

# The Explorers Club Northern California Chapter November 2009

In color at our web site: <http://www.explorersnorca.org>

Note venues and dates with care.  
**Tiburon, CA**  
Our next event is at 6:30 on  
November 20, a **Friday** evening,  
at the Dana home.



Just killed, 1898  
(here and lower right)

## Tiburon—November 20, 2009 Nathaniel Dominy, Ph.D. MAN-EATING LIONS IN KENYA, FOR SURE!

### A Question Answered for Teddy Roosevelt

For over one-hundred years explorers have wondered if the large number of humans reportedly eaten (estimates ranged from 28 to 135 workers) during the construction of the British railroad across Kenya to Uganda in 1898, was plausible—as reported by Colonel J. H. Patterson in his 1907 book, *The Man Eaters of Tsavo*. In that cooperation is the cornerstone of lion social behavior, in this notorious case, two adult male lions cooperatively killed. In December, 1898, Patterson killed both large (nine feet nose to tail!) maneless males. Some thirty years later the stuffed hides and original skulls were sold to Chicago's Field Museum, where they remain.

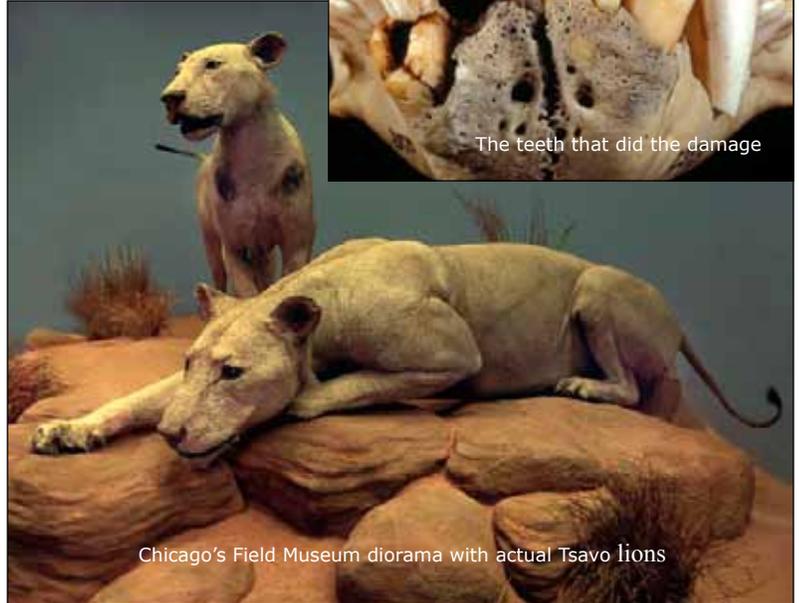
Move 100 years ahead. In 1999, The Explorers Club awarded a grant to Nathaniel Dominy to support his graduate studies. (He is now Associate Professor at UC Santa

Cruz and has just been selected as one of the **Brilliant 10 Scientists** of 2009\* by *Popular Science* magazine.) Prof. Dominy studies the evolution of human and primate diets, and he is about to publish a paper on the diet, ecology, and life history of the Tsavo man-eating lions. Come hear how he has solved the question of how many people each lion ate! (Col Patterson wasn't so wrong.)

While the full extent of the lions' man-eating behavior is unknown, he will describe the use of stable isotope ratios to quantify increasing dietary specialization on novel prey (fortunately *people* are considered *novel*) during a time of food limitation.



The teeth that did the damage



Chicago's Field Museum diorama with actual Tsavo lions

For one lion, the carbon and nitrogen values of bone collagen and hair keratin (which reflect dietary inputs over years and months, respectively) reveal isotopic changes that are consistent with a progressive dietary specialization on humans. These findings not only support the hypothesis that prey scarcity drives individual dietary specialization, but also demonstrate that sustained dietary individuality can exist within a cooperative social framework. The intensity of human predation (up to 30% reliance during the final months of 1898) is also associated with severe craniodental infirmities, which may have further promoted the inclusion of unconventional prey under perturbed environmental conditions.

*A cold case resolved, a century later.*

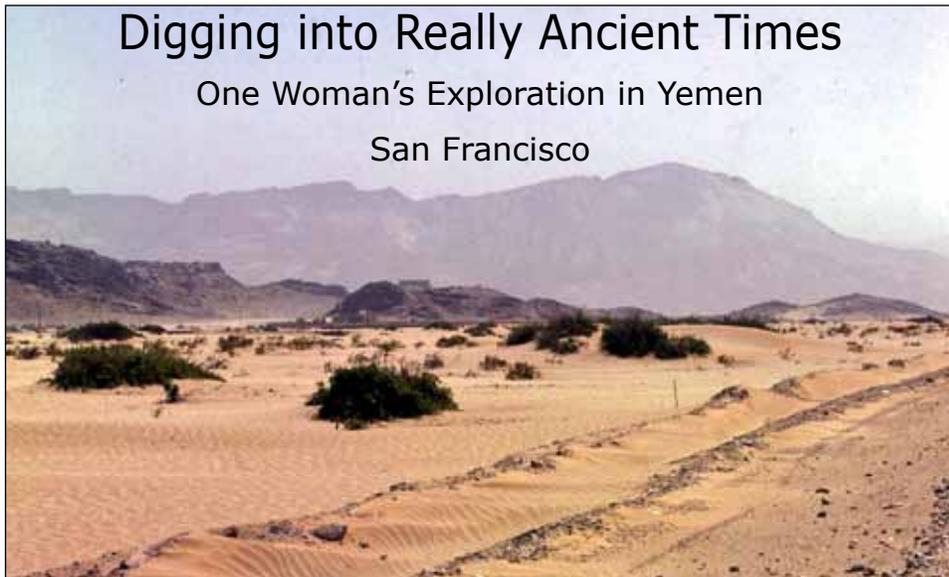


\* Dr. Dominy is profiled in the November issue, on newsstands October 15. It is the magazine's ninth annual *Brilliant 10* issue, which shines a spotlight on men and women under 40 whose work "will change the future." An announcement states, "Dominy, 33, is a bold researcher who has already made significant contributions to the study of human evolution. His work focuses on the acquisition and consumption of food; his goal is to identify the nutritional jackpot that gave our forebears a major advantage over all other primates. To that end, he explores the diet and foraging behaviors of hominins, the early human ancestors who lived 2 million years ago. A creative and indefatigable scientist, Dominy works at the intersection of anthropology, ecology, and genetics to understand what fueled the development of bipedalism and big brains."

# Digging into Really Ancient Times

## One Woman's Exploration in Yemen

### San Francisco



Diana Pickworth, Ph.D. (FN01), has a passion for Yemen and a poetry in her presentation of the work she has accomplished there for nearly two decades. Native to England, she first traveled to this rugged land on the southern edge the Arabian Peninsula at 25—she taught two French children. She remembered this haunting place and returned to seek out archaeology therein—even though cautioned there was little to be found. Ah, she thought, there *must* be interesting sites, people have passed this way since the Pleistocene.

Dr. Pickworth gave a brief survey of earlier archaeology in Yemen. It has been modest in scale, partially due to the physical hazards of desert work and the hostility of local tribes. The desert breeds hearty humans very protective of their hard scrabble existence.

This is a land where a path crossed between Africa and India as the ancient human diaspora expanded. To leave Africa the first hurdle was the Red Sea, then the north-south mountain range which parallels it's

eastern edge. For centuries Bronze Age man populated the sea shores. At some point, a narrow pass (now in modern Yemen) was discovered that allowed access to a river valley crossing far to the east; slowly man made his way.

As a result of this long presence, burials and artifacts are common, and these have become the basis of her studies. Diana works closely with the Yemen Department of Antiquities and has found treasures in the beautiful, yet bleak, terrain. Archaeology in the desert is very hard and dangerous work to this day. She shared the humor of the locals and the close calls, not infrequent. She has lost expedition participants in tragic accidents, been chased by bandits, harassed by weather—yet she has returned with crates of carefully documented detritus left by humans.

She spoke of three sites: one, along the southern edge of the vast dunes of the Rub' Al Khali (the Empty Quarter) where Paleolithic and even Neolithic burial sites were

discovered. Another, an abandoned city once along the trade route for gold, frankincense and myrrh resins (when boats, introduced by the Greeks, allowed sea travel, the land route was abandoned.) A third, an old well in Aden where layers of chards revealed the development of trade between Asia and the Near East.

Yemen, like Thailand, has never been a colony (albeit the coastal city Aden was British for over a century.) It has an ancient and proud history. It has been prone to shifts in religious fervor over the ages, and it now faces new intrusions of extremists partly because the population is rapidly increasing. Nevertheless, Dr. Pickworth returns in December to continue teaching at the University of Aden and conducting her solo expeditions into difficult places. "The silence of a sunrise in the desert is my perfect moment," she says. No wonder.

It was a fascinating hour.



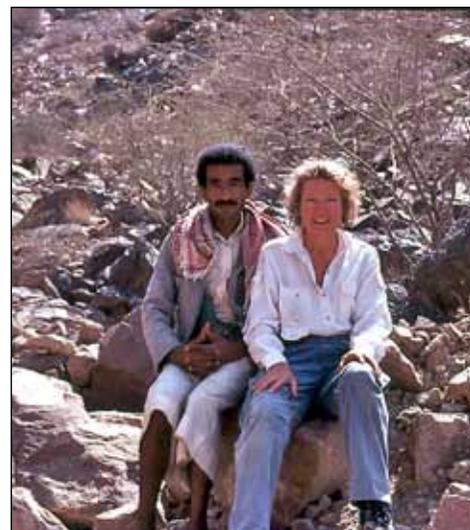
Photos

Chair Alan Nichols and Diana Pickworth at our October 30th meeting (upper left).

Ramlat Sabatayn: representative of the harsh desert and harsh roadways (upper right)

Shabwa children, Diana and a protective rifle (left)

Diana and Ali, her driver over the Mablaqah Pass (right)



## HELP WANTED

Chair needs some help coordinating National merchandising for Explorer items; contact Alan.

The newsletter continues to seek an individual to report upon member tales, a highlight of our meetings; contact [lee@langan.net](mailto:lee@langan.net)

Local chapter calendar-year dues are \$25; they mainly support the newsletter.

(We would like to send as many notifications and newsletters as possible by email, but our mail list still remains about 320.)

Please notify Steve Smith at [nauticos@oceanearth.org](mailto:nauticos@oceanearth.org) to accept email-only communication.

## Von's Trek Kit



Medical tape	One roll	Lots of uses
Gloves – Nitrile or non-latex	2 – 3 pairs	Blood / body fluid contact
Alcohol swabs	6 – 8	Antiseptic wipe
Face shield	One	For giving CPR
Triangular bandages	3 – 4 (pre-packaged)	Slings and many other uses
Scissors (EMT)	One pair	Cutting clothing / other uses
Bandage compresses (sterile)	3 – 4	Bleeding control
Roller bandages	2 – 3	Securing compresses / other uses
Aspirin	3 – 4 packets or container	Heart attack / other uses
Irrigating eye wash	1 bottle	Eye rinse
Sugar packets (glucose)	3 – 4	Diabetic emergency
Band Aids	5 – 6 Small to extra large	Cuts and scrapes
Steri-strips	One full sheet	Temporary suture for serious cuts
Bio-hazard & zip-lock bags	2 – 3 various sizes	Contaminated wipes / other uses
Whistle	One	To summon help
Rescue (“Space”) blanket	One	optional*
Wire splint	One	optional*

All above items can be carried in a gallon size zip-lock bag and weigh just one pound.

\* You can lighten your load one ounce by omitting the blanket and splint.

**The Corner Chair**—We had a record turnout to hear **Diana Pickworth** on her adventures and work in Yemen. Almost everybody made it, to my surprise, through the clogs and smogs of horrendous traffic jams from all directions. If they want to force us into mass transit, they should close the bridge a few more times!

**Dida Kutz** all the way from Monterey (she almost gave up in Palo Alto) and **Bob Higgins** joined us to celebrate their election to full membership. Bob is now coordinating a new membership initiative to help several sirdars and others ascend the Elysian heights of Member status since he overly modestly claims, “If I can do it, anyone can.”

**Ed Von der Porten** has struck gold (sarcheologically at least), his 1576 galleon *San Felipe* which contained an oriental cargo; he’s talking at the New York clubhouse in their “Sea Stories” series, but he won’t tell anyone where the sunken ship is.

**Von Hurson**, our new field-trip chair, introduced our newest Sirdar **Fofo Gonzales** from the local cavers girth; Fofo, former President of the Mexico cavers, will lead us on our next field trip. This is a natural for me

since I’m often “completely in the dark.”

**Lawrence Glacy**, visiting from San Diego, reported his upcoming visit to ‘prison’ Tibet looking for lichen, not freedom, in his studies of their relationship to the transport of air pollution.

True explorers are there when you need them. **Kathy Jepsen** took care of the money while Sue was away, and **Becky** stepped in for our lead hostess—both at the last minute.

We had an explorers demonstration of the biblical loaves and fishes for carpools to Bart for the East Bay traffic jam victims. Those who made their way by auto gladly accepted passengers for the return.

Thanks to all members who filled out the questionnaires at each table; the few responses must mean we’re doing OK? Or Not?

We now have a *film* new Sirdar, welcome **Geoffrey De Vito**.

Becky and I attended the New York dinner on *Risk* in expeditions: too many speeches, daredevils dancing on fabric 50 feet in the air (real risk takers), and some good advice: “Having an unexpected adventure on an expedition proves your incompetence.”

—Alan Nichols (FN84)

**The Trek Kit**—It started with a scenario-based “Field Medicine Trip” on Mt. Diablo earlier this year to experience how medical advice from a doctor, via satellite cell-phone, would function to save a life—or at the very least, a limb. Impressive. Still, one important question remained: what about having the correct tools on hand to do the job?

Having spent 11 years with the National Ski Patrol as a patroller with basic EMT training, I always responded to a call with a vest-full of basic, but important supplies.

Hence the birth of what’s become known within the NorCA Chapter as the *Trek Kit*—a one-pound pouch filled with medical supplies that go well beyond those found in a standard first-aid kit and vary considerably from traditional survival kits. It focuses strictly on medical issues—from a small scrape, to diabetic emergencies and broken bones, to life-threatening events like breathing emergencies or severe bleeding.

The collection of supplies has been selected with the goal of keeping someone with traumatic, potentially life-threatening, injuries alive by stabilizing them, and keeping them as intact as possible until advanced medical help arrives or they can be transported to a medical facility. And *that* can make all the difference.

—Yvonne (Von) Hurson (NorCA Sirdar)

## A new NorCA Field Trip on December 5 (Saturday)

—We will travel to a nearby cave and be escorted by an officer of the local chapter of the National Speleological Society. You will need a good flash light (and a spare), a construction-like helmet (bike head gear works; tape the light to this) and clothes that can get muddy (with a clean set for returning home.) Knee pads can be helpful; bring some water and a light snack—you’ll eat in the cave. (This may be a first for many! Aficionados say it can get into your blood.) If you are interested, please email Von Hurson soon,

[trekking@sonic.net](mailto:trekking@sonic.net)

The group is limited and eight signed before it became formal. Specifics will be forwarded. If you participated in the earlier field trips, you know it will be fun; if not, try it.

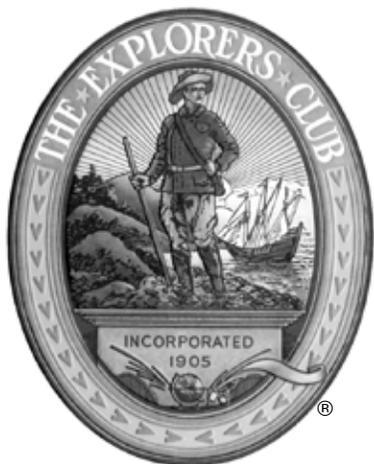
## Early Warning, Symposium—

Several of our members traveled north to attend the *Compass Symposium* arranged by the Pacific Northwest Chapter. We have been advised that it will again be held at the Lakedale Resort this Spring. The dates: April 22-25, 2010. If you want details of what is scheduled, the costs and signup, contact: Lynn Danaher (MN05):

[Lynn <islandlynx@aol.com>](mailto:Lynn<islandlynx@aol.com>)

**Election for 2010**— As nominated by the prior chairs of the NorCA Chapter, Alan Nichols was unanimously elected at our October meeting to serve as Chapter Chair in 2010. We look forward to another great year and thank him for the year just closing.

November 2009



Chair: Alan Nichols  
 415 789-9348  
 nicholsalan9@gmail.com  
 Vice Chair: Anders Jepsen  
 925 254-3079  
 ajviking@aol.com  
 Treasurer: Sue Estey  
 510 526-2216  
 sestey@earthlink.net  
 Secretary: Stephen E. Smith  
 Webmaster: Mike Diggles  
 Newsletter: Lee Langan

Nate Dominy about the Tsavo lions  
 20 November — the Dana home, Tiburon

**Northern California  
 Calendar of Events**

(Venues will be identified as soon as known.)

Our next Meeting

November 20 (Friday) . . . Nathaniel J Dominy  
 Tsavo Lions of yore, Dana home, Tiburon  
 ATTENDANCE LIMITED TO 1st 40

Future Event Schedule

- December 5 (Saturday) . . . . . Fofo Gonzales  
 Cave Field Expedition register with Von Hurson
- December 12 (Saturday) . . . . . Alan & Becky  
 Chair's Member Reception . at Nichols, Tiburon
- January 29, 2010 (Friday) . . . . . several  
 Story Night . . . . . Golden Gate Yacht Club
- February 26 . . . . . Reginald Barrett  
 California Wildlife . . . . . GGYC
- March 26 . . . . . Adam Wolf  
 Siberian Tundra . . . . . GGYC
- April 30 . . . . . Seth Shostak  
 Are We Alone in Space? . . . . . GGYC
- May 21 . . . . . planning
- June TBD . . . . . Angel Island Picnic
- July 1 . . . . . Joint Meet with Dendrology Society  
 Marcel Robinson. . . . . GGYC
- Earlier Meetings
- March 27 . . . . . Payne Johnson  
 Stephens' 1839 Search for the Mayas, GGYC
- April 18 . . . . . Mort Beebe  
 Photography Field Expedition, Mt. Tam
- April 24 . . . . . Christopher Whittier  
 Stories of Gorilla Country, GGYC
- May 9 . . . . . Paul Freitas, MD  
 Medical Emergency Field Expedition, Mt. Diablo
- May 15 . . . . . Doug Findley  
 Sailing the NW Passage, GGYC
- June 6 . . . . . Angel Island Picnic
- June 13 . . . . . Mt. Shasta Climb
- September 25 . . . . . Jim Sano  
 Retracing Shakleton, GGYC
- October 30 . . . . . Diana Pickworth  
 Yemen Archaeology, GGYC

Send address changes and  
 corrections by email to Steve at  
[nauticos@oceanearth.org](mailto:nauticos@oceanearth.org)

**USE PAYPAL!**

**November LOCATION**

**Date:** Friday, November 20, 2009  
**Place:** The Don & Jeanne Dana home  
 34 Paseo Mirasol, Tiburon, CA  
**Time:** 6:30 - reception  
 7:15 - supper  
 8:00 - talk  
**Cost:** guests of the Dana's;  
 Chapter donation \$20  
 Please mail information (to right), to  
 Dr. Sue Estey, 216 Carmel Avenue, El  
 Cerrito, CA 94530 or email sestey@  
 earthlink.net or call (510) 526-2216

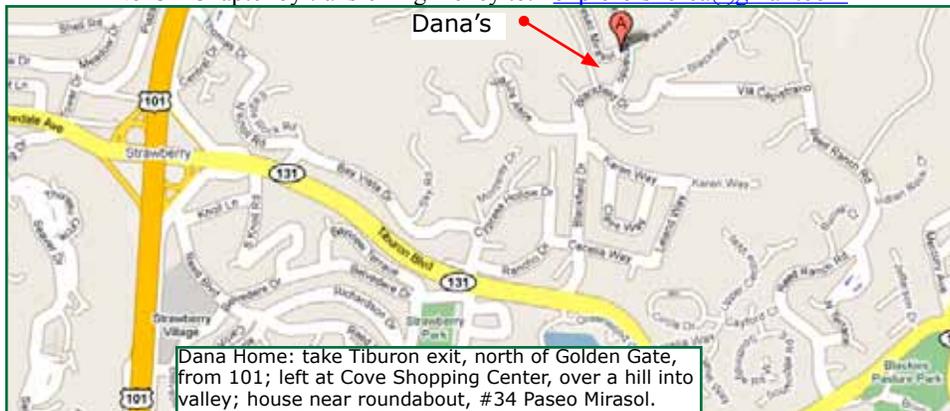
Reserve \_\_\_ spaces for  
 November 20, 2009  
 Dominy talk at  
 the Dana's Tiburon, CA home  
 Cost: we are the guests of the Dana's  
 (a Chapter donation of \$20 is requested!)

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

**DUE TO SPACE LIMITS  
 ATTENDANCE AVAILABLE FOR 1st  
 40 Sign Ups**

**We have established a PayPal account.**

For those of you who have these accounts, you can sign up and remit dinner costs to the  
 NorCA Chapter by transferring money to: [explorersnorca@gmail.com](mailto:explorersnorca@gmail.com)



Dana Home: take Tiburon exit, north of Golden Gate,  
 from 101; left at Cove Shopping Center, over a hill into  
 valley; house near roundabout, #34 Paseo Mirasol.