



Butte, Glenn, Lassen, Plumas & Tehama Counties

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Yahi Summer 2018 Outings and Events
Coordinated by Alan Mendoza

www.sierraclub.org/mother-lode/yahi/outings

Tiny Houses
By Annette Carey, Yahi ExCom



Opportunity Village house, Eugene, Oregon

Everyone has noticed the increasing numbers of homeless people that are impacting our community and many wish the problem would just “go away.” But the problem rather than going away seems to be increasing. Butte County’s homeless population grew from 1,422 to 1,983 between 2015 and 2017.

It is a problem that must be addressed and hopefully, the example of Opportunity Village in Eugene, Oregon, (*see at <https://www.squareonevillages.org/opportunity>*) will inspire our city to go ahead with a similar program that allows the homeless a temporary structure of some 60 to 80 feet to call their own. CHAT proposes 33 tiny houses and the residents pay about \$160 per month from their resources.

Activist Charles Withuhn has been partnering with CHAT to already begin building these structures but there still is a big obstacle to overcome, i.e., where to put the structures. Two sites have been suggested. One suggestion was to be a part of the new homeless services near the Torres Shelter and the other was the plot of land owned by the city at the corner of Humboldt Avenue and Bruce Road.

Marysville faced a similar problem and located their 14Forward community in what they considered to be the perfect spot because it was near the community but “not right in your face.” Our community would certainly like to find a similar location. They do not want to upset individuals in a neighborhood by situating homeless people there. But certainly the people who must live in a small community like Simplicity Village need bus services available to them and stores within walking distance.



See a video of a proposal: <http://krctrv.com/news/butte-county/the-chico-housing-action-team-proposing-a-village-for-the-homeless-1>

Source: KRCR News Channel: "The Chico Housing Action Team Proposes a Village for the Homeless"

The problem is definitely not going away so I for one appreciate all the thought and suggestions that Charles and others in our community have put into this along with their hard work in building the structures. I would hope that people will join them to see how they too can help the homeless.

Our county needs to be as forward thinking as Marysville and Eugene, Oregon, in order to solve the last hurdle of location for our Simplicity Village. Contact Chico City Council, Butte Co. Board of Supervisors, the downtown Business Council, CHAT, or the Housing Authority to express

your ideas on where the tiny houses can be located. You will be helping Chico and the homeless.

To follow this project: <https://www.facebook.com/chicohousingactionteam/>

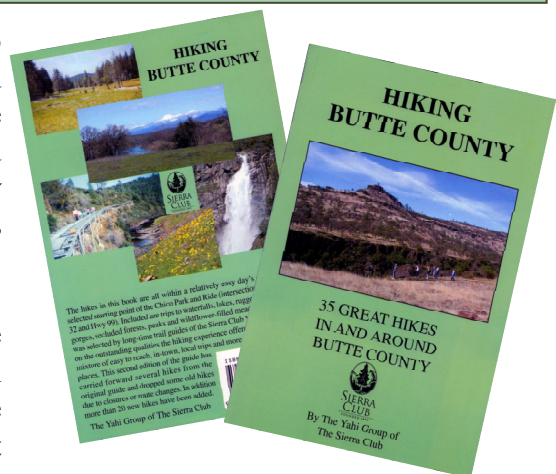
For more information see:

- <https://www.newsreview.com/chico/tiny-houses-big-potential/content?oid=25516904>
- <https://theorion.com/65440/news/tiny-house-homeless-village-in-progress/>
- <http://www.actionnewsnow.com/content/news/8th-Graders-Build-a--479557093.html>
- <http://www.chicoer.com/opinion/20180224/letter-simplicity-village-can-work-for-chico>
- <http://chicosol.org/tag/simplicity-village/>
- <http://pswf.net/simplicity/index-original.html>

Hiking Butte County

Hiking Butte County is a wonderful field guide to hikes in and around Butte County. It was assembled by the outings leaders in the Yahi Group under the direction of Alan Mendoza. In it you will find descriptions directions, distances and difficulty information for 35 hikes. This is the only book of its type for this area.

You can purchase it for \$11.95 at Trailside Adventures in Paradise and in Chico at Mountain Sports and Lyons Books. Or you can order one directly from Alan for \$10 plus shipping. Contact Alan Mendoza, 891-8789 or ajmendoza@prodigy.net.



Statewide Sierra Club Meeting about Climate Change

By Grace Marvin, Yahi Conservation Chair

What are we doing to address climate change? That was the major topic of the May 2018 statewide (plus Nevada) meetings of the CNRCC (Ca-NV Regional Conservation committee) held in San Luis Obispo. An impressive set of presentations and speakers made for an outstanding conference.

According to the International Panel on Climate Change, we can only save our planet by limiting global warming. Since we have not been decreasing our GHG (Greenhouse Gases) sufficiently, we now have only until 2034 to reduce our emissions to zero. As Dr. Jim Stewart stated at the conference, we have a climate emergency! One earth shaking implication: we cannot *ever* start using 84% of fossil fuels that are still in the ground; otherwise, the world continues heading to a 4°C heat increase. My research finding from the World Bank (in *Green Facts*) lists what many of us have already seen: the “consequences of an increase of the global earth temperature of 4°C are:

- the inundation of coastal cities
- increasing risks for food production potentially leading to higher malnutrition rates
- many dry regions becoming dryer and wet regions wetter
- unprecedented heat waves in many regions, especially in the tropics; (WE might add the Mideast) substantially exacerbated water scarcity in many regions
- increased frequency of high-intensity tropical cyclones;
- irreversible loss of biodiversity, including coral reef systems

On a more local, or even personal level, we can promote Sierra Club recommendations that lead to less greenhouse gas, such as:

1. Supporting sustainable communities, e.g., in housing, landscapes, transportation, water use (its scarcity often is related to global warming, e.g., evaporation)
2. Eating less meat, e.g., methane producing cows, while increasing habitat for wildlife
3. Promoting climate education in all high schools
4. Regarding material possessions: ”Reduce, Reuse Recycle.” After all, energy is used to create much of our “stuff”
5. Substantially reducing pollution – especially excessive in disadvantaged communities, which is related to promoting environmental justice
6. Advancing energy programs in our communities, called “Community Choice Energy;” such programs are already being implemented in many CA communities and are being considered in Butte County
7. Encouraging cities and counties to push beyond state building codes to increase energy efficiency in choosing building materials and in the design of structures and landscapes
8. Requiring local and state agencies to use low GHG products, while maximizing use of clean energy

The Sierra Club Energy Committee maintains that people cannot rely only on current methods of being sustainable. Instead, some of the major goals of the Sierra Club's Energy Committee directs our country/countries to;

1. Specifically, reduce GHG (Greenhouse Gas) Emission levels (at least 40% below 1990

- levels) and to reduce natural gas and petroleum use -- by at least 50% each
2. Aim for at least 50 % of electricity being renewable, and doubling the amount of energy efficiency in current buildings
 3. Advance sustainability on farms and in forests, including increasing carbon sequestration methods-- such as capturing carbon from the atmosphere in the soil – and by planting and maintaining huge numbers of forests. A relatively new proposal for sequestration is planting seaweed in oceans; not only does it remove CO2 but there is there plenty of space for it in our oceans. Seaweed is very economical and does not require fresh water. (From *60 Minutes*: kelp is a great source of food, too.)
 4. Learn about and promote other new ways for individuals and communities to adapt to our inevitably climate changed environment

We also learned from several other CNRCC committees about how climate change is involved in their special areas of interest. Briefly mentioned here are relevant points from three of them:

The **Coastal Committee** provided much data showing that global warming is increasing the rise in sea levels. We don't need to look just to melting icecaps in Greenland and Antarctica. Even the SF Bay area is having related flooding issues, while many across the U.S. Coasts and the world are facing losses of entire communities to permanent flooding.

The **Water Committee** (of which this water novice is a member) pointed out results of warmer temperatures. For example, more evaporation is decreasing the amount of unsalted water (in rivers, streams, lakes, and canals). Decreasing snow pack also means much less water per capita. These losses are aggravated by growth in populations. While this is devastating in Africa, we even see the dangers here, *e.g.*, L.A. is expected to increase in population by 5 million by 2030. But unlike what some dam proponents maintain, there is not enough storage space in proposed dams for the doubling of CA's water needs. Instead we ought to preserve the sources of water by maintaining and increasing riparian habitat, restoring the Delta, and allowing far more water seepage into the ground. After all, groundwater storage is substantially less costly than building and maintaining dams. DWR 's Oroville Dam disaster last year shows, however, that we should better maintain and repair the dams already existing. Moreover, we need to significantly reduce (hugely) wasteful energy drilling and agricultural practices while limiting urban water use and promoting excellent methods for recycling water.

From the **Forest and Biomass Committees**, we learned that forests can sequester half of the carbon we humans produce (and oceans remove almost as much). The 102 million dead trees we have in California should not be delivered to “biomass” plants, since incineration contributes to the build up of many pollutants in our air. Instead, we must realize that dead trees are no more likely to burn than live trees, and that dead trees provide much ecological value, such as, contributing to the regeneration of forests. Forest growth, after all, is far more beneficial to fighting global warming than is removal of trees for biomass, lumber, or corporate farms. Moreover, we must recognize that fires in or near wilderness areas are often are the result of placing homes in fire prone areas, *e.g.*, Santa Rosa, where the dangers of fire have long been known. We should instead build in less dangerous areas, and protect forests and other wildlife --while recognizing that even dead trees are important for the regeneration of life within forests.

The Politics Chair: A Brief Bio, Then — What Can We Do??

By Ed Schilling, Political Chair

The first time I remember being obsessed with what had been dubbed the “greenhouse effect” was in the early 1990’s. And the only thing I could think to do about this slow moving global disaster was to write about it. It was in that spirit that I signed up for a class I’d heard about at Sonoma State University led by Carl Jensen, founder of Project Censored. I’d received my MA in English over ten years earlier. Here was a chance to finally do something with my degree. Maybe I’d also learn more about investigative journalism.

The article I wrote for Carl Jensen’s class, called *The Suppression of Ideas by the Auto and Oil Industry*, got more traction than I ever imagined. It was published in a local paper, then picked up by *The Earth Island Journal*, which also sold a twenty-page booklet that I’d written on the subject through the magazine. On top of all that, I’d made it to the Project Censored top twenty-five most censored stories the following year in 1992. (#18) I also converted an old Honda Civic to electric at that time.

In 1993 I moved up to Chico to be closer to my Mother, who had retired in Paradise, and was getting on in years. I sold the electric car. I returned to school at Chico State and tried once again to dust off that old MA in English and make use of it, eventually receiving a TESL/EFL certificate. Between ’93-’95 I was also editor of the local Yahi Group newsletter. The idea for editing a booklet, called *Yahi Trail Guide*, a guide to local hikes, came out of my previous booklet experience. And now we have an even better version, *Hiking Butte County*, edited by Alan Mendoza.

In the late 1990’s I lived in Ecuador, taught English in two Universities, a grammar school, and some language schools. I used that experience to finally land a job at Butte College in 2002 where I taught basic writing courses in both the English Department and LEAD (Language Education and Development) for six years as a part-timer. After my job fizzled in 2008, my wife started working at Enloe and has been there since, and my son will go to CSUC next year. Time doesn’t fly, it goes by in a blink.

In recent years I’ve fixed up and sold our old mobile home, written a novel, taken classes, and taken care of the household. Much of my life was spent driving a taxi, or the airporter, or being a courier, or doing various jobs from A to Z to support my writing habit. (a good habit!) I like writing fiction, yet actually publishing something besides booklets is difficult. So, another booklet?

The slow moving global disaster of climate change is *now* upon us, full force. James Hansen warned about it over thirty years ago. At that time, he also accurately predicted an unprecedented worldwide refugee crisis as a result. In California, if your house burns down in Santa Rosa or Ventura or Santa Barbara, you can be homeless, especially if you’re a renter. In Oroville, we came close to a dam breaking, some serious flooding, and a lot of people fleeing their homes, some never to return. In Syria, the results are far worse. It’s claimed that one reason the war in Syria started was because of climate change. People moved from an inhospitable hot desert into the city, and tensions began. Today, Syrian refugees keep pouring out.

When a position opened up for Politics Chair for our Sierra Club Yahi Group, I decided to take it. One thought was that I could use the position to lend credibility to fighting climate deniers like Doug La Malfa. Another idea might be to get younger people involved in the Sierra Club through designing a trail guide app, or editing another booklet, this time with essays on mitigating the effects of climate. How about a booklet called “Suppression of Ideas” with a picture of Oroville dam about ready to break on the cover? Essays on climate change of course, or how to remove CO2 from the atmosphere. Anyone interested could contribute. Proceeds to go to projects like Simplicity Village, or?

I view Politics Chair as a pretty wide-open position, so anyone that has ideas they’d like to share on what they’d like to see happen, or how they could contribute—please let me know. You can email me at edschilling65@gmail.com .



River Watcher:
A Locust Tree Along the River
By Rex Burress, The River Watcher



Down by the riverside, near Bedrock Park, snuggled along the shore, is a grove of locust trees that stand stark and somber during the winter, but burst to life come spring with fragrant white blossoms and new deciduous leaves. The dozen trees have stood together like alien visitors from outer space for years. Since they are not native to California, the seeds had to be planted by some means to account for their presence. I had called them commonly used “honey locust,” but in reviewing locust history, I discovered that two major species are native to only the eastern USA, but have been introduced all over the world.

Armed with new information, I scurried down to examine the identification of the locals, and to my surprise, nearly all of the ragged trees were dead! Only a small section of a tree had new growth, and even it had fallen against the bank, the accessible crown dry and twiggy with great numbers of last year's dark seed pods hanging like strips of dried salmon. The pods had cracked open revealing some brown seeds still clinging to their mother. I suspect that last year's massive flood had affected their root structure, as it is stated the tree is resistant to rot and disease, and one of the hardest woods in the world, once made into nails to hold ships together.

Most importantly, I found the species to be Black Locust, (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), instead of Honey Locust, (*Gleditsia triacanthos*), although the two are quite similar. Both have fragrant, pea-family blossoms, but the black locust flowers are very white with a yellow blotch in the middle, and most revealing are two sharp thorns at each leaf base. A locust leaf is pinnately compound, composed of a number of leaflets like black walnut. *Gleditsia* is thornier on the trunk. Black locust also has toxic leaves, bark, and roots, but the seeds and blossoms are edible. A locust tree was what launched John Muir into a botanical life searching for plants and the wonders of nature. At the University of Wisconsin, a fellow student was talking to him about pea-family species, indicating that the locust and the sweet pea were in the same family. Muir was so struck in realizing that revelation that he dashed off into the fields, examining blossoms, and rejoicing over his new-found discovery. He particularly found trees fascinating, fighting for

redwoods in California, and finally ending his travels with a six-month steamship trip to see monkey-puzzle trees in South America and baobab trees in Africa in their natural habitat.

A particular grove of locusts grew on my Uncle John's Missouri farm, between the house, windmill, and the leaning barn. They were the only trees on that lonely hilltop where my four cousins were raised, and I remember the introduced starlings that nested in the old woodpecker holes. English Sparrows and European pigeons occupied the barn, as if that alien trio were hungry for homes and human company!

Those Tolle locusts stood like a wind-break squadron defending the farm from intruding storms that were sometimes laced with tornadoes. At least the exposed, old gray, two-story house stayed staunch while occupied with family long-since dispersed to all parts of the country. Only the windmill and perhaps some of the trees remain, although locust only have a life-span of about 120 years.

The sweet aroma of the scented pea-pod flower structures in spring is quite memorable, and the grove along the Feather River, far away from Missouri, gives me a whiff of homey flavor from the homelands.

*"I'll lie here and learn how, over their ground,
Trees make a long shadow and a light sound."
--Louise Bogan*

Check Out Area Farmers' Markets



California agriculture is a state treasure. Find the freshest produce and support local farmers.

We are including here a guide to website information about local markets in the Yahi member counties.

- Butte County: <http://www.seecalifornia.com/events/farmers-market/butte-county-alpha.html>
- Glenn County <http://www.seecalifornia.com/events/farmers-market/glenn-county.html>
- Lassen County: <http://www.seecalifornia.com/events/farmers-market/lassen-county.html>
- Plumas County: https://www.yelp.com/search?find_desc=farmers+market&find_loc=plumas+county
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For submissions, comments, or inquiries, contact Louise Casey, 872-9159, YAHInews@comcast.net. Please include name, phone number, and address with each submittal. Short, single-topic articles are preferred. Deadlines for proposed articles and letters to the editor: February 1, May 1, August 1, and November 1.

Yahi News reserves the right to edit all submissions for reasons of space, clarity and potential libel. The opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Sierra Club or the Yahi Group.

The Last Word

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