

# The Explorers Club

## Northern California Chapter

January 2002

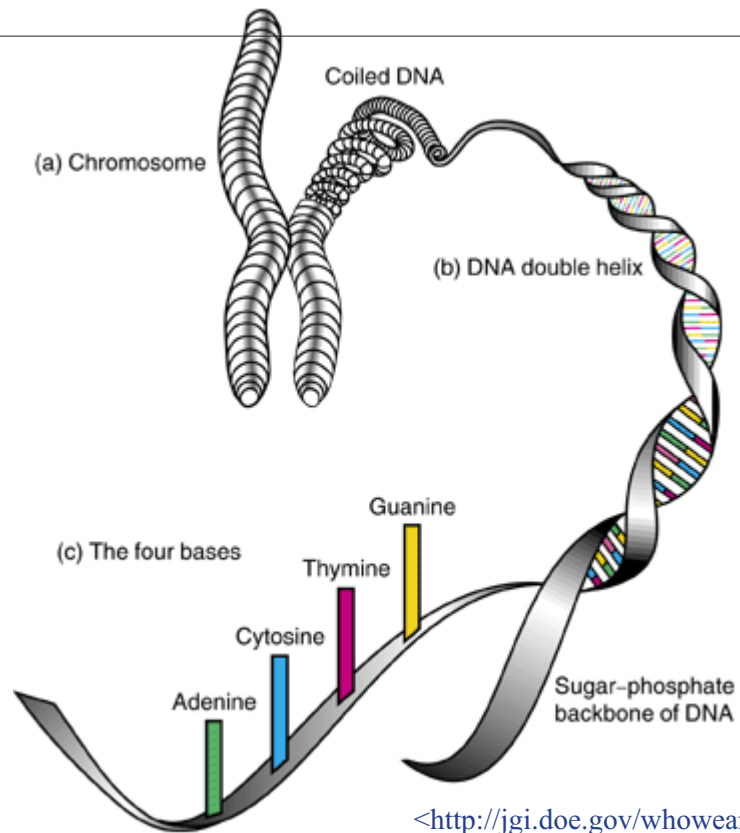
Web site: <http://www.diggles.com/ec/>

### San Francisco January 25 Elbert Branscomb

#### Life Through the Genome's Eye

Now that the humane genome has been investigated at such length, this evening we will wrestle with some subset of these questions:

- In what sense does a creature's 'genome' specify its properties?
- What kind of information is in the genome and how is its storage arranged?
  - Is the genome tidy and rational; is it fashioned 'for the good of the species'?
- What is the history of the human genome and what do we learn about human history from it?
  - How do the genomes of mice and men differ—or those of different individuals—or of different peoples?
  - How do genomes change over time; how fast; why?
  - Where do we sit in the evolutionary tree of life?



<http://jgi.doe.gov/whoware/index.html>

- Does 'life' look like a different sort of thing in the light of 'post modern' post-genomic understanding?
  - What good and what ill is likely to come from our having at long last rendered visible the secret instruction sets—the genomes—of very many creatures both great and small - including ourselves?

In November 2000, Elbert Branscomb became the Chief Scientist of the Department of Energy Human Genome Program. Between 1996, and November 2000, he was the director of the Department of Energy's Joint Genome Institute (JGI), a fusion of the genome programs of Lawrence Livermore, Lawrence Berkeley, & Los Alamos National Laboratories, responsible for the sequencing of human chromosomes 5, 16, and 19. Branscomb received his B.A. in physics from Reed College in 1957, and his Ph.D. in theoretical physics from Syracuse University in 1964. He joined

Lawrence Livermore in 1964, as a theoretical physicist and became a senior biomedical scientist in 1969.

Branscomb's professional activities include being a member of Scientific Overseers, Jackson Labs, Maine since 1997, and member of the Scientific Advisory Board of the Joint Center for Structural Genomics, La Jolla, California. From 1996 to 1998, he was a member of the Panel of Scientific Advisors for the National Institutes of Health-National Council of Human Genome Research's Pilot Project for Large-Scale Sequencing of the Human Genome. From 1993 to 1995, he was on the Advisory Committee, Mouse Genome Informatics Project, Jackson Labs, Maine; and, from 1992 to 1995, a member on the NIH-GR Study Section for the Human Genome Program. He is also the coauthor of numerous scholarly articles, primarily on scientific research related to the human genome.

**Date:** Friday, 25 January 2002  
**Place:** Ft. Mason Officers Club  
Ft. Mason, Franklin at Bay  
San Francisco  
**Time:** 6:30 pm, no-host cocktails  
7:30 pm, dinner  
**Cost:** \$45 (by Jan 21)  
\$50 (if posted afterwards  
call Steve at (925) 934-1051)

Reservation Form on page 5  
Please reserve promptly!

## The basics of genetics.

Each cell in the human body (except red blood cells) contains 23 pairs of chromomes. These are inherited. Each parent contributes one chromosome per pair to their children.

(a) Each chromosome is made up of a tightly coiled strand of DNA. Current research lies in the details of this structure. In its uncoiled state it reveals

(b) the now familiar double-helix shape. Viewed as a twisted ladder, the sides, made of sugar and phosphate molecules, are connected by

(c) rungs made of chemicals called bases. DNA has four, and only four, bases that form the interlocking pairs:

- adenine (A)
- thymine (T)
- guanine (G)
- cytosine (C)

The order of these bases along the length of the ladder is called the 'DNA sequence'. The hunt for genes is focused on reading the order of the bases for each DNA strand and determining which parts of the sequence constitute genes.

Come expand upon these basics.

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## Remember Your US History And Teach It!

Dave Rader has an open request for speakers to discuss events from the 20th Century in his classes at De Anza College. Give him a call; those who have responded find great satisfaction.

Topics include (but are not limited to):

- Teddy Roosevelt
- Hiram Bingham
- Peary-Henson North Pole
- Margaret Mead
- Roy Chapman Andrews
- aerial exploration/ 20s & 30s
- Martin/Osa Johnson
- post-WWII explorers/exploration
- space exploration
- National Geographic Society
- The Explorers Club
- personal expeditions/experiences
- and the list goes on...

Contact: David S. Rader, Instructor  
(650) 210-8370  
d-rader@pacbell.net

# San Francisco Explorer Gene Savoy

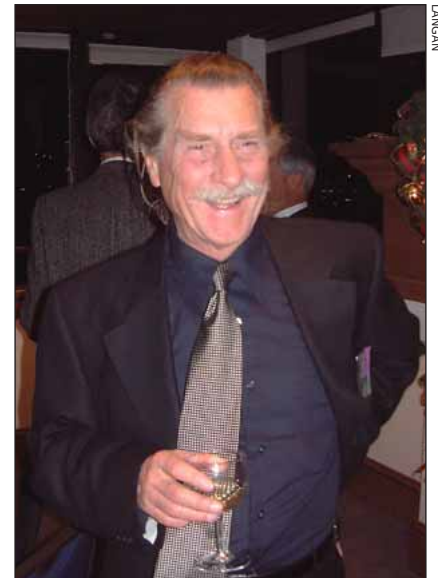
## Perseverance in Finding *El Dorado*, the Lost Cities in Peruvian Andes

Those who were not able to attend our December meeting missed a rare evening. Our speaker, Gene Savoy (MN'69), reminisced about a career of seeking El Dorado in the Incan Andes. It was off-the-cuff and reflective; a marvelous evening with an explorer.

This Summer he carried Explorers Club Flag #147 to return to a hidden hillside city complex of the Chachapoyas named Gran Saposoa. He had discovered the site in 1998. On this trip he was accompanied with film crews, Peruvian officials, scientists, mountain climbers, a full expedition of 100. They managed to spend a fortnight wresting a plaza from the jungle: a small attempt to show what lays beneath. To give some sense of the scale of this find, in three adjacent complexes there are approximately 500 dwellings; in contrast, famed Machu Pichu has some 200.

We were treated to a video taken during the 2001 trip: an insightful tour of the activities, jungle-bound structures and the scenic mule trip leading to and from the eastern Andean valley. If this is any indication, the professional film in progress will be spectacular.

Gene narrated the video, which gave a sense of being there as one watched. The archaeological find is amazing enough, in that the cities are buried deep in jungle cover, at a high 9500-foot altitude. It frequently takes a keen eye to see the outlines. Then one realizes the scale of things. In other views, tombs are placed high in cliffs, seemingly impossible to reach. Stone carved heads; mummies entered. But built they are, and with large heavy materials. One asks how were these structures were created in approximately 500 AD. A site he found on an earlier expedition, Gran Pajatin, contains a structure one kilometer in circumference with as many stones as are



in the pyramids of Choeps. Massive building went on in these high mountain valleys. Now they are occupied by monkeys.

Gene has followed the precepts of Schliemann. The German found Troy by believing Homer's *The Iliad*. Savoy searched for El Dorado, the mythical great white city. He found Vilcabamba by believing de la Varga whose description of the Incan mythology described trails and routes and cities. Early airborne exploration and arguous search for ground truth, succeeded in identifying these jungle-covered ruins. Now it will take time for the archaeologist to ferret out what story they tell. Gene feels his work is done; he has led them to the site!

He closed by confirming his joy at being able to explore and urged the members, and several younger guests, to follow exploration. "The human mind is curious, and life is very short. As long as the explorer contributes knowledge to himself and to the world in which he lives, exploration is a thoughtful business." And, clearly fulfilling and enjoyable!

## Rain or Shine! A place to be!

### Betsy Crowder Trail

January 19, 2002

10:00 a.m.

The Betsy Crowder Trail is short; it leads to other longer and steeper trails on Windy Hill (on which you may wish to continue.) The planned hike will take about 30 minutes.

On Saturday morning, January 19th, we'll join Betsy's daughter, Wendy, to hike the Betsy Crowder Trail on Windy Hill. The trail is a gentle, short hike leading to a vista point. It connects to other, more demanding trails and participants have the choice of just doing the Betsy Crowder trail and returning to the parking area, or continuing on for a longer trek.

We'll have coffee and bagels in the Windy Hill Parking lot and start the hike at 10AM. Call by Friday evening (510/527-7899) to let us know you'll be there, and we will wait for you if you are a few minutes late. If you want to be spontaneous and not call ahead, please be at the Windy Hill Parking lot by 10AM!

Directions to the start of the hike: Take 280 to Sand Hill Rd in Menlo Park; exit and go west towards Portola Valley. After approximately 4-5 miles, look for the Portola Valley Town Center on your right.

The Windy Hill Parking lot is 1/2 mile after the town center, on the right. The Betsy Crowder Trail starts in the parking lot and is about 1/2 mile long. It connects to the Windy Hill Trail (optional additional hike), which ascends 1100 feet, 3 miles, up to the top of Windy Hill on Skyline.

### Our February Lecture

## Inside Afghanistan

Dr. Bonita Chamberlin

At Ft. Mason Officers Club on February 22

Anthony Mournin, of the San Diego Chapter of The Explorers Club wrote, after hearing their chapter Vice Chair speak: "Until November 27, 2001, I had never been to Afghanistan. Like so many others, my knowledge was limited to the images and snippets of information from CNN.

"Bonita Chamberlin changed my perception of the country and its people with a carefully prepared slide presentation delivered at a fast moving pace before an audience of almost 250 information-starved members of the general public and The San Diego Chapter of The Explorers Club.

"For almost 26 years Bonita has been involved with the peoples of Afghanistan. Trained as an anthropologist, she first worked in Afghanistan with SunMaid raisins and Lummus cotton. Like the mountain trails she walked, the path of her career had many twists and turns. Gemstones of Afghanistan, unearthed by bombs in the unsuccessful Soviet attempt to conquer a nation of stubborn mountain warriors, uprooted raisins as a way Bonita saw for Afghan tribes to provide employment, obtain foreign exchange, and purchase needed goods and materials.

"Land mines, perhaps as many as 12 million, pepper the countryside. The mines make it impossible to grow crops or graze animals. On average, Bonita said, almost 90 people die each month from these seeds of destruction sown by planes of the former USSR. Until the mines are cleared they will continue to kill and to maim. More than 5,000 people made their living trying to find and disarm land mines. Explosives and metal parts are sold at local bazaars. But Afghanistan is more than mines for gems, or land mines. We saw a countryside with lowlands and climate not much different from San Diego, but with a backdrop of mountains and peaks along the old Silk Road of Rudyard Kipling's Kim. With more than twenty peaks above 20,000 feet, this is a land of challenges. Its mountains protect, but they also divide the many tribes, creating very separate languages and cultures. With more than 20 different languages, (not just different dialects, but different languages), Afghanistan has never been a people united. Then, as now, each region has been autonomous, and, at best, the nation has been a loose confederation of interests rather than with a common purpose, unless

fighting a common enemy.

"Bonita quoted the first king of Afghanistan, Abdur Rahman Khan, as he asked, "How can a small Power like Afghanistan, which is like a goat between these lions, or a grain of wheat between two strong millstones of the grinding mill, stand in the midway of the stones without being ground to dust?" One wonders. These are a hardy people. Rough around the edges, perhaps, with less than 2% of the population able to read or write, but survivors every one."

Be prepared for some true insight in February, and invite your friends.

Please note that, *Inside Afghanistan*, with Bonita Chamberlin, was filmed by U.C. San Diego-TV on November 27, 2001. For those of you with cable, it is scheduled to air on television on January 14, 2002 at 7:30 P.M. and 9:30 P.M. and January 20 and 21 at 6:00 P.M.

UCSD stations include Time Warner channel 18 or 35; it is streamed on their website

<http://www.ucsd.tv/>

See the following website for a 7-page critique/newsletter on the lecture (from which the above quote was taken.)

<http://www.adventurecorps.com/sdx/news/afghanistan.pdf>

American Society of Media Photographers presents:

## Architects of Peace: Visions of Hope in Words and Images

Michael Collopy  
Photographer-Editor

Ft Mason Conference Center  
February 12, 7PM  
ASMP Members 5.00  
Non members 20.00  
Students: 5.00

Michael Collopy, who had a vision and documented the work of those who have dedicated their lives to the struggle for peace and justice, will present his images and cover the many facets of his recent projects.

His new book, *Architects of Peace: Visions of Hope in Words and Images*, features portraits in stunning black and white imagery and essays by a broad and very diverse community, including Nelson Mandela, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Carlos Santana, Mother Teresa, Jimmy Carter, Robert Redford and many others. "I've ended up with a group of people I never could have imagined. I hope the diversity of viewpoints I've included shows how differences could be united through the central goal of peace." Michael hopes to turn his peace project into an international exhibit that will tour universities.

He is currently working on a book profiling blues musicians including

B.B. King, John Lee Hooker, Buddy Guy and the Rolling Stones. His first book, a two year project, *Works of Love Are Works of Peace*, celebrates the life of Mother Teresa.

Michael began his career in a back stage studio at the Circle Star Theater, formerly in San Carlos. He photographed a variety of entertainers from Frank Sinatra, Bob Hope, George Burns, Diana Ross, Liza Minnelli and Jerry Seinfeld. Michael lives in Hayward with his wife, photographer Alma Ahedo and sons, Sean and Paul. Michael shoots both on location and shares a studio with Tom and Tommy Vano-The Studio of Vano Photography, Inc. in Burlingame.

Michael will be available for a book signing after the event.

—Mort Beebe, FN'78



A Folsom Street snapshot of Beebe's huge inkjet print from Fort Scott shows both famous bridges at once.

### "City by the Bay, San Francisco"

Morton Beebe's photographic exhibition of 5' x 9' prints are displayed in the Gap Inc. Headquarters Art Collection's 21 windows fronting the Embarcadero, Folsom and Spear Streets, San Francisco. The photos are from publisher Harry Abrams book, *San Francisco*, in print from 1985-2002. They were produced by Digital Pond and are hosted by GAP Inc. Headquarters, 2 Folsom Street, San Francisco. [ed note: Drive by; a real treat.]

### Chicago

February 9, 2002

Exploring the Source of the  
Amazon River  
Zbigniew Bzda

Call Chery Istvan at (847) 446-8645 to attend this lecture at the newly activated Chicago Chapter. There will be the added opportunity to visit the Polish Museum of America

### Philadelphia

January 30, 2002

Wildlife Without Boundaries  
Peter Godwin, Wayne Safro,  
Faanya Rose

The discussion is on an innovative approach to conservation in southern Africa. To attend, contact Carol Aitken [aitken@400search.com](mailto:aitken@400search.com).

Their February 21, meeting is about discovery of the deepest wooden shipwreck.

### New York

March 23, 2002

ECAD  
The Future of Exploration

It is time to make reservations for the annual feast and elegant gala at the Waldorf. It is always a wonderful affair; if possible make arrangements to attend with fellow chapter members.

Contact the Club Headquarters:  
[events@explorers.org](mailto:events@explorers.org),  
[kbrush@explorers.org](mailto:kbrush@explorers.org)

# Greetings from the Chair

Dear Northern California Explorers:

Happy New Year. I hope you all have included The Explorers Club and exploration in your new year's resolutions. And if anyone has a resolution to get more involved with the Chapter, we have a couple of special projects that can use some help, along with routine efforts.

**Roster:** we want to put out a new Chapter Roster. Lee Langan has everyone's address. If you want to correct or add to your roster information, please put the changes or additions on the dinner form, with or without a reservation for dinner. And, if you want to help more, Lee will need help putting together the roster and mailing it out.

**Newsletter:** Lee is also always looking for more material for the newsletter – personal stories, flag reports, reviews of books by Chapter members, treasure maps – anything you would like to share that relates to Club efforts.

### Special Upcoming Events:

• January 19, 2002: Betsy Crowder Trail Walk, starting at 10 AM. Within the first five minutes of meeting Betsy, she managed to relay her love of hiking and joy in the Peninsula trails, and her enthusiasm was infectious.

• March 9th New Member and Sponsor Brunch: We'd hoped to be able to hold this brunch on Ground Hog's Day, but February is getting too crowded to hold a brunch and make it fun. And, we have so many new members (16 as of the most recent count) and the new members and their sponsors may be too large a group to fit comfortably in my house. The new member and sponsor group should be a large and lively event, and we should be enjoying some Philadelphia scrapple, cheese steak sandwiches and Maryland crab. Thank you to everyone who has sponsored new members throughout the year, and welcome again to all the new '01

members. Mark your calendars for brunch on the 9th, but do not wait till then to start coming to Chapter events.

• March 23rd: Explorers Club Annual Dinner. You should have received information on ECAD from New York. Every year is a special and note-worthy weekend. If you will be going, please consider taking a few notes and providing a write-up of the event for the chapter newsletter.

Again, Happy New Year. Current events have reaffirmed my appreciation for exploration, the exchange of information, and awareness of different cultures. As it says in our mission statement, "it is vital to preserve the instinct to explore."

—Lesley Ewing, FN'93

## Treasurer's Report Calendar Year 2001

|                       |          |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Bank Balance, Dec '00 | \$1,225  |
| Meeting Income        | 21,668   |
| Meeting Costs         | (13,304) |
| Other Income          | 2,090    |
| Projector Cost        | (1,501)  |
| Newsletter            | (1,531)  |
| Bank Balance, Dec '01 | \$8,647  |

## Elections Calendar Year 2002

At the December meeting the slate of officers who served for Calendar Year 2001 were proposed and voted upon to continue the governance of the Northern California Chapter of The Explorers Club.

# Evolution

@ The Explorers Club

Your Northern California Chapter came upon hard times in December. Thanks to our diligent Webmaster Mike Digles, a complete lack of communication was averted. There is a tale behind the events.

It seems that the Bureau of Indian Affairs is involved in a lengthy legal conflict with independent nations within our borders, one or more Indian cultures. It was found that there is a leak in the very widespread and accessible Department of Interior web site. The leak related to confidential financial information of monies owed these tribes. So...

On Wednesday, December 5, 2001, District Court Judge Royce C. Lamberth: "...ORDERED that defendants shall immediately disconnect from the Internet all information technology systems that house or provide access to individual Indian trust data; and it is FURTHER ORDERED that defendants shall immediately disconnect from the Internet all computers within the custody and control of the Department of the Interior, its employees and contractors, that have access to individual Indian trust data."

Our web site WAS hosted by the US Geological Survey, which was clearly no longer available. Mike scrambled, and we are now hosted, as shown on the first page, at his personal site. Thanks, the address is even easier to remember!

What a mess that unfettered access has begot. Hackers, confidential data, terrorists and the venerable Interior Department. This is our brave new world.

—Lee Langan, FN'99

Please make your checks out to The Explorers Club, Northern California Chapter and mail with this form to:

Please reserve \_\_\_\_ spaces for January 25, 2002, at Ft. Mason Officers Club. Cost: \$45 each by January 19; \$50 if postmarked thereafter (call Steve at (925) 934-1051 to confirm and assure a reservation).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (if changed): \_\_\_\_\_

Guests: \_\_\_\_\_

Stephen E. Smith  
The Explorers Club  
402 Via Royal  
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

meal choice: (please circle)

meat

fish

vegetarian

## Chapter Officers

Chair: Lesley Ewing  
510 527-7899  
lewing@coastal.ca.gov

Vice-Chair: Stephen E. Smith  
925 934-1051  
nauticos@oceanearth.org

Treasurer: Thomas Hall  
415 502-7204 (work)  
thall@epi.ucsf.edu

Webmaster: Mike Diggles  
650 329-5404  
mdiggles@usgs.gov

Newsletter: Lee Langan  
415 567-8089  
lee@langan.net

## Chapter Calendar for 2001-2002 Season

|             |               |  |
|-------------|---------------|--|
| January 25  | San Francisco | Elbert Branscomb — the Joint Genome Project                  |
| February 22 | San Francisco | Bonita Chamberlin — Inside Afghanistan... From One Who Knows |
| March 29    | not set       | Marilyn Schlitz — noetic sciences                            |
| April 26    | not set       | in process   |
| May 31      | not set       | not final  |
| June        | not set       | Chapter Picnic   |

Please note venues with care. They sometimes change, but the most recent is accurate!  
The January 25 meeting is at the Ft. Mason Officers Club in SAN FRANCISCO!

(When copying the URL addresses be sure to keep them all on one line; most are also available as links on our Chapter web site.)

### *January 2002*

Lesley Ewing  
The Explorers Club  
Northern California Chapter  
1679 Tacoma Avenue  
Berkeley, CA 94707-1826

