



**From the Editor:** With workdays suspended over the last number of months due to the Covid-19 pandemic – and more recently wildfires – our newsletter will be continuing in shifted focus from workday news and photos to reporting on outdoor activities with an eye to safety and wellbeing. As well, we'll be continuing our introduction of Trail Center Board members and their favorite tools.



**From Trail Center Leadership:** In light of the COVID-19 outbreak and the continued uncertainty about when it will be safe for gatherings, our next volunteer workday is, as yet, still to be determined. We will establish when workdays can resume based on Trail Center board policy, government and health department directives, and the policies of our park agency partners. Most of all, we will consider, as always, the safety of our volunteers. We will provide updates at the Trail Center website ([www.trailcenter.org](http://www.trailcenter.org)) and via email to our volunteer list as we make decisions.

### Introduction: Dave Taylor



The Trail Center is pleased to introduce our oldest Trail Center Board member: David (Dave) Taylor. You probably already know Dave from a past volunteer workday as he has been volunteering since 2001! He joined the board in 2004, and served as President from 2006 to 2016. We'd like to give readers the chance to get to know a bit more about Dave, so we posed some questions, and Dave was happy to respond.

***What brought you to the Trail Center, and how long have you been with us as a volunteer?***

In the spring of 2001 I saw a brief mention of a Trail Center project in a local paper, which included a request for volunteers for trail work at Los Gatos Creek. This was on a property newly acquired by the Sempervirens Fund. I came out and the then president, Geoffrey Skinner, sold me on the Trail Center's mission. It seemed like a great group of people and a way to "give back to the trails." Because of a family emergency, I did not get back to doing projects until much later that year, but I've been involved ever since.

***Where is your favorite place to hike locally? What about it is special?***

I think that my favorite is the Polly Geraci Trail which is located in the Pulgas Ridge Open Space Preserve operated by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District ("Mid-Pen"). In the '80's the  
(continued on following page)

*Introduction: Dave Taylor (continued)*

Trail Center built this trail and it is working well today. It connects to the Blue Oak Trail, which is also a nice trail. The Polly Geraci trail is also unique in that it is the only trail that I know of that has a sign that provides attribution to the Trail Center for constructing the trail.

***Can you tell us about one of your favorite workday projects over the years? Do you have a “hands-down” favorite?***

There have been so many I can't remember them all, but I especially enjoyed the construction of the two connector trails in Huddart Park the construction of the first Sugar Loaf Mountain Trail, and work on San Bruno Mountain. I echo [fellow Board member] Heike's thoughts expressed in the last newsletter that making new trails is really cool.

***What achievements are you proudest of from your time as President?***

There were several things that stand out. The TC celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries during that time. These were significant milestones for a small nonprofit. We also had the trailer painted and developed a new Trail Center logo. Another significant achievement was partnering with the Sutro Stewards in San Francisco. We were integral to them getting started, training their staff, advising them on what tools to buy, etc. Subsequently we put on an excellent Crew Leader Training with them where we used Mount Parnassus as a training ground and worked on several UCSF projects there.

***If you could choose any workday assignment — widening tread, brushing, drain work, etc. — what would it be and why?***

I really like making drains. A good drain must be well thought through, and you never know what will challenge you – rocks, brush, hard dirt, topography, berms, roots, etc. However, all projects are great where you can look at the before and after photos and recognize what a difference you and your crew have made. These days, my most frequent assignment is most often as a Crew Leader, which involves a lot of walking the on the trail in discussions with new volunteers and other experienced trail builders.

***Anything you would like readers to know about you personally?***

I'm a chemist by training, and worked in the environmental field for forty years, the last twenty one with the Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco. I'm now retired. I hail from Ann Arbor, Michigan originally. My wife of 45 years and I have two sons and one granddaughter. I was a long-time blood donor until sidelined by medical issues. I donated almost 34 gallons! I grew up in the sixties, and was a draftee who served in Thailand during the Vietnam War. I like to garden and spend time hiking and canoeing in the Sierras. We have a small cabin down the hill from Sonora Pass.

***Do you have a favorite tool to work with on workdays? If so, tell us why, and please share best uses for that tool.***

I think it would have to be the Rogue Hoe. I like tools that have some sturdiness to them, and the Rogue Hoe definitely fits that criterion. It is great for knocking down berms and for digging drains. It is not quite as good for moving dirt around as a McLeod or a bent shovel, but I think it is a very versatile tool for trail work.

## Rogue Hoe



*Rogue Hoe detail, above.*

*Rogue Hoes in action, right.  
Trail Center volunteers during  
November 2019 Russian Ridge //  
Bay Area Ridge Trail workday*

This combination hoe/rake is ideal for use in wildland firefighting and trail building. The hoe features a 7" cutting edge, and the five rake teeth are 2-1/4" long each. Rogue Hoe's legendary tempered steel blade stays sharp and withstands rugged use in the field.



## Bay Area Hikes for Social Distancing

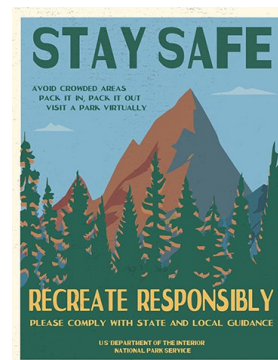
Our friends at the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) put together a list of some trails in the Bay Area that are exceptionally suitable for maintaining safe social distancing while enjoying a hike.

For those unfamiliar with POST, they've been working since the late 1970s to preserve open spaces in San Mateo County, and provide information on their website -- <https://openspacetrust.org> -- regarding hiking trails in the Bay Area, among other topics.

During this time, when we're doing our part to safely socially distance while in public, POST provides links to notably wide trails at <https://openspacetrust.org/blog/hikes-for-social-distancing> and to the least crowded local trails at <https://openspacetrust.org/blog/least-crowded-hikes/>.

## Safety reminders for hiking during Covid-19 pandemic

- Keep a six-foot distance from other hikers not from your household.
- Bring a face covering and wear it when required or recommended.
- Bring hand sanitizer – just in case it's needed.
- Wash hands immediately upon returning home.



**Heat, wildfire smoke, bad weather, bugs  
got you stuck inside?  
Still want to enjoy the outdoors?**

Take an armchair hike by enjoying  
one of these documentary films,  
curated by Beth Dean for Ellis Brigham.

- 180° South
- Mile ... Mile & A Half
- Only the Essential: The Pacific Crest Trail
- Distant North
- 3 Hikers
- Six Million Steps: A Journey Inward
- As It Happens: Pacific Crest Trail

For film descriptions and details on where to  
access films, see:

<https://www.ellis-brigham.com/news-and-blogs/7-must-watch-hiking-documentaries>



**Lightning Complex Wildfires:  
Trail Remediation**

As Bay Area residents note the heartbreaking news of devastation due to the Glass Fire in Napa and Sonoma counties, we are relieved to note 100% containment of the LNU Lightning Complex fire in those counties as well as full containment of wildfires impacting the Peninsula and South Bay, including:

- The SCU Lightning Complex fire in multiple locations throughout Santa Clara, Alameda, Contra Costa, San Joaquin, Merced and Stanislaus Counties
- The CZU Lightning Complex fire in various locations across San Mateo and Santa Cruz Counties

Parks and open spaces in which Trail Center has built and maintained trails have been impacted by both the SCU and CZU fires. Agencies in related jurisdictions have been providing Trail Center with updates on park conditions. It is expected that Trail Center will be asked to assist with restoration once conditions are deemed safe for volunteers. We look forward to helping rebuild our beautiful parks and open spaces.

---

**Haunted Hiking Trails**

Pumpkin carving and trick or treating come to mind as we get close to Halloween. How about throwing a haunted hike into the mix this year? Here are some tried and true recommendations for Bay Area Haunted Hikes: <https://weekendsherpa.com/issues/haunted-hikes-across-the-bay-area/>

---

***If you're not yet a Trail Center member, beat the year-end rush and join now.  
See our website for details: <https://www.trailcenter.org/membership/>***

***Also, please consider us in your charitable donations.***

***Trail Center is a 501(c)3 non-profit volunteer organization.***