



**FRIENDS  
OF  
CHINA  
CAMP**

# Newsletter

**Fall 2017**

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In this edition of the Friends of China Camp Newsletter:

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## The Shoreline Trail Repair is Complete



Shoreline Trail is now open and ready for you. Come take a peek at a fabulous repair done by a combination of the California Conservation Corps (CCC), contracted equipment operators and 'we can do it' volunteers.

Highlights of the project:

- Numerous hours were devoted to permitting and logistical planning.
- 54 volunteers participated in one or more of the 17 work day events.
- Of the 2,400+ man-hours of work, 50% was done by volunteers.
- Detour trails were created.
- 300+ tons of rock and stone were used.
- Motorized toters traveled over 400 miles to and from the work site.
- Several hundred feet of firehose was laid to supply water at the worksite.
- Gabion cages were assemble and filled with rock *by hand*
- Erosion control was done using filter cloth, jute and wattles.
- Split rail fencing was installed.
- Frequent equipment failures required some very creative solutions.

- All work complied with State environmental standards and passed inspection.
- Total cost in materials and labor was just under \$100K; approximately half was donated.  
Thank you!

This was far and away the most ambitious trail repair project executed by FOCC. We are proud of the results and thank the many volunteers and donors for their support. For more details about the project, special thanks and donors, [click here](#). To see photos (in chronologic order) [September 22-23, CCC](#), [October 6-7](#), [October 21-22](#), [November 1](#).

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## A Gift from Arlin Weinberger



FOCC cannot operate China Camp with fewer than three vehicles, so earlier this year, when the State repossessed all but two vehicles in the park, FOCC put out the word to the community for a second-hand pick-up truck. A dedicated donor answered the call. Her name is Arlin Weinberger. Arlin has been a stalwart supporter of Marin's parks for many years, having served in leadership positions with Friends of Mt. Tam and with the Marin Conservation League. Today, we thank Arlin for donating the funds for FOCC to purchase its own pick-up truck so that we can adequately maintain and patrol the park and assist park visitors, when necessary.

Arlin states, "I'm lucky. China Camp is my backyard - full of trails, birds, wildflowers and even a beach. I love living so close."

And FOCC is lucky to have Arlin living so close, too. Thank you, Arlin!

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## FOCC Annual Community Meeting



On October 21, FOCC held its annual community meeting at China Camp Village. About thirty attendees heard updates on park operations from Executive Director Martin Lowenstein,

Program Director Sheila Coll and Board members. The meeting was intended both to share information and provide the opportunity for questions and suggestions on how the park can better meet the needs of park visitors.

Among the topics raised were:

- Trail repair and maintenance: Board members Ed Westbrook, Joyce Abrams and volunteers Andy Kives and Missy Westbrook, led the volunteer effort to repair a major side on Shoreline Trail following last winter's storms. See lead article for details.
- Future of the Village and Café: With the passing of our friend and mentor, Frank Quan, the operation of the village and café are now part of FOCC's operational responsibilities. It is the intention of FOCC to maintain the village as it is, with efforts directed only at stabilizing structures that need repair. For example, some of the pilings under the museum are failing and need to be replaced. The Café will continue to be operated by volunteers. FOCC is in the process of getting necessary state and county permits to sell drinks and snacks. Georgette Dahlka, Frank's cousin, will be at her spot behind the counter every weekend.
- Multi-use trails: California State Parks requires that trails in China Camp be open to a variety of users including, hikers, runners, bikers and equestrians. Board member Tom Boss is leading FOCC's outreach activities to encourage courtesy and cooperation on the trails. FOCC has instituted a Trail Ambassador program with volunteers on bike and foot to provide information about trail use.
- Public safety: FOCC is working closely with the Marin County Sheriff and County Fire Department to ensure all park users have a safe and enjoyable experience. Increased park patrols, improved communication and implementation of coordinated emergency procedures are among the items being implemented.

If you have questions about park operations or suggestions for making the park better, please [contact us](#). Constructive comments help us improve.

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## A Shout Out to Volunteers Ed Westbrook and Joyce Abrams

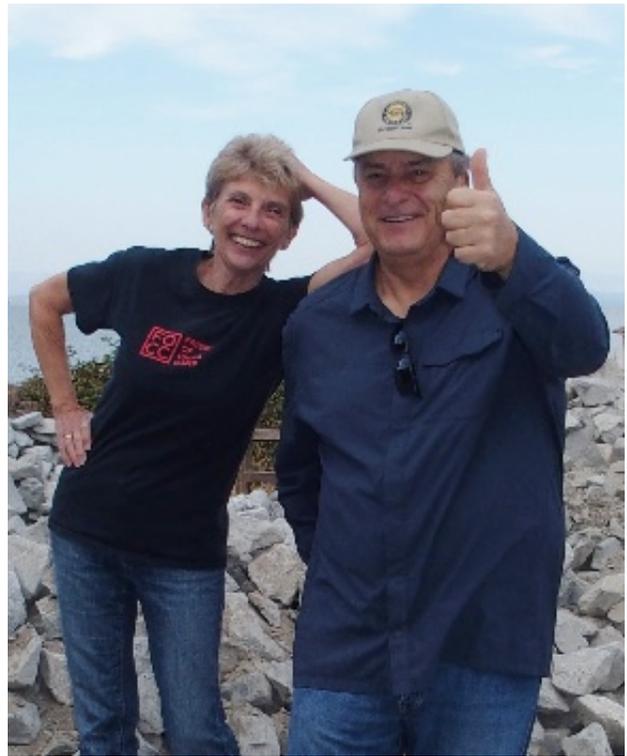
On October 22nd, after thousands of trail volunteer hours, Shoreline Trail has finally been restored from the massive landslide that closed the trail for months. Many hours were spent planning, gathering materials and coordinating volunteers. Over 300 tons of rock and stone were hauled in and carefully placed bit by bit into the supporting structures. Two people in particular were the powerhouses behind this massive project and all the volunteer trail events at China Camp: Joyce Abrams and Ed Westbrook. As volunteer Andrew Ling said: "if it weren't for Joyce and Ed, monthly volunteer trail events just wouldn't happen at China Camp".

**Ed Westbrook** has been the mastermind behind just about all the trail restoration projects at China Camp, including the massive Shoreline trail project. He carefully and meticulously designed the blueprint of the project including the placement of the gabion walls, trail tread, and split rail fencing. He spent hours negotiating with the Department of Parks and Recreation to meet the environmental and regulatory specifications of the trail restoration. He is known for his "laser beam" like focus, efficiently managing equipment and crews on workdays. He has done all this in addition managing his successful construction company, Quarry House Inc., which has also donated countless hours of labor, materials and equipment.

**Joyce Abrams** has been called the beating heart of FOCC. She is the powerful force that has

managed dozens of Champion trail work days and mini workdays over the years. In addition to being FOCC's media communications team lead and an administrator, she has coordinated and mobilized hundreds of volunteers and dozens of Civilian Conservation Corps workers. She has always ensured that her volunteers felt welcome, and that by the end of the workday they are well fed with lunch and an abundance of snacks. Don't let this gentle petite woman fool you though: when she is out on the trails she becomes a warrior on heavy machinery, deftly hauling massive amounts of rock and gravel on workdays; it is said she can "operate a tractor like it's a Honda Civic".

When things go wrong, (which happened one work day when almost all the equipment failed to work), Ed immediately jumps into solution mode and uses his creativity and ingenuity to overcome any obstacles. Joyce meet roadblocks with humor and a persevering spirit to uplift everyone and ensure the project is done well and completed as a team.



Both Ed and Joyce inspire loyalty and strong camaraderie among a core group of volunteers. Volunteers keep returning because they feel welcome and the projects are very well managed and fun. Trail volunteer Judith Hanks put it succinctly: "One of the many reasons that Joyce and Ed are so successful is their open-heartedness and willingness to embrace volunteers. All you need is sincerely to want to help, and Joyce and Ed will find something for you to do, thank you when you leave, welcome you by name when you return, make you feel that you had an important contribution, that you mattered. An amazing skill, their love of the park is translated so that you, the volunteer, love the park too..."

Over the years they have contributed selflessly to the park, both on the trails and as seasoned board members. They are both very modest about their contributions, but it's time to recognize this dream team for the big-hearted trailblazers (literally) that they are.

Thank you Ed and Joyce for everything! You are so appreciated!

Joyce and Ed are both quick to point out that none of this would be possible without the support of numerous volunteers, particularly our core group of 50 volunteers, our Fabulous Faithful. A big thank you to them.

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## November Activities in the Park

### Champion Trail Work Day

Join us for a Champion Volunteer work morning on **Saturday, November 11, from 9-12:30**. Unlike many of our previous work days, this will be simple trail grooming. We will be using weed whippers, rakes and McCleods to remove overgrowth and organics on the trail. To register, go to the [California State Parks Foundation website](#). Your registration helps us plan for tools and supplies. After you register, CSPF will contact you with information about where to meet, what to

bring, what to wear, etc.

## Gentle Walk in the Woods

Join naturalist Susan Edwards on **Sunday, November 12 from 9:30 - noon** to wander through China Camp State Park and wonder at the plants and creatures that make it home. We'll start at the campground kiosk and make our way through the oak woodlands to the pickleweed marsh. This will be a slow, joyful walk to see, smell, taste, hear and feel as much as we can. Susan is a seasoned naturalist who loves to share her knowledge of the intricate secrets of natural world along the trails of China Camp. She equally delights in discovering and learning new things with you, the participants.

[Click here](#) for more information and most importantly, to reserve a space.

## Speaker Series: Pathogens in Our Park, Sudden Oak Death

Have you observed an abnormal number of dead or dying oaks with yellowed or browning leaves within your local woodland? If so, you are probably observing trees that have been infected with Sudden Oak Death (SOD). Professor Wolfgang Schweigkofler, Ph.D joins us on **Saturday, November 18, from 5pm - 6pm at the museum in the Lower Village**. He will shine a light on this mysterious disease and, most importantly, what you can do to help stop it.

Admission is free for members and \$5 for non-members. [Click here](#) for additional details.

## Hiking Program every Saturday 9:30

Want to get out in the fresh air and get exercise? Join our guided hiking program every Saturday in November at China Camp State Park. Hikes range from easy to moderate, ranging from 1.5 to 2 miles.

[Click here](#) for additional details.

**If any of these events are cancelled,  
an announcement will be posted on the [FOCC website](#).**

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Champion Work Day

November 11, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

### Gentle Walk in the Woods

November 12, 9:30 am - noon

### Speaker Series: Sudden Oak Death

November 18, 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

[SEE ALL UPCOMING EVENTS](#)



## WHO ARE WE?

We are volunteers who operate China Camp State Park.

Despite the name, China Camp State Park is neither operated nor supported by the State of California. Park operations are funded entirely from your fees and tax-deductible donations to Friends of China Camp, Inc., a 501(c)(3) public benefit corporation. All fees collected at China Camp State Park stay within FOCC for use in operating the park; no fees go to Sacramento.

With your donations, plus thousands of hours of volunteer support, FOCC continues to keep facilities open and in good repair, maintain the trails, provide educational programs in natural history and cultural history, and pay rangers, park aides, and maintenance workers.

For more information about the partnership between FOCC and California State DPR, [click here](#).

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### How You Can Help

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