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enjoy,
and protect
the planet

Sierra Club Lake Group

July-August 2019 Newsletter

Midsummer BBQ July 20

This year's party will be held at **5:30PM on Saturday July 20**, at Dancing Tree People farm, 1445 Pitney Lane off Elk Mountain Road in Upper Lake, which just happens to be the residence of Lake Group Chair Denise Rushing. As usual, it's planned as a semi-potluck: the Club will provide a choice of main dishes, and guests are asked to bring beverages, and a side dish or dessert to share. To eliminate as many throwaways as possible, we're also asking guests to *please bring your own reusable plates, napkins, and eating utensils*: let's see if we can make this a genuine zero-waste event this year! The party is always free, and all Lake Group members and their guests are very cordially invited. To RSVP for the BBQ (very strongly recommended) contact Victoria at 994 1931 or vbrandon@lakelive.info.

Readers of Lake Group's email alerts, **please be sure to note the date change**: a scheduling conflict has led us to move the party from the original date of Friday July 19 to Saturday July 20—the first time we've ever held this event on a weekend. By the way, we're also asking guests to bring a folding chair if possible.

Sulphur Bank Mine Superfund Site Update

On June 5 the regular meeting of the Blue Ribbon Committee for the Rehabilitation of Clear Lake was preceded by a two-hour tour of the superfund site, which is adjacent to Elem Indian Colony at the eastern end of the Oaks arm of the lake. Continuing drainage of contaminated water from the Herman Impoundment has led to Clear Lake's being listed as impaired for mercury under the TMDL process.

EPA representatives spoke of the work that has been done on the site (primarily the removal of contaminated soil from Elem roads and residential areas more than ten years ago), and ongoing studies of next steps, which consist primarily of additional studies: despite years of

investigation, there is still no concrete plan for effective mitigation of ongoing mercury pollution into the lake.

Agency spokespeople did make it clear that this impairment does not mean that Clear Lake water is unsafe to drink. The only potential health impacts relate to fish consumption, and vary considerably depending on the type of fish and the characteristics of the consumer, with the greatest potential danger coming from top predators such as bass, and the most at-risk individuals being small children and women of childbearing age. Excessive consumption of mercury, a neurotoxin, can damage the developing brain. (con't)

(Sulphur Bank, con't) They also made it clear that concerns about fish consumption also apply to many other bodies of water throughout the region, as one would expect given the high levels of naturally occurring mercury in the soil and the presence of numerous abandoned mine sites.

When the committee reconvened for its business meeting in the afternoon, one of the first presentations was made by Elem Colony, which is proposing an alternative to the long-standing proposal to drain the Impoundment to get its water level below that of the lake. They assert that a more effective longterm solution would be to fill the pit in instead. It was not made clear whether the objective scientific studies needed to demonstrate or disprove the value of this approach have yet been conducted but the idea certainly sounds worth investigating.

Lake Group Executive Committee

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ExCom meetings are held at 6:30PM on the fourth Wednesday of the month, at locations that vary. All members are cordially invited to attend, but requested to contact the Chair first to confirm time and location

KONOCTI POST

www.konoctipost.blogspot.com

a lake county naturalist's blog

TAKE A RAMBLE. IT'S FREE.

An Evening with Charles Eisenstein

On July 17 at 7PM New Paradigm College is hosting an evening with Charles Eisenstein, author of *The More Beautiful World Our Hearts Know is Possible* and *Climate: A New Story*.

Eisenstein, who graduated from Yale University with a degree in Philosophy and Mathematics, is a speaker, author, and inspiring thought leader who challenges us to see the climate issue, partisan politics and other difficulties as symptoms of a much deeper challenge writes and speaks of moving from the old story of division and separation in which we are all independent actors in a destructive economic model, to a new story of "inter being" where all are connected in our quest for security, relationship and meaning.

The evening is the first of many stimulating events to be held at the College, AKA "the Lucerne Castle". Tickets are \$30, and available at Watershed Books, 305 N. Main in Lakeport.

Let's Go Digital

Lake Group members are invited to help fight deforestation by receiving this bimonthly newsletter electronically rather than on paper. To get it as an email attachment in pdf format instead, send a request to join the "Lake Group Paper Free" list to *vbrandon@lakelive.info*—not only does this save some trees, it also benefits the Group financially.



Devoto Announces Retirement

It is with mingled regret and appreciation that Lake Group announces the retirement of our longtime Outings Chair Steve Devoto. Steve, a member of the Sierra Club since 1955 and one of the three original founders of Lake Group nearly twenty years ago, has been the Group Outings Chair since inception. Over the years he has led dozens of hikes, trained numerous leaders, and introduced countless local residents and visitors to the wonders of nature in our region.

He was also instrumental in supporting efforts for the establishment of new Wilderness in the region and the designation of Cache Creek as a Wild and Scenic River, and for a number of years hosted Lake Group's annual holiday party.

In explaining his retirement decision to the Group executive committee and outings leaders, Steve states that he has "concluded that my plate is overfull. . . . It's been lots of fun leading others on the trails of Lake County but all has eventually to come an end."

We're going to miss you, Steve! Happy Trails!

Rent This Space

Lake Group is now accepting (in other words, selling) advertisements in this newsletter: a two-inch (business card size) ad like this costs \$25 per issue, or—Great Bargain—\$100 for a year (six issues) To submit an ad send an email to vbrandon@lakelive.info or call Victoria at 994-1931.

Help Wanted

(a) Webmaster. Lake Group's website now has modernized social media connections, an interactive online calendar, slide show and video capability, and other exciting features. Now that this foundation has been laid, the Group is seeking a new webmaster to keep everything shiny and up to date. PS: we'd also love to find someone to keep our Facebook page updated.

(b) Newsletter editor: produce, manage and edit the Group's bimonthly newsletter by assigning and editing articles, updating events listings and managing subscription database.

(c) Social Director: work with Group leadership to plan two social events for members and supporters each year. The ideal person for this position will have experience in event planning and love parties.

Details and contact info for the three positions at sierraclub.org/redwood/volunteer-lake-group

As always, we're looking for Outings leaders. Here's the job description: "No experience needed, just a love for brisk exercise in the out-of-doors. There are many good reasons to become an Outing leader, including an opportunity for autocracy: as leader you get to choose where to go, and when." Interested? Contact Redwood Chapter Outings Chair Louis Vas at 707-563-7100 or lvas75@sonic.net to learn more.

Outings

At press time, no listing of Lake Group hikes was available. Any that are scheduled later will be posted to the Group website at sierraclub.org/redwood/lake/outings. Hikes throughout Redwood Chapter are listed at sierraclub.org/redwood/outings



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