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Dates to Remember

February 26 *Bulletin* Deadline
 March 3 Board Meeting
 April 17 Oregon’s Spring Cleanup

Current event schedules at:
www.obsidians.org

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**Outside or In —
 Obsidians Have Options**

Lou Maenz, Publications Chair

CCOVID, AS WE ALL CAN ATTEST TO, IS A TOUGH ROW TO HOE. There is the boredom, the creeping and sometimes galloping ennui that seems to squeeze in under the door, and there is the loneliness. Our emotions frequently run the gamut between relieved we have no demanding schedule and the wish that someone would give us a call and require something tough from us.

So we have a vaccine. A moment of pure relief until reality sets in and we adjust to the fact it might be another year before we can go back to living a normal life—if ever. So we protect ourselves. And what must we protect?

Physical Health Obviously, the first thing is our physical health. We all know that there are certain actions COVID has forced upon us in order to maintain our health, like masking and not being physically close to people. These two things are what is causing the other issues we have. What an unbelievable conundrum—we put ourselves in danger mentally and physically because we are trying to protect ourselves. Indeed—how sad, but how true.

“As Obsidians we are very, very, lucky because we LIKE to exercise and we love the outdoors.”



Morning on Spencer Butte. Photo by Dave Lodeesen.

As Obsidians we are very, very, lucky because we LIKE to exercise and we love the outdoors. These endeavors, whether or not we are still able to participate in the usual Obsidian groups, are available to us still. Our current Obsidian groups may not be as large as they were once, and carpooling is questionable, but we still have hikes, snowshoe and ski trips, and kayak paddles. Another thing many of us have done is to find hiking partners and routinely walk some of the many (we are really lucky) local trails near Waltherville, or Cottage Grove, or Veneta. On the days no one is available to hike, there is always a neighborhood jaunt to get the blood flowing. And when the weather is just plain ugly, we can put some music on and dance.

Mental Health Listening to music and dancing, walking with a friend or two and chatting, or tromping through the snow with a group is good not only for the body, but also for the brain and for mental health. Our brains thrive on exercise. New neurons and new neural connections are formed throughout our lives. The good blood flow from

(Continued on page 2)

Welcome New Members!

Eamon Happy
Eugene, OR 97401

Kate Shapiro
Eugene, OR 97401

(Lucky Obsidians, continued from page 1)

exercise helps us to overcome the slowing down of our brains—even young brains (well, past twenty-five when aging actually begins to take its toll).

Emotional Health Lastly, we come to the most important part of our personage. Although listening to music can raise feel good endorphins in the brain, and exercise enhances blood flow and neuron development, for our emotional well-being we need to do more. We need to decrease the stress that COVID has insinuated into our lives. How? By staying involved. Social engagement is candy to our being. We need other people, and we need to do things with them, and relate to them. Up until the Big C came to visit, we had pretty much established our relationship patterns: perhaps a book club with lunch, a visit to the barber, a tailgate party, a barbeque with friends, Sunday dinner with relatives—but no more. So we NEED to take our socialization to a new level. Shift your expectations. If you don't have a walking buddy, go on an Obsidian hike and see if you meet up with some like-minded people. Walking and chatting is good for the soul. Join social media sites online. Look up old friends on Facebook, check out meetup.com, look for activities online that hold meetings on email, Zoom or Skype. Develop an interest online or join an online class. There are art classes, writing groups, science-oriented groups, and many more, all just a click away. You can also volunteer. Even if you don't want to come in contact with people, many organizations have openings and need help. You could walk a dog at Greenhill or help package Meals on Wheels. As an Obsidian, you already have an interest in the environment and the out of doors; find an environmental organization to join online.

The above are all pretty well accepted methods of interacting, but here is one you may not have thought of which is fun and brings people together. It can be done in a group or with one other person and it can be virtual on Zoom or email, or in some cases on the phone. We didn't get to where we are in life without facing challenges. Thus, this is a challenge activity. Following is an example: let's say I come up with five random words: cow, grass, buzzard, merry-go-round and spoon, and I challenge you to write a poem using all of them. I would also try the same poem. If there are more than two people involved, everyone gives it a go. Let's say you work on it for a week and then comparisons are made. At this point you can assign a grade or not. Then the other person comes up with five words. Perhaps they want a love poem or maybe a humorous poem. Whatever, a game between two or more has begun.

The first challenge I was lucky enough to participate in was painting a watercolor picture from an illustration that we all had, using only a stick. Needless to say, it was a hoot. Other challenges are limited only by imagination—like developing a cipher or creating a sculpture with rocks and old silverware. Finding the best takeout pizza and explaining why, perhaps trying to come up with a recipe for it and passing it on to your challenge partners to try, or planting small gardens of the same type plants in a window container and comparing growth.

The possibilities are endless! Give it a try.



OBSIDIANS, INC

P.O. Box 51510, Eugene, OR 97405
Website: www.obsidians.org

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Maryanne Reiter, President
Dave Cooper, Vice President
Denise Rubenstein, Secretary
Stewart Hoeg, Treasurer
Denise Bean, Marci Hansen,
Dave Hawkins, Laura Osinga
Jorry Rolfe, Lyndell Wilken

Board meetings are held at 6:00 PM the first Wednesday of each month, except October when it is the Wednesday after the Annual Meeting. There is no August meeting.

Committee Chairpersons

Bus..... Jim Northrop
Climbs Maryanne Reiter
Concessions Carla Cooper
Conservation/SciEd ... K. Coots/A. Ruzicka
Entertainment Evelyn Nagy
Extended Trips..... Lana Lindstrom
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Publications Lou Maenz
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Safety..... Lyndell Wilken
Summer Camp
Summer Trips Dave Cooper
Trail Maintenance..... Matt Bell
Winter Trips..... Dave Cooper

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Deadline
for March Bulletin
Friday, February 26, 2021

Editorial Team

Writing & Editorial Staff:

Janet Jacobsen, Lou Maenz

Copy Editors:

Ethel Weltman, Karen Yoerger

Graphics Design & Desktop Publishing:
Carla Cooper, Bea Fontana, Stewart Hoeg

Assembly/Mailing Team

Manager: Lou Maenz

Assistant: Nancy Raymond

Team: Instaprint



Is Science For the Birds?

Randy Sinnott

LONG BEFORE THE ADVENT OF THE INTERNET, there was the concept of citizen science, where the research community welcomed input from people everywhere regardless of their technical expertise. The hobby of birdwatching and bird listing were quickly put to use collecting troves of data worldwide. Christmas bird counts began in this country early in the past century and really flourished by the 1940s. The Eugene Christmas Bird Count (ECBC) was done this year on January 3, becoming the 77th consecutive count for our area, and continuing an annual ritual now going back to 1944.

Worldwide, counts are done around Christmas when birds are not migrating and therefore present a more stable counting target. As in years past, this ECBC count was conducted by volunteers coordinated by Dick Lamster, a member of our local Audubon Society. The count area is a 15-mile radius circle encompassing Eugene and surrounding public and private lands. This circle has not changed since its inception. The count circle is further divided into 27 smaller units with teams assigned to each. This year 140 participants took part in field counts, while another 119 volunteers submitted home counts, recording birds that visited their yards that day. The efforts yielded a near record 133 species. Eugene is surely in the vanguard of generating this citizen science data. Of 2,646 Christmas bird counts done last year, Eugene ranked ninth in the number of participants.

Today, a joint project by the Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology has created a powerful database, known as [eBird](#), where sightings, photos and sonograms of bird vocalizations can be submitted by anyone interested in taking part. This burgeoning collection of scientific observations is accessible to the public free of charge and even encourages users to organize and archive their personal bird discoveries, life lists and more, making it perhaps the largest facilitator of citizen science in the world.

Since 2009 the Audubon Society, with input from thousands of volunteers, has produced surveys and studies that illustrate how global warming is impacting our world. This is just one example of how sharing our hobbies and passions can contribute to science and the preservation of our environment.



*Immature bald eagle.
Photo by Randy Sinnott.*

Thank you!

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT INGREDIENT FOR A SUCCESSFUL CLUB? The people! Once again it is that time of year to recognize the generous Obsidians who support our club through their premium memberships and/or time and efforts to serve on our committees. Many thanks to all of you, your commitment to the Obsidians is greatly appreciated!

2020/21 Premium Members

**Platinum Members
(\$200 or more)**
Hildreth, Dick
Landes, Michael
McDonnell, Margot
Straub, Peg

Newlove, Natalie
Northrop, Jim
Osinga, Laura
Raymond, Nancy
Riggs, Judy
Shirk, Velma
Smith, Mike
Strutin, David
Terry, Judy
Whitfield, Nancy
Yoerger, Karen

**Gold Members
(\$100-199)**

Aten, Barbara
Bean, Denise
Bradley, Joan
Cooper, Carla
Cooper, David
Coots, Kay
Duncan, Sharon
Fontana, Bea
Jacobsen, Janet
Jacobsen, John
Lowder, Bill
Murray, Darian
Murray, Karen

**Silver Members
(\$50-99)**

Baldwin, Don
Baskett, Martin
Beckwith, Jane
Bienvenue, Donald
Brown, Ben
Brown, Max
Carver, Deb
Castleberry, Rob

Christensen, Dan
Christiansen, Lynda
Claypool, Marcia
Clinger, David
Cole, Dallas
Curtis, Alan
Cutsforth, Sharon
Dame, Wendy
Dinn, Diana
Dinn, James
Doerr, Don
Emlen, Clara
Ewing, Joella
Firth, Leah
Garwood, Judy
Glover, Elizabeth
Green, Kellie
Hanson, Vicky
Hoecker, Nancy
Hovis, Scott
Hull, Diantha
Jeffcott, Diane
Kameenui, Brenda

Kocken, Verna
Loe, Jack
Lyon, Carla
Martz, Helen
Masarie, Diana
McCoy, Verlean
McIvor, Andrew
McQueen, Suzanne
Miller, June
Miller, Sam
Milliman, Greg
Moffitt, Michael
Mucker, Patrick
Nease, Mike
Nelson, Catherine
Nelson, Doug
O'Donnell, Jack
Parramore, Ken
Payne, Don
Pegg, John
Prouty, Wes
Reinhard, David
Romoser, Ruth

Ross, Ben
Rusow, Karla
Sayre, Gordon
Scherer, Carol
Schomaker, Barbara
Spizizen, Gary
Sundt, Richard
Thompson, Harold
Thornton, Eric
Van Liefde, Lisa
Vincent, Virginia
White, Nancy
Wiktorowski, Jodi
Wilken, Lyndell
Wolling, Sue
Wolters, Kris
Young, Tommy

2021 Committee Members

Bus Trips: Jim Northrop (Interim Chair), Judy Adamcyk, Tom Adamcyk, Barbara Beard, Paul Beard, Marcia Claypool, Sharon Cutsforth, Joella Ewing, Judy Garwood, Sheridan Gates, Dave Hawkins (Treasurer), Sandra Larsen, Vern Marsonette, Evelyn Nagy, Mary Ellen West

Climbs: Maryanne Reiter (Chair), Trina Kanewa, Eric Gran, Danni Harris, Marci Hansen, Patrick Mucker, Jen Marlow,

Concessions: (Carla Cooper, Chair), Mari Baldwin, Keiko Bryan, Joella Ewing, Anne Hollander, Chris Shuraleff, Nancy Whitfield

Conservation/SciEd: Kay Coots, Angie Ruzicka (Cochairs), Joanna Alexander, Marsha Barr, Jorry Rolfe, Randy Sinnott, Diana Wheat

Entertainment: Evelyn Nagy, Pam Swisher, Ron Swisher (Cochairs), Dave Cooper, Lana Lindstrom, Yuan Hopkins, Mary Livingston, Richard Hughes, Esme Greer, Joel Greer, Jonathan Jost, Lynn Stearney, Joella Ewing, June Miller

Extended Trips: Lana Lindstrom (Chair), Daphne James, Emily Rice, Diane Schechter, Chris Shuraleff

Finance: Stewart Hoeg (Chair), Denise Bean, Joel Greer, Dan Christensen, Dave Hawkins, Lana Lindstrom, Laura Osinga, Susan Zeni

Librarian/Historian: Lenore McManigal (Chair), Bea Fontana, Janet Jacobsen

Lodge Building: Dave Cooper (Chair), Clara Emlen, Joella Ewing, Brian Hamilton, John Jacobsen, Meg Kieran, Doug Nelson

Lodge Grounds: John Jacobsen (Chair), David Cooper, Doug Nelson, Jim Northrop

Membership: Diane Schechter (Chair), Carla Lyons, Brenda Kame'enui, Dorothy van Winkle, Joel Greer, Helen Martz, Diana Masarie, Laura Anderson

On-Line: Wayne Deeter, (Chair)

Publications: Lou Maenz (Chair), Carla Cooper, Bea Fontana, Stewart Hoeg, Janet Jacobsen, Karen Yoerger, Ethel Weltman

Publicity: Marci Hansen (Chair), Denise Bean, Laura Osinga

Safety: Lyndell Wilken (Chair), Maryanne Reiter (Climbs) Mike Smith (Winter Trips), Dave Cooper (Summer Trips), Jim Northrop (Bus Trips), John Hegg (At Large Member)

Summer Camp: vacant

Summer Trips: David Cooper (Chair), Steve Cordon, Scott Hovis, Lana Lindstrom, Darian Murray, Mike Smith

Trail Maintenance: Matt Bell (Chair)

Winter Trips: David Cooper (Chair), Steve Cordon, Jane Hackett, Scott Hovis, Darian Murray, Rich Romm, Gordon Sayre, Mike Smith

Online Signup Tips

The 'My Trips' Tab

John Jacobsen, Obsidian Online Committee

A FEW MONTHS BACK, I HEARD ABOUT A MEMBER who had arrived at what he thought was the departure location for the trip. Finding no Obsidians, he logged into *Obsidian Online* on his phone to check the Signup Sheet to see if he may have remembered the departure info wrong. Well, lo and behold, the Signup Sheet for the trip was no longer there because our online system automatically removes trips available for online signup at the time the trip departs. That got me thinking about how we could always have the trip description and information available for situations like this, as well as at other times.

The solution was to add the ability to access the Trip Description (and Trip Reports for completed trips) from the "My Trips" tab of *Obsidian Online*:

Trip Descrip	Trip Report	Date	Activity	Trip Status	Event Name	Leader	Status	
TDView		17	1/28/2021	Hike	Online	Mt Pisgah Sunset/Moonrise (long)	Janet Jacobsen	Signed Up
TDView		18	1/27/2021	Hike	Done	Amazon Hdwtres/Spencer Butte	Kathie Carpenter	Signed Up
TDView	TRView	19	1/26/2021	Hike	Done	Blanton Ridge to Spencer Butte	Leah Firth	Completed
TDView	TRView	20	1/23/2021	Hike	Approved	Mt Pisgah	Janet Jacobsen	Completed
TDView	TRView	21	1/21/2021	Hike	Approved	Spencer Butte, the day after	Janet Jacobsen	Completed

Clicking the 'TDView' button in front of a trip opens a window with the Trip Description info, and clicking the 'TRView' button opens the Trip Report (once it is completed) for the trip. In addition to providing access to the trip information any time, trip leaders have found this a useful place to copy details from past trips into the trip descriptions of newly added trips. Tip-in-a-tip: The right-click copy and paste does not work in the popup windows, but can be triggered with the normal keyboard shortcuts (Ctrl-c and Ctrl-v) or via your browser's menu. And lastly for some folks who enjoy reviewing their activity history, the 'My Trips' tab is a great place to do it, and don't miss the 'Trips Summary' button to get a quick overview.

Oregon's Spring Cleanup

Darko Sojak
SOLVE Volunteer Coordinator

I WANT TO SHARE MY APPRECIATION FOR ALL THE SUPPORT Obsidians have shown for SOLVE's beach cleanups on the Oregon coast, and let you know about an upcoming change.

Since 1986, SOLVE, State Parks, and other partners have come together during spring break to clean the coast. In 2021, for a variety of reasons, SOLVE will be combining the annual Spring Oregon Beach Cleanup and SOLVE It for Earth Day into one statewide event called Oregon's Spring Cleanup. This new combined event will be held on Saturday, April 17 and will include any volunteer projects taking place the week before and after as well, so it will likely be the state's largest Earth Day event in 2021.

Obsidians will participate in cleaning the area around Berry Creek, eight miles north of Florence. Trash bags and gloves will be provided to you on the site.

Please join me. darchey@comcast.net



Holger Krentz and Jane Hackett sifting microplastics for the first time with the Obsidians' sieve.

JANUARY BOARD NOTES

January 6, 2020, By Denise Rubenstein

President Maryanne Reiter called the Zoom meeting to order. Board members present: Denise Bean, Dave Cooper, Marci Hansen, Dave Hawkins, Laura Osinga, Jorry Rolfe, Denise Rubenstein, and Lyndell Wilken. Others present: Carla Cooper, Kay Coots, Lana Lindstrom, Jim Northrop, and Stewart Hoeg.

The Board approved the minutes for December 2020.

Treasurer's Report (Stewart Hoeg): Stewart reviewed the year-to-date income and expenses as well as the balance sheet. The Board approved the bills.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Lodge Grounds (John Jacobsen): A couple days ago I popped in on the two PUDs to the west of the Obsidian Property to see how they looked. Both are finished, the new streets/drives are open, the trail down to Central Blvd is restored and the lots look like they are ready for sale. I also noticed that the Obsidian's three-wire fence between the smaller six-lot development and our property, which had been removed for some reason during construction, has not been replaced. I don't believe we were asked if the fence could be removed—was anyone on the Board or anyone else contacted? The Grounds Committee (Dave Cooper, Doug Nelson, Jim Northrop and I) met today to look it over and consider what we should do, if anything. We all agreed that it would be good to have a fence there to prevent (discourage?) access to the back of our property from the development, but also felt a more secure fence, possibly a six-foot chain-link fence or something similar would be better. We are now in the process of trying to track down the owners or who might be responsible for replacing the fence and see what we might do to get some compensation for the fence removal and replacing it. We also spent some time discussing putting a security fence and gate along the front of our property along 29th—we will think about this more when we are a bit farther along on the westside fencing. We also solved several seemingly intractable domestic and global problems, but unfortunately that stuff falls outside the scope of this report because it would have been interesting reading.

Librarian/Historian (Lenore McManigal): We received an email from Heidi Farrell asking for information about her grandfather Harry Wright who was a member from 1929–1939. She wanted the lyrics and the melody for the *Obsidian Song* that he used to sing. Member Carol Scherer was able to provide all the verses of the song and that the melody was the *Alabama Fight Song*. Bea and Janet searched the archives and

found a newspaper article reporting that Harry was one of 71 persons who was on a Middle Sister Obsidian climb July 1, 1934. They also found a photo of Harry with his trophy after winning the 12-mile ski race sponsored by the Obsidians. Here is one of her emails:

This is so fun for me and my siblings to see this side of our Grandpa. It was also fun to see that our Grandma (Mildred Jacobson) went hiking up the Middle Sister with him. They must have been dating at the time. Kind regards, Heidi

Membership (Diane Schechter): Obsidian Membership Stats: Active-358, Life-14, Honorary-6, Junior-12 Total Membership-390.

Winter Trips (Dave Cooper): In December there were 34 trips. The approximate participant counts were 258 members and 16 nonmembers. Fees should be \$256. There were lots of Pisgah and Ridgeline hikes.

OLD BUSINESS

Strategic Plan Update: Maryanne reported that the last meeting spent time determining our target audience. Geographically, our primary market is Greater Eugene/Springfield area with Greater Lane County being our secondary market. Demographically, our primary target is within the age range 45–65, both genders with a sensitivity to include under-represented and LGBTQ population. We currently tend to draw members who find themselves at a transitional point in their lives—new to the area, divorce, retirement, empty nesters, etc. Since focusing on a younger market, age 30 and under would require substantial resources, that would be a secondary market.

NEW BUSINESS

2020 Committee reports were approved.

2021 Committee members were approved.

2021 Budget reviewed and approved. Stewart reported that the 2021 Obsidian budget reflects the expectation that COVID-19 will impact activities for most of the year. Summer Camp, Bus Trips, and Climb School are all unbudgeted and potlucks, ExploraTalks, Lodge rental, extended trips and climbs are all projected to be basically nonexistent until late in the year. As a result, we are budgeting a small loss for the year. Membership, however, remains constant.

Mileage reimbursement will remain at 10 cents per mile.

The following new members were approved by the Board: Eamon Happy, Kate Shapiro.

Obsidian Membership Directory

John Jacobsen, Online Committee

YOU MAY NOTICE THAT THE **OBSIDIAN MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY**, historically mailed along with the February *Obsidian Bulletin* for decades, is not included this year, nor will it be in years to come. The *Membership Directory* is now updated daily rather than once a year and is available online in the Members Only area of the Obsidian website. See last month's *Bulletin* for the details on why this change was made and how to access the *Directory* online.

If you are an Obsidian member and unable to print the *Obsidian Membership Directory* yourself, contact Janet Jacobsen (jbjacobsen@comcast.net or 541-206-1251) to help you get a printed copy. Contact the Online Committee (onlineobs@gmail.com) with any questions, concerns, suggestions, or help with accessing and using the *Directory*. Contact the Membership Committee (membership@obsidians.org) with any changes or corrections to your contact information.

TRIP REPORTS



Hikes

Mt. Pisgah: Find the Bench

December 24, 2020

Leader: Janet Jacobsen

Photographer: Mari Baldwin

Hike: 4 miles, 300 ft. (Easy)

THE COLD WEATHER KICKED US INTO HIGH GEAR as we headed out on the Riverbank Trail and the Meadow Road to see the Lawrence Vinis Bench. Michael shared stories about Vinis, who was the godfather for one of his kids. From there, we wandered through the meadow to Trail 5 to explore the rock quarry, a labyrinth, and the well-hidden, trashed truck. Next stop was the bathroom. We then meandered, in a somewhat purposeful way, on the Buford, Incense, Jette, and Hillside Trails, stopping to muse at the exhibits and benches. We were surprised that the Scherer Bench had been removed for repair. Listening to the rushing water on the Creek Trails was a cheerful ending for our two-hour, holiday walk with jovial and curious friends. Here is a link to the Mary Oliver poem that Lynda shared:

www.bedlamfarm.com/2018/09/05/poem-self-portrait-still-full-of-beans/. Members: Mari Baldwin, Kathie Carpenter, Lynda Christiansen, Marguerite Cooney, Patricia Esch, Janet Jacobsen, Michael Myers, Peg Straub.



The hidden truck discovered near the side trail. Marguerite, Janet, Michael, Peg, Pat, and Kathie.

Finley Wildlife Refuge

December 25, 2020

Leader: Angie Ruzicka

Assistant Leader: Darko Sojak

Hike: 6 miles, 100 ft. (Easy)

A SMALL, BUT ENTHUSIASTIC, GROUP STARTED OUR HIKE at the Acorn Woodpecker Loop trailhead. The air temperature was 35 degrees and there was no real rain; for a brief moment, we thought we saw a snowflake. After completing half

of the loop, we used the Inter-tie Trail to make our way to the Mill Hill Loop Trail. On the way back, we took a short side trip to the visitor center (closed), and then returned to complete the Woodpecker Loop. The oaks presided over a forest that was magically lush with lichens, moss, ferns, and mushrooms. It was a delightful way to spend a Christmas Day. Members: Angie Ruzicka, Darko Sojak.

Andrew Reasoner Explora Hike

December 27, 2020

Leader & Photographer: Darko Sojak

Hike: 2.5 miles, 400 ft. (Easy)

OUR GROUP DROVE TO LORANE VALLEY where, in the most beautiful weather of December 2020 so far, we met with landowner Linda Carnine. During introductions, we learned that Linda and her husband, Doug, bought this property to create a conservation easement, and to improve the wildlife corridor between adjacent farmlands. With the help of McKenzie River Trust, native American groups, and volunteers, they are managing and restoring Andrew Reasoner Wildlife Preserve. In sun and 45 degrees, we hiked through grassland, oak savanna, and rolling hills covered with white and black oaks, Douglas-fir, valley pines, madrones, coastal redwoods, spruce, and chinquapin. The owners welcome all visitors to the 294-acre conservation easement, which is accessible from 84731 Lorane Highway. Before accessing the property, please visit: www.mckenzie-river.org/property/andrew-reasoner-wildlife-preserve/. Members: Lynda Christiansen, Marguerite Cooney, Nancy Hoecker, Holger Krentz, Linda Parks, Angie Ruzicka, Darko Sojak, Dorothy van Winkle.



Rolling hills covered with white and black oaks, Douglas fir, valley pines, madrones, coastal redwoods, spruce, and chinquapin.

McDowell Creek/Horse Rock Ridge

December 28, 2020

Leader: Kathie Carpenter

Photographer: Daphne James

Hike: 5.4 miles, 1,328 ft. (Moderate)

WE CARAVANED FROM SOUTH EUGENE HIGH SCHOOL to the Horse Rock Ridge trailhead. Thanks to Michael, as lead driver, and to Marguerite's expert navigation, we were the first group at the trailhead, and were able to find parking easi-

ly. Several groups came after us, and the good spaces filled quickly, because this is a popular hike. The trail was icy and a bit treacherous. We had one fall, but once again Marguerite saved the day by throwing her body under our falling comrade, so there was no serious injury. The panoramas were spectacular, with clear views of the Sisters, Mt. Jefferson, Diamond Peak and Mary's Peak. This would also be a very pretty hike in the spring because it is prime wildflower terrain. The McDowell Creek County Park loop was lush and lovely, and the waterfalls were splendid among the ferns and moss. For future reference, I'd recommend making the loop counterclockwise, so that you go up the long, slippery staircase by Terrace Falls first. These very pretty hikes are on the short side, and are not too far out of town. Each would be perfect for making out-of-state visitors jealous that you live in Oregon, or for convincing reluctant children that they really do like hiking after all. Together, they made for a wonderful, but not too demanding, day that showcased the variety of Oregon landscapes. Tips o' the day: We found Sullivan's driving directions to be a lot more helpful than Google Maps. These hikes are not well known to most Obsidians, so future leaders should make sure that all participants know how to find the trailheads. Members: Kathie Carpenter, Marguerite Cooney, Daphne James, Michael Myers, Kathy Randall, Angie Ruzicka, Paul Winther.



Climbing Horse Rock Ridge Trail.

Cape Mountain
December 31, 2020
Leader: Jonathan Jost
Assistant Leader: Lynn Stearney
Hike: 7.6 miles, 1,400 ft. (Moderate)

THE GROUP OF TEN DEPARTED FROM THE DRY LAKE TRAILHEAD under cloudy skies and with occasional drizzle. We stopped at major intersections but did not dawdle as we made our way along the Princess Tasha Trail, and then on to Scurvy Ridge and the Blue Horizon Loop. The bench on Blue Horizon Loop was our socially-distanced lunch spot. Darko was able to gather a nice assortment of mushrooms along the route. On the return, the group deviated briefly to examine an alternate trailhead, and returned to the Dry Lake Trailhead parking lot around 1:15. Members: Kathie Carpenter, Marguerite Cooney, Elizabeth Grant, Jonathan Jost, Holger Krentz, Jessica Moll, Angie Ruzicka, Darko Sojak, Lynn Stearney, Sue Wolling.

Ferguson Creek/Long Tom River
January 3, 2021
Leader & Photographer: Darko Sojak
Hike: 6.4 miles, 30 ft. (Moderate)

THE FERGUSON CREEK/LONG TOM RIVER ESTUARY WAS OUR TRAILHEAD. We started walking north, enjoying the pleasant weather and the view of the white-tailed deer. After only 1.1 miles, we had to turn back because the trail turned into an impassable jungle. After returning to our trailhead, we collectively accepted Marguerite's suggestion to drive south to the Fern Ridge Reservoir to hike a well-known loop. We drove to Orchard Point Marina, on the north side of Fern Ridge Reservoir. We hiked the Fern Ridge Dam trail to Richardson Park and back, and totaled 6.4 miles for the day. Members: Joanna Alexander, Marguerite Cooney, Gwyneth Iredale, Jonathan Jost, Holger Krentz, Jorry Rolfe, Angie Ruzicka, Darko Sojak, Diana Wheat.



Along the Long Tom River.

Cooper Creek Reservoir
January 16, 2021
Leader: Darko Sojak
Hike: 8 miles, 1,000 ft. (Moderate)

BESIDES VIEWS OF THE SCARS ON NEARBY, RECENTLY CLEAR-CUT HILLS, and a few logs on the trail, our hike was great. Everyone enjoyed the sunny weather and the windless, upper 50-degree temperature. Members: Gwyneth Iredale, Holger Krentz, Wally Miller, Linda Parks, Angie Ruzicka, Darko Sojak, Lisa Van Liefde, William Wu.

Amazon Headwaters/Spencer Butte Hikes
Hikes: 5.2–6.2 miles, 1,170–1,530 ft. (Moderate)
Various Leaders

Kathie Carpenter: 12/23 6 Members, 1 Nonmember
Darian Morray: 12/30 8 Members
Janet Jacobsen: 1/1 8 Members, 1 Nonmember,
1/21 9 Members, 2 Nonmembers
Karen Yoerger: 1/6 11 Members, 1 Nonmember
Denise Rubenstein: 1/13 10 Members, 2 Nonmembers

Blanton Ridge to Spencer Butte Hikes
Hike: 8.5 miles, 1,740 ft. (Moderate)
Various Leaders

Janet Jacobsen: 1/5 7 Members, 1 Nonmember
Elizabeth Grant: 1/8 3 Members
Sue Wolling: 1/19 9 Members, 1 Nonmember

52nd Street/Spencer Butte Hikes

Hike: 5.2 miles, 1,150 ft. (Moderate)

Various Leaders

Elizabeth Grant: 12/23 5 Members, 12/30 5 Members

Mike Smith: 1/1 11 Members

Joanna Alexander: 1/6 3 Members, 1/20 6 Members

Evelyn Nagy: 1/13 6 Members



Janet and Denise by the new sign at the Fox Hollow Trailhead.

Mt. Pisgah Hikes

Hikes: 3.5–9.5 miles, 1,000–2,000 ft. (Moderate)

Various Leaders

Janet Jacobsen: 12/29 12 Members, 1/9 10 Members,

1/16 10 Members, 1/23 9 Members, 1 Nonmember

Kay Coots: 12/29 6 Members, 1 Nonmember

Darko Sojak: 1/9 3 Members



Snowshoe Trips

Nickerson Loop Snowshoe

January 17, 2021

Leader: Jane Hackett

SShoe: 4.5 miles, 200 ft. (Easy)

NO SNOW AT NICKERSON LOOP. The first snow worth mentioning was at Potato Hill. We moved on to Ray Benson, where we did the south half of the South Loop. This was six miles of rolling country with views of Mt. Washington and Three Fingered Jack. It was perfect spring snow, with a temperature of 39–40 degrees. We had lunch under a blue sky with lots of sun. We arrived back at the cars only to discover that the leader, who has two blue jackets, had put her keys and phone in one jacket and locked it in the car. Because of COVID and two passengers, three windows were down about an inch or so; the leader had forgotten to roll them up.

After some hand-wringing and attempts to use ski poles to retrieve the jacket, we had a skier who works for the Forest Service offer the use of an avalanche probe and a stiff piece of wire. From one window, we used the probe to lift the jacket so that the ski pole could pull it towards the back window. There, Lisa could get her fingers on it to pull it through the window. After that, we all got to go home. Members: Joanna Alexander, Patricia Esch, Jane Hackett, Denise Rubenstein, Lisa Van Liefde, Diana Wheat.

Will the Wonders of Nature Ever Cease to Amaze Us?

DURING MOST OF DECEMBER AND INTO JANUARY, we saw thousands of yellow things on a few of the Spencer Butte steps. Not so curious Obsidians thought it was some kind of vegetation, but Peg Straub, after picking one up, was convinced that they were live critters. The enlarged photo taken by Leah Firth on January 7 revealed the truth.

Tommy Young sent this science lesson from his Google search: *The common name is golden snow flea. They are arthropods not fleas; they catapult themselves into the air by releasing a spring-like mechanism called a furcula, which is a tail-like structure that's folded underneath the body and they don't freeze in the winter thanks to a special kind of protein in their bodies that's rich in glycine, an amino acid.*

Where do they go? *Snow fleas live in the soil and leaf litter where they munch away on decaying vegetation and other organic matter, even during the winter months.*

The good news: They don't bite or bother people.

By Doubting Anonymous Obsidian





Leader Spotlight

JOANNA ALEXANDER WILL BE LEADING THREE CAMPUS WALKS, March 22, June 17, and September 20 to appreciate the remarkable trees throughout the seasons. She also leads the shorter alternative Wednesday hike from the Willamette 52nd Trailhead. It is not a surprise that she is also a member of the Conservation/SciEd committee.

We asked Joanna to share her story of how it happened that she joined the Obsidians in 2018 and has already gone on 90 plus trips.

I was born in Texas in 1946 into a family of urban jocks, therefore, while I was deemed the most physically fit freshman coed at my nerdy undergraduate Rice University, the only hiking of my youth happened sporadically at Girl Scout camp. But I knew from an early age that I loved the natural world, as I lived in an undeveloped part of suburban Houston that I could explore on my own without fear.

Keeping in motion physically and geographically is my life's theme, from competing in swimming and water ballet in the 1950s, to embracing hiking in the mountains while living in Pau, France in the 1980s. I have had around 30 different mailing addresses throughout my life, from Paris to Honolulu and several states in between, settling in Eugene five years ago. When I finally found a career that would help me as a single mother (since 1995) earn enough income, I left my Ph.D. in French Lit. behind to work in document management for the design and construction in-

Joanna Alexander

dustry. Moving from one large project to another in different states I developed skills to help me feel part of a new community, diving right in to church or other community organizations to help and get to know others, part of my Girl Scout toolbox as well. My work and parenting life left me little time for hiking for many years; caring for my aging mother in Texas for a year after retiring in 2014 was mostly sedentary as well. I moved to Eugene, like many I've met here, following my only child who had come here to work at the University of Oregon.

How to make friends and become an integral part of the community? Overcome the inner obstacle that I felt—that I would not fit in with the highly motivated trail movers, climbers, and shakers of the Obsidians. The Obsidians is a large organization that seems intimidating at first to the shy among us. I attended some of the ExploraTalks and Potlucks prior to becoming a member. It was finally after some encouraging by another Obsidian, Jorry Rolfe, whom I had met in an Osher Lifelong Learning French Conversation group, that I made the commitment to join the Obsidians.

Why do I lead Obsidians outings? I've studied some of the natural history of the area and enjoy moving amongst the awe-inspiring environments in which we Obsidians get to immerse ourselves. I love sharing my joy of being outside and also living the words of a round sung around the campfire: "Make new friends, and keep the old: one is silver and the other gold!"



*Photos from Joanna's June 2019
Campus Tree Appreciation Walk.
Photographer: Carla Cooper*



OBSIDIAN CALENDAR

February

9 Tue Blanton Ridge to Spencer Butte Hike M Jost 485-1612
10 Wed Amazon Headwaters Hike M Jacobsen 206-1251
13 Sat Rosary Lakes SShoe M Van Liefde 949-677-1379
13 Sat Mt Pisgah Hike M Jacobsen 206-1251
14 Sun Oregon's Birthday Hike M Jacobsen 206-1251
14 Sun Big Lake Xski M Hackett 9537046
16 Tue Blanton Ridge to Spencer Butte Hike M Sinnott 915-0234
17 Wed Amazon Headwaters Hike M Rubenstein 248-514-5092
19 Fri Blanton Ridge to Spencer Butte Hike M Grant 514-1176
20 Sat Mt Pisgah Hike M Jacobsen 206-1251
23 Tue Blanton Ridge to Spencer Butte Hike M Morray 953-5679
24 Wed Amazon Headwaters Hike M Smith 520-488-9569
26 Fri Mt Pisgah Sunset/Moonrise (long) Hike M Jacobsen 206-1251
28 Sun Mt Pisgah Hike M Jacobsen 206-1251

March

2 Tue Blanton Ridge to Spencer Butte Hike M Wolling 345-2110
9 Tue Blanton Ridge to Spencer Butte Hike M Firth 503-658-6478
12 Fri Blanton Ridge to Spencer Butte Hike M Grant 514-1176
14 Sun Pi Hike E Jacobsen 206-1251
16 Tue Blanton Ridge to Spencer Butte Hike M Yoerger 510-2832
22 Mon U of O Campus Walk Hike E Alexander 458-209-7798
23 Tue Blanton Ridge to Spencer Butte Hike M Rolfe 206-9501
30 Tue Blanton Ridge to Spencer Butte Hike M Wolling 345-2110

April

6 Tue Blanton Ridge to Spencer Butte Hike M Jacobsen 206-1251
13 Tue Blanton Ridge to Spencer Butte Hike M. Young 941-780-4156
17 Sat SOLVE Beach Clean Up Hike E Sojak 799-9199
20 Tue Blanton Ridge to Spencer Butte Hike M. Young 941-780-4156

FOR THE MOST UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION about our activities, visit the Obsidian website: www.obsidians.org
If you plan to join Obsidian trips, be prepared to abide by our protocols: [COVID-19 Protocols](#)

A Pitch for My Octopus Teacher

Janet Jacobsen

FILMED IN 2010, A NEW NETFLIX DOCUMENTARY *My Octopus Teacher* chronicles a year that Craig Foster observed and made a magical bond with a remarkable creature, a shy octopus. Three Obsidian members each gave a pitch to entice one to dive away from COVID concerns and get in touch with an octopus world.

The level of trust which develops over time between the octopus and Craig Foster was a treat to watch. As their trust deepened, Foster's octopus teacher allowed him to accompany her as she went about her daily life in the sea kelp forest off the southern tip of Africa. Nancy White

I watched My Octopus Teacher the first time on my phone. I was travelling and didn't have access to a big screen. As soon as I got home, I saw it a second time. The cinematography is spectacular. Even if you were not interested in the story, it is worth watching just for that reason. But the story and narration are compelling, with unexpected twists and turns. You might want to have a warm beverage and blanket close at hand. Foster describes the water tem-

perature as about 7C. That's about 45F or bloody cold. I like swimming in cool water., but I shivered when he dove into the sea. Enjoy! Janet Whitesides

It turns out that Craig Foster can hold his breath six minutes. That reminds me a little of holding my breath as hikers pass with no masks. Peg Straub

I haven't been able to watch the film because I don't have Netflix, but I listened to an interview of the filmmaker on NPR and was absolutely fascinated by his story. I learned so many things I didn't already know about octopuses, and I'm guessing that some of the tidbits may not have made it into the film. You can listen to a recording of the 36-minute interview, or you can just read the transcription.*

www.npr.org/transcripts/923915545 Bea Fontana

*NPR's *Fresh Air*, October 15 interview with Craig Foster, and *The Soul of an Octopus: A Surprising Exploration into the Wonder of Consciousness* by Sy Montgomery.



Member and photographer Tommy Young gently holds an octopus while studying marine life at Seal Rock—one of his favorite places to explore at a minus low tide.





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February 2021



*A surprise labyrinth as viewed from the wall of the quarry. Photo by Mari Baldwin.
(See Mt. Pisgah report on page 7.)*

ENJOY the photos in color! ONLINE *Bulletin* at www.observians.org