind isn't blowing.

Energy efficiency upgrades are reducing the need to build expensive power plants the communities get stuck paying off for decades.

Across the state, communities are saying no to building gas plants in their backyard because, regardless of what the industry tells you, these plants are dirtier, more expensive and carry great risks to our energy bills than clean energy.

The Grayson proposal would increase emissions and particulates that would adversely affect the health of our children at Benjamin Franklin Elementary, Mark Keppel Elementary, the Disney Children's Center as well as the elderly residents of nearby Pelanconi Estates. Our most vulnerable populations in Glendale and in the surrounding areas will be impacted. Think about asthma incidents and the many trips to the ER because of poor air quality.

The area around Grayson Power Plant is considered at the top of the most polluted areas according to the

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Cal Enviro screen. The poor air quality is responsible for lower birth weights in our city.

Now is not the time to build this gas plant. We must look at what clean energy can do for our community before jumping into building an expensive gas plant that contributes to climate change.

Let me be clear. This is not a JOBS versus the ENVIRONMENT issue. We are tired of that rhetoric. We are tired of being the bad guys because WE ARE NOT. We care about jobs, green jobs that can support families and benefit our communities through clean energy investments, that everyone can be proud of. There are great models for how to link clean energy investment to career pathways for Glendale residents and something I hope we can build on. The only thing that has been proven to work is strong progressive coalition building between labor and environmental groups that emphasizes grassroots and community input. Putting environmental concerns and the jobs in opposition to one another in this way is as counterproductive as it is offensive.

We respectfully ask you, Glendale City Council members, and GWP to put this gas plant project on hold and conduct a review of clean energy alternatives. We will work with you on potential solutions and alternatives. Given the rapid pace of innovation in clean energy solutions like energy storage and rooftop solar, new dirty and expensive gas plants are very hard to justify. Your constituents, like me, our families, and the community organizations invested in Glendale will continue to show up at meetings, signing petitions, and writing letters to tell you to let clean energy compete. By hitting the PAUSE button, collectively, all of us, will have taken a great first step toward smart energy investments that save customers money, ensure the lights stay on, and protect our health and the environment. We look forward to continuing to work with GWP and urge them to conduct the study transparently and timely.

Note: These were the notes Susan used for her presentation at the February 6 Glendale City Council meeting.



Pro-Natural-Gas-Plant, Anti-Environmental OpEd Draws Response

By Michael Beck

On February 10, the Glendale News Press printed an opinion piece singing the praises of the Grayson Expansion and belittling the opposition led by the Glendale Environmental Coalition, which the Sierra Club is working closely with. Here's the letter to the editor that I fired off in response:

Sawiskas' OpEd piece slickly promotes the Grayson Expansion as the only possible replacement for Glendale's obsolete power plant. But his argument suffers from the very first because it demonizes the opposition as "fear-mongering" and "zero-tolerance," never a good tactic if one wishes to come across as reasonable and balanced.

Why is the opposition upset about the Grayson Expansion? Well, first off, the entire 5000-page proposal plus EIR was written by the very two entities that designed the project. No independent studies of the potential for renewables made it into this proposal or Sawiskas' defense of it.

Second, they ignore the true danger of global warming, which Governor Brown calls the greatest existential threat of our times, and which the global scientific community views with utter alarm. If this alarm is "fear-mongering," then I'll go with the scientists and not with front people for the fossil fuel industry. These are but two of at least a dozen major unaddressed problems with the Grayson Expansion. The opposition's plea that this plan be put on hold pending an independent assessment is a far cry from "zero-tolerance" radicalism.

The Elephant in the Rooms

by Carol Henning

In this case the elephant is Billy, the Asian elephant at the L.A. Zoo in Griffith Park. His rooms are enclosures, mostly outdoors. They are beautifully landscaped with pools, waterfalls, tree groves, hills and grasses. Billy and his three female colleagues walk on a surface of soft river sand, which is tilled so it won't become compacted. Lovely though it is, the zoo's 6.56 acres of habitat for

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the elephants is divided up into about four sections. The elephants cannot get from one portion of their zoo home to another unless a keeper gives them access.

It is a bit like being confined to a suite of rooms at a well-appointed resort hotel where only the hotel staff has the keys to the rooms. Is the situation a kind of house arrest for Billy, Jewel, Tina and Shaunzi?

“Captivity is a terrible existence for any intelligent, self-aware species, which the undisputed evidence shows elephants are,” said L.A. Superior Court Judge John L. Segal in a 2012 decision. Johann Hari, in his 2018 book, *Lost Connections*, writes that, “We know now from over a century of observing animals in captivity that when they are deprived of their natural habitat, they will often develop symptoms that look like extreme forms of despair. Parrots will rip their own feathers out. Horses will start unstopably swaying. Elephants will start to grind their tusks—their source of strength and pride in the wild—against the walls of their cells until they are gnarled stumps....None of these species ever behave this way in the wild.”

It would be wonderful if elephants could survive and thrive in the wild, but the wild Asian elephant population has declined 50 percent over the last three generations. Like most countries, Malaysia, whence comes Billy, has experienced devastating habitat loss in recent decades. Adding to this the threat of poachers seeking elephant tusks for the ivory market, one wonders what Billy’s chances of survival would have been had he stayed in his native country.

Asian elephants are the continent’s largest terrestrial mammals. They can reach 21 feet in length, up to 11,000 pounds in weight and 8.9 feet in height (at the shoulder). Most Asian male elephants have tusks. Female elephants have reduced tusks called “tushes.” (These are actually short second incisors that just stick out beyond the upper lip.) There are three subspecies of Asian elephant. There is also a Borneo pygmy elephant, which could be a separate subspecies. Adult males usually live alone.

Elephants have large brains, well-developed self-awareness, and the ability to use tools. They are herbivores who consume about 300 pounds of food each day. In some parts of Asia, elephants are used as work animals for lifting and carrying heavy loads and for

transporting humans. (My husband and I rode through a forest in southern Nepal on elephant-back.) Often the training of working elephants involves practices that seem harsh and cruel. An Asian elephant can survive 60 years in the wild but not many of them do. The Asian elephant is restricted to 15 percent of its original range and is classified as endangered.

“For 1.8 million visitors to the L.A. Zoo each year, they [Billy and the three ladies] are ambassadors for their species, which is facing extinction in the wild,” claims a zoo card featuring a photo of Billy, trunk raised and tongue showing. Google Asian elephants and his picture will appear. This handsome 32-year-old elephant has been the subject of an ongoing controversy involving animal activists, zoo staff, lawmakers and zoologists. The L.A. Zoo has been the target of a long-running lawsuit over the care of Billy and other elephants.

Actor Robert Culp and real estate agent Aaron Leider filed a taxpayer lawsuit in 2007 “in an effort to halt construction of a new elephant exhibit and stop the zoo from keeping elephants on the grounds,” writes Dakota Smith in the *Los Angeles Times* (latimes.com, Jan. 23, 2018). In his 2012 decision in the 2007 case, Judge Segal, who now serves on the California Court of Appeals, criticized the zoo for its treatment of the elephants. A *Times* article (July 24, 2012) by Carla Hall, called the Judge’s ruling “a stunning rebuke of L.A. Zoo officials who insist the new elephant exhibit offers state-of-the-art management of the elephants.” Segal issued an injunction in 2012 ordering the zoo to exercise its then three Asian elephants at least two hours a day. The court order was overturned by the California Supreme Court, which ruled that “taxpayers who obtained an injunction against the L.A. Zoo used the wrong legal vehicle to obtain results.” Nonetheless, zoo officials say they continue to follow the order of the lower court even though it is no longer legally enforceable.

The zoo staff members seem sincere about their concern for the welfare of their elephants. Keepers and docents care deeply about animals—their survival in the wild and their well-being in captivity. L.A. Zoo Director John Lewis says, “Billy and the girls get excellent care. Their caretakers have been with them for decades, and we know from their health assessments that they are in

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good shape.” (quoted by Dakota Smith, latimes.com, Jan. 23, 2018).

On its website, the zoo points out that their staff “work very hard to ensure that they [the elephants] are physically and mentally active.” The website goes on to say that the elephants benefit from the work of the L.A. Zoo’s research team and from animal care innovations and technologies shared among institutions accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). The zoo defends the size of their new elephant habitat. “As the largest habitat in the history of the L.A. Zoo, Elephants of Asia exceeds the standards of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.” The elephant habitat was divided into “large corrals,” they explain, “by design, allowing for optimal flexibility in the use of space. With the system of corrals, the elephants are able to move from area to area throughout the day, which maximizes their opportunities for enrichment and exercise.” (But they cannot move around at will.)

Many years ago, when I was an L.A. Zoo member, I was invited to join a tour of the zoo at night. We were told that a treat awaited us—a look at the elephants. Most of the tour was interesting and encouraging. The peek at the elephants was not. They looked like members of a chain gang. My memory might not be wholly accurate. It was a long time ago. Mostly, I remember that I felt sad. Perhaps this is an impression shared by many animal lovers, especially when they see large, intelligent, sensitive animals in this predicament. That said, any of us who visits zoos from time to time can see that most of them have come a long way since the days when animals were exhibited in fenced enclosures with concrete floors, little room to move around and often no place to get away from the stares, sometimes taunts, of humans.

Certainly the L.A. Zoo has been working hard to provide attractive, comfortable and stimulating habitat for its animals. No less an expert than Jane Goodall was consulted about the design of the new chimpanzee exhibit. The L.A. Zoo also participates in many species survival programs. Its success, together with the San Diego Zoo, in raising and releasing California Condors brought these birds back from the brink of extinction. The zoo also helped to save the Arabian Oryx, many of which have been returned to their native habitat.

We Sierra Club members work to protect the environment and we know that, as our species continues to destroy Mother Earth and to decimate habitat that wildlife needs to live, zoos may be the only means of ensuring the survival of many non-human species. The L.A. Zoo is a member of the AZA Asian elephant Species Survival Plan. Billy doesn’t currently have a potential mating partner at the zoo. Tina and Jewel are past reproduction age. However, Billy’s genetics are very important to the population of Asian elephants currently in zoos.

The L.A. Zoo is accredited by the AZA, an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to conservation, education and science. “Fewer than 10 percent of the 2,800 wildlife exhibitors licensed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture under the Animal Welfare Act meet the more comprehensive standards of AZA accreditation,” says the zoo website. Zoo staff are proud of this, and their pride and concern has led them to state: “Other people—who lack an understanding of the expertise and dedication that the daily care of elephants demands—are seeking to take animal care decisions out of the hands of highly qualified zoo professionals who have committed their lives to preserving and protecting the species.”

And who are those “other people”? Enter a group of celebrities, animal activists and two members of the Los Angeles City Council. Paul Koretz and Mitch O’Farrell of the City Council Arts, Entertainment, Parks and River Committee have put forward a motion—CC motion #17-0453—which states: “Billy has long since earned an opportunity to live free of doubts about the adequacy of his living situation. Relocating him to a sanctuary is the solution and there are indications that philanthropy may be available to underwrite it....” Zoo spokespeople argue that, “Sanctuaries simply do not have the staff, resources or facilities to provide the daily care, exercise and mental stimulation that Billy and all our elephants receive at the L.A. Zoo.”

Enter Yours Truly. I was approached by a friend who is an L.A. Zoo docent and by my sister, who is also a docent there. They know I have worked with Paul Koretz on the Angeles Chapter L.A. County Political Committee and that I have had some contact

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with Mitch O'Farrell's office. Paul Koretz has long been known for his advocacy of animal welfare. He has introduced many animal-friendly bills in the L.A. City Council. Councilmember O'Farrell has co-sponsored some of these bills. Councilmember Koretz instigated a successful campaign for an L.A. City ban on bull hooks and other tools that inflict pain on elephants. The state later adopted that policy. The legislation was opposed by representatives of circuses.

After visiting Billy at the zoo and talking with docents, I emailed Koretz and he responded promptly. In my email I echoed the zoo staff's arguments. The docents who spoke to me seemed to think that Koretz and O'Farrell just didn't understand the situation. But Koretz's answer suggested that they do understand. He mentioned all the testimony from 2012. Koretz means no slight to zoo staff. He mainly argues that Billy has too small a space. Elephants often walk long distances in the wild. At the zoo he has a small space, made smaller by dividing it up. When he isn't engaged by his keepers, Koretz observes, he stands around bobbing his head and moving side to side, "a sign of mental health problems according to the experts." One of the features of such disputes is dueling experts. The zoo claims that, "Research has shown that the head bobbing is most often anticipatory in nature," similar to tapping one's foot. To minimize the head bobbing the animal care staff breaks up Billy's routine every day. The behavior is not detrimental to his physical or psychological health, says the zoo. (But is it a symptom of boredom?) Koretz and others point out that, when Ruby the elephant was moved to a sanctuary from the zoo, she stopped exhibiting similar behavior and became a leader of a herd. There is a million-acre sanctuary in Cambodia,

says Koretz, where Billy could have plenty of room to roam and live a more normal elephant life. (Would he be safe there?)

People on each side of the dispute think they know best, or that their experts know best. In child custody disputes the generally prevailing standard is the best interest of the child. Courts are required to consider and evaluate such factors as mental and physical health, the length of time the child has lived in a stable, satisfactory environment and the desirability of continuity, and the reasonable preference of the child. Billy has lived at the L.A. Zoo for 28 of his 32 years. Would a move after so much time upset, even traumatize, him? It would be nice to dodge the humans' debate about who knows best and ask Billy what he would like. If only we could find someone who speaks Elephant.

Meanwhile, let us conclude this discussion with a quote from Judge Segal: "This case raises the question of whether the recreational or perhaps educational needs of one intelligent mammal species outweigh the physical and emotional, if not survival, needs of another. Existing California law does not answer that question."

Italian Holiday at Harwood Lodge

Sat-Sun, June 2-3, 2018

**It is a long trip to the Italian Alps,
but Harwood Lodge is right in our backyard!**

Celebrate the Festa della Repubblica which marks the birth and unification of the Italian Republic.

Enjoy a selection of easy to strenuous activities or just sit and enjoy the clean crisp mountain air. Listen to Italian music. Eat Italian food.

Stay in the dorms (separate male and female) or camp out under the stars.

Price includes Sat happy hour, dinner, and Sunday breakfast.

\$40 SC members/\$50 non-members/\$30 children under 12.

To sign up, send names of all participants, email or 2 sase, check (made out to Verdugo Hills, Sierra Club), interest in rideshare to

**Leader: David F Eisenberg
501 W Glenoaks Blvd #824**

Glendale, CA 91202

Co-Leaders: Delphine Trowbridge, Annette Kargodorian.

ACTIVITIES

.March 5 Monday

Monthly Meeting

Bruce Hale presents 'Travel Adventure in the Himalayas.' Glimpse into the Kingdom of Bhutan and see what trekking around the base of Annapurna is like. Everyone welcome at 7 for Social Hour. Meeting starts at 7:30 PM. Meet at the Library in their community room. (2809 Foothill Blvd., La Crescenta). Enter from the back-parking lot. Handicapped accessible from the back.

March 12 Monday

Monday Hike (Note new day)

Easy paced hike in the Verdugo Mountains. Hike from the Nature Center to the Mountainway trail (1500' gain) to the picnic table. Great views. Wear lug sole shoes, bring water and \$\$ for optional lunch. Meet 10 am at Nature Center, 2300 Walnut Ave, Burbank. Ldrs: Bruce Hale, Delphine Trowbridge

April 2 Monday

Monthly Meeting

Panama: Come see Patrick and Gabrielle Reynolds' beautiful slide show featuring a unique area of western Panama, and its daily life as well as flora, fauna, and indigenous culture. The Reynolds lived in this part of Panama, centered around Boquete for a year and half and are definitely experts on the area and how to make your retirement dollar go farther in this warm community of expats. Everyone is welcome at 7:00 for social time and refreshments. The meeting begins as 7:30 in the auditorium of the La Crescenta Library (2809 Foothill Blvd., La Crescenta). There is plenty of parking, enter in back. Handicapped accessible.

April 9 Monday

Monday hike

Silver Lake: Join the Verdugo Hills Group for a walk around Silver Lake. See the Silver Lake and Ivanhoe Reservoirs. Enjoy seeing this interesting area. Wear comfortable shoes. Bring \$ for lunch. Heavy rain or excessive heat (90+) cancels. Meet at the Verdugo Hills rideshare point at 9:15 or 10:00 at the Silver Lake Recreation Center (which has bathrooms and nearby street parking) 1850 W. Silver Lake Dr. Ldrs: Evelyn Alexander, Delphine Trowbridge, Bruce Hale, Carol Henning.

April 20-22 Friday-Sunday Natural Science, Pasadena Group, Camera Committee, Verdugo Hills O: Owens Lake Exploration Friday-Sunday, April 20-22

The Dust and the Birds Have Settled on Owens Lake: World class wildlife migrating between hemispheres has replaced the worst dust source in America. Collaboration has replaced confrontation. In the Deepest Valley (Owens Valley), learn the human history as well as the natural history. Appreciate the tools that shape our Earth - earthquakes, glaciation and vulcanism. Understand the chronology of human history - early peoples, the Paiute, the settlers, miners and finally Los Angeles. Experience all of this in a valley of 3,000 feet elevation surrounded by the 14,00-foot peaks of the Mt. Whitney Crest. We'll camp at Diaz Lake Campground in Lone Pine and drive to locations around Owens Lake and the nearby hills. Cost of \$25 includes two nights at the campground and the naturalist fee for Mike Prather, Sierra Club leader and long-time activist in the Owens Valley. Motels are available in Lone Pine, but you must make your own arrangements; cost and reservation details remain the same. This trip satisfies two days for the Environmental Awareness requirement for prospective I-rated leaders. Reserve a place by sending your contact information, including your email address, and a check for \$25 made out to the Natural Science Section to Reservationist Ginny Heringer, 245 San Miguel Road, Pasadena, CA 91105. Leaders Judy Anderson, Carole Scurlock, and Ginny Heringer.

CST #2087766-40: Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.

All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read the Liability Waiver before you choose to participate on an outing, please go to: sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/ or contact the Outings Department at 415-977-5528 for a printed version.

ACTIVITIES

April 28 Saturday

Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Gardens

Tour Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Gardens during their annual wildflower festival. Enjoy the beauty of this garden dedicated to Native California Plants, followed by a tour of the nearby Sam Maloof Foundation. The home and gardens of this world famous furniture designer are listed on the National Historic Register. Send \$18. (seniors) or \$24 (adults) and a SASE/email to Evelyn Alexander. Wear comfortable shoes, bring \$ for lunch. Heavy rain cancels. Meet at the Verdugo Hills Rideshare at 8:45 or Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Gardens (1500 N. College Ave., Claremont) at 9:45. Ldrs: Evelyn Alexander, Bruce Hale

May 6 Sunday

Angeles Chapter Awards Banquet

Verdugo Hills has 2 awardees. Reserve your place at a Verdugo Hills table by emailing David Eisenberg, then sending \$40 (Payable Verdugo Hills Group) to David Eisenberg.

May 7 Monday

Monthly Meeting

Ten Tips for Better Wildlife Photography is the title and the subject of the program for the Verdugo Hills monthly meeting. Award winning photographer Karen Schuenemann will discuss ways each of us can improve our photos. Based on ten years of mistakes and experience she has learned ways to compose and improve images so that the picture that she wants to see is the one that she will winds up with. Meeting starts at 7:30 PM. Meet in the Library community room (2809 Foothill Blvd., La Crescenta). Enter from rear.

June 2-3 Sat-Sun

Italian Holiday at Harwood Lodge

It is a long trip to the Italian Alps, but Harwood Lodge is right in our backyard. Celebrate the Festa della Repubblica which marks the birth and unification of the Italian Republic. Enjoy a selection of easy to strenuous activities or just sit and enjoy the clean crisp mountain air. Listen to Italian music. Eat Italian food. Stay in the dorms (separate male and female) or camp out under the stars. Price includes Sat happy hour, dinner, and Sunday breakfast. \$40 SC members/\$50 non-members/\$30 children under 12. Send names of all participants, email or 2 sase, check (made out to Verdugo Hills, Sierra Club), interest in rideshare to Leader: David F Eisenberg, Co-Leaders: Delphine Trowbridge, Annette Kargodorian.

We are planning a summer camp at Jalama Beach near Lompoc. Stay tuned for more information.

THE LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM is very important to Sierra Club because it allows us to have safe trips and activities. We always need new leaders. To become a leader, you must have current Sierra Club membership, participate on five SC trips or hikes, attend an all-day LTP Seminar, complete Red Cross Standard/Basic First Aid and satisfactory completion of a provisional outing. There are several levels: O-1 applies to uncomplicated outings such as single-day hikes on trails and O-2 applies to overnight, away-from-the-car outings on trail. If you are interested contact Bruce Hale, Outings Chair.

Volunteers Needed

Verdugo Hills Group is always looking for new people for our Management Committee.

We are looking for hike leaders, event planners/leaders, committee members, etc.

If you would like to help in directing our wonderful group, please talk to our membership chair,

JUDY ANDERSON ()

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All links are live. You can email leaders or visit websites by clicking on a link.

Email and Phone info is not available in the web version to protect privacy.



To contact leaders or for more information on our Group, email VerdugoHillsGroup@gmail.com.

VERDUGO VIEWS

Meetings

Verdugo Hills meets first Monday of each month except July and January. Meetings are located at the La Crescenta Library (2809 Foothill Blvd—Enter in the back). Social Hour: 7 pm, Meeting: 7:30

Web Page

angeles.sierraclub.org/verdugo

Support Committee

(Directory of Support Committee and Leaders is on inside back page.)

Delphine Trowbridge.....Chair/Mailing

David F Eisenberg.....Vice Chair/Newsletter Editor

Carol Henning.....Co-Conservation/
Chapter Delegate

Charlotte FeitshansSecretary/
Alternate Chapter Delegate

Michael Beck.....Climate Change/Hospitality

Annette KargodorianTreasurer

Judy AndersonMembership/Treas Asst/
Publicity

Gene & Terry PaulinPolitical Advisor

Bruce Hale.....Outings

Marlene VellaAt-Large

Susana ReyesPolitical

Garen Yegparian.....Political Compliance

Evelyn AlexanderPrograms

Dotty & Mike Sandford.....Fundraising

Lucile Davis.....Social Secretary

Richard Castro.....Webmaster

Conservation Round Table

Carol Henning, Michael Beck, Gene Paulin, Evelyn Alexander, Delphine Trowbridge, Judy Anderson, Marlene Vella, Charlotte Feitshans


Submission Instructions

Deadlines are the 15th of even numbered months (Feb, Apr, June, Aug, Oct, Dec).

Send stories by email (preferably) to:


Send pictures by email at full resolution. Email if you wish to make arrangements to scan a picture

Membership



Don't Get Left Out in the Cold... Join Us!

Sierra Club Outings are a terrific way to meet new people and enjoy the great outdoors. Whatever your interests - hiking, canoeing or birdwatching - there is an outing for everyone. If you are new to the area, let your local Chapter or Group give you the lay of the land. Join today and become part of America's largest environmental organization offering the most enjoyable outings.



Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

YES! I would like to give a gift membership to:

Gift Recipient _____

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Check enclosed. Please make payable to Sierra Club


Please charge my: Visa Mastercard AMEX

Cardholder Name _____ Exp. Date ____ / ____

Card Number _____ Signature _____

Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
Special Offer	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 15	N/A
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 49
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35


Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!



Contributions, gifts & dues to Sierra Club are tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$ 7.50 for a subscription to SIERRA magazine and \$ 1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

Enclose a check and mail to: Sierra Club, PO Box 421041, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041 or visit our website: www.sierraclub.org

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