

The Explorers Club Northern California Chapter

May 2017

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

LOCATIONS

Note venues and dates with care

Friday, 26 May, 2017

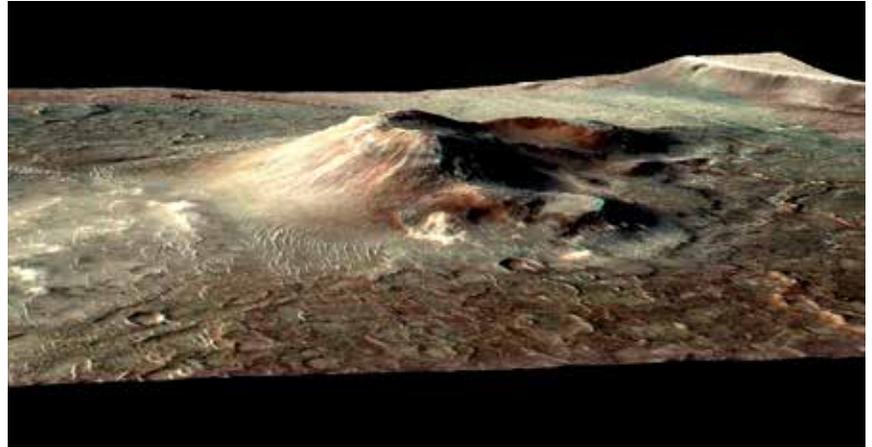
[Spenger's Fish Grotto](#)
[1919 Fourth Street](#)
[Berkeley, CA 94710](#)

SEEKING SIGNS OF LIFE ON MARS J. R. SKOK

One of the greatest questions of science and society is 'Are we alone?' Is the life that we know all there is, or is there much more out there? While scientists are investigating this question from many directions, this talk will focus on our search for evidence of life on Mars. Mars is the most Earth-like planet in our solar system and has had environments that would have easily supported life as we know it. The critical question is if it ever did. If life can form any time the right environment is present, we would expect life to exist throughout the universe. If not, then we are all the more special.

Join J.R. Skok, a planetary scientist from the SETI Institute and a Explorer's Club member since 2010 on his journey to develop a mission to find evidence of this life on Mars. Using NASA satellite data, J.R. discovered one of the two known hot spring deposit on Mars. These springs deposits are ideally suited for developing life, preserving it and showing us where it find it. All we need to do now is make the mission and send it. J.R. has traveled to spring systems around the world to understand how they work and what a mission would need to do. Springs in Iceland and Chile are being used to understand what we should look for. J.R. will share his journey to these springs and how that will get us ready to explore for life on Mars

J. R. Skok, has been fortunate to embed exploration into his life for both work and play. He works as a planetary scientist who explores



with the SETI Institute and NASA Ames to lead the development of a mission to find life in ancient Martian hot springs. In order to get a better understanding of the geologic processes seen on Mars, he has worked in analogous environments including Antarctica, Iceland, the Andes, Hawaii, Spain, Northern Quebec and more, with each location offering a specific insight into what made Mars.

Beyond the Mars Exploration, J.R. is active in cave exploration. He has mapped caves in Virginia, Alabama, California, Hawaii, Mexico and has spent six months over the past few years on mapping expeditions in southwest China. Both the work on Mars and recreational exploration are driven by J.R.'s passion for the unknown and to see what has not been seen. This can either be the first to map as in the caves or to observe something in a new way, such as with a new instrument on Mars.

J.R.'s interests have led him to be a student of past human explorations and the culture and technology that enable them. He is using these lessons to help propel humans into the next great age of exploration with the Journey to Mars. Beyond the science, J.R. is working on the technology and cultural needs through his company Made of Mars, dedicated to creating the material platform for multi-planetary civilization. Through Made of Mars, J.R. is making the exploration of Mars accessible to everyone while developing the processes humans will need away from Earth.



Mars and Mars-like places on Earth; when not doing that, he is often mapping caves to relax. He has been part of NASA's Mars Exploration Rover and Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter mission team and now works



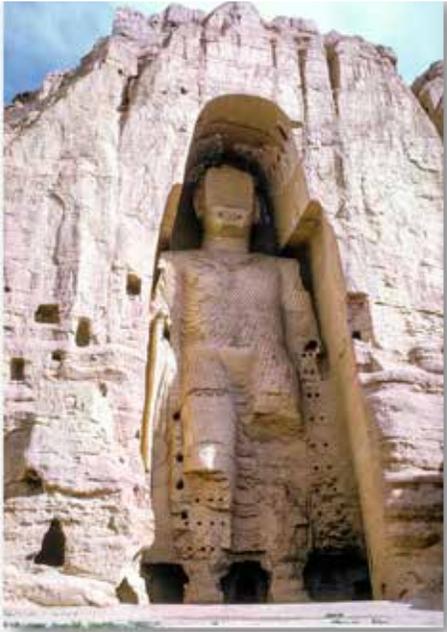
THE FACES OF AFGHANISTAN AT PEACE: 1970
by SANDRA ROSS, April 28, 2017
with Sandra Cook and Sandra Fish

The April Chapter meeting featured a remarkable collection of photographs from Afghanistan. Our own Sanda Ross FN'17 presented pictures taken during a trip she and her late husband Ed Ross FE'79 took to Afghanistan in 1970, before the Russian and American incursions. Accompanying her great slides were Sandy's remembrances of her 6 weeks spent cruising Afghanistan looking for Emibiids (bugs) and finding a culture, as well as a new species.

There is no way to adequately describe the details presented in the many photos that Sandy showed in her wide-ranging talk. Pictures of people, shops, families, life, terrain, temples, vehicles, etc. all brought to the audience a view of a gentle life in a culture and environment different from the frenetic pace that we are used to. All of this accompanied by personal comments from one who experienced it first hand, including a bit of the different life that females experience in Afghanistan.

The preparation of this review was aided by the ability to view it on video, and this reviewer had the pleasure of hearing the talk and seeing the photos more than a few times during the setting up of this page.. The reader is encouraged to revisit Afghanistan through this video. The complete talk can be viewed at: <https://archive.org/details/FacesOfAfghanistanAtPeace>.

Thank you Sandy. AJ



Photos by Ed and Sandy

**International Ocean Film Festival
Northern California Chapter Film Program**

The next film program will feature *Freightened*, June 11th on the US Berkeley Campus. *Freightened - The Real Price of Shipping*, the latest film from Denis Delestrac, "reveals in an audacious investigation the mechanics and perils of cargo shipping; an all-but-visible industry that relentlessly supplies 7 billion humans and holds the key to our economy, our environment and the very model of our civilization." (from www.freightened.com)

This event will be held in coordination with Center for Law, Energy & the Environment and Law of the Sea Institute. The showtime, campus location and ticket options are still in development and will be announced soon.

ANNUAL CHAPTER MEETING: 26 MAY 2017.

The business of this meeting will be to present the slate of and vote on candidates for the Officers and Member-Elected Directors of the Chapter for their coming terms. All members of The Explorers Club may vote.

The nomination committee has presented the following slate of nominees for consideration by the membership:

- Chair: Stephen Smith
- Vice Chair: Lesley Ewing
- Secretary: Yvonne Hurson
- Treasurer: Joan Boothe
- Member Elected Director 1: Jim Hurson
- Member Elected Director 2: Sandra Cook
- Member Elected Director 3: Paul Freitas

Chapter Members are invited to submit additional nominations (including self-nominations) for any of the above positions.

Nominations from the Membership should be emailed to Von Hurson, Secretary of the Chapter at (trekking@sonic.net) no later than 7:00 pm May 25, 2017. After May 25 and before the meeting, nominations should be left by voicemail at 707-545-6880.

Can't make the meeting? Cast your ballot by email to Lee@Langan.net by 26 May.

More on Afghanistan



Top Left: The three Sandras: Speaker Sandra Ross with her consultants: Sandra Cook and Sandra Fish

<Photos by Ed and Sandy Ross^

EDITOR'S CORNER

Movies. THE EAGLE HUNTRESS is a beautiful film set in the Altai Mountains of western Mongolia near Kazakhstan. 13-year old Aisholpan wants to learn to be an 'eagle hunter', a skill traditionally passed down from father to son. Her father helps her to capture an eaglet and teaches her how to work with it. Not only magnificent scenery but also a view of the culture of the nomads of Mongolia. It's a great story with gorgeous scenery; a film that every explorer should see.

Looking for life on Mars. Getting ready for the promo article on Page 1 about the May talk, the speaker sent us some pictures, one of which was so dramatic (the volcano on page 1) I wondered if it was indeed real or just an artist's conception. Researching this on the internet led me to NASA's collection of photos from space. I was astonished at the quality of the pictures and the clear geological evidence of familiar geologic processes just like the ones on earth. Do a search for "mars nili patera" and check out those amazing pictures of Mars and other planets.

**HONOR ROLL
PAID UP DUES
FOR 2017**

Members

Jim Alexander
Linda Alexander
James Allan
Julia Amaral
Robert Anderson
Susan Anderson
Guitty Azarpay
Richard Blake
Sheldon Breiner
Joan Boothe
Keith Chase
Doug Cheeseman
Ted Cheeseman
Sandra Cook
Alan Cooper
Thomas Cromwell
Richard Dehmel
Mike Diggles
Tom Dolan
Don Dvorak
Elaine Dvorak
Palmer Dyal
Scott Ellis
Sue Estey
Robert Eustace
Lesley Ewing
Susan Fox
Paul Freitas
Peter Hemming
Mike Herz
Don Heydorn
Don Heyneman
Robert Higgins
Jim Hurson
Von Hurson
Alan Hutchinson
Dana Isherwood
Anders Jepsen
Steven King
Ronald Klein
Jonathan Knowles
William Kruse
Keith Kvensvolden
Lee Langan
Ellen Lapham
James Prigoff
Sandra Ross
Becky Rygh
Rick Saber
Steve Smith
James Weil
Ed Von der Porten
Mordechai Winter

Sirdars
Barry Boothe
Marion Blumberg
Karoli Clever
Wendy Crowder
Joy Durighello
Sandra Fish
Anna Freitas
Louise Geraci
Gerald Griffin
Louise Heyneman
David Hirzel
Ann Hutchinson
Nancy Isaac
Kathy Jepsen
Fred Johnson
Kathy Judd
Margot Komarmy
Christopher LaFranchi
Karine Langan
Liz McLoughlin
Bonny O'Keefe
Tom Patterson
Laura Phelps
Aldeana Saber
Kay Schmieder
R Stewart
Z Stewart
Judy Van Austen
Robert Van Austen
Mark Weiman

From the Chair

The final event for our chapter until we resume activity in September will be our annual picnic in June. This year, it will take place on Saturday, June 24. This is always a fun time, and I hope to see many of you there. A picnic committee is working to put together details. You'll be hearing from the chapter shortly re place and other details.

Our picnics are always fun, but sometimes they are also consequential. Last year, a student member who had not previously been involved in our chapter introduced himself to several of us at the picnic. A fascinating conversation, as we so often have with our fellow explorers, quickly revealed that J.R. Skok is a person who has wonderful experiences to share. It was nearly a year ago, but that Chapter Picnic in June 2016 is the reason that J.R. will be our speaker this May, talking to us about his efforts on Earth leading ultimately to "Seeking Signs of Life on Mars."

As for J.R.'s talk, it will take place at Spenger's Fresh Fish Grotto in Berkeley — the first time that we've had a meeting in the East Bay in several years. I'm delighted that we could put this together — largely thanks to the efforts of Lesley Ewing. But this meeting is significant not only because it's in the East Bay. We will hold our Chapter Annual Meeting at this meeting and, with that, our 2016-17 Chapter Year will come to an end.

At this Annual Meeting, we'll be electing new officers, and I will be ending my term as your Chapter Chair. It has been my honor and privilege to fill this role, and I thank all of you for this opportunity. But no Chapter Chair can hope to serve our members well without a great supporting cast. I have had a wonderful one, starting with my Vice-Chair, Steve Smith. He is almost entirely responsible for what I believe is the major accomplishment of my term as chair, gaining legal non-profit status for our chapter. Von Hurson as secretary, Sandra Cook as Treasurer, Anders Jepsen as Newsletter Editor, Mike Diggles maintaining our website, Rick Blake as Field Trip Coordinator, Aldeana Saber taking care of meeting nametags . . . all our past chairs as members of our board . . . All these people and many others have contributed much over the past two years. To all of them, my great thanks. And may my successor as chair be so blessed!

As for me, I'll no longer be your chair, but I'll still be actively involved in the chapter, enjoying the company of the fascinating people who make up our Chapter membership.

Joan Boothe MN' 07

MORE NORCA CHAPTER MEMBERS AT ECAD



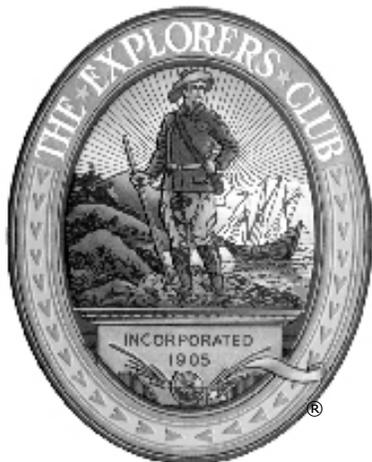
Photos by Joan Boothe

Above left:
Richard and Suzy Dehmel

Above Right:
Chris LaFranchi, Paul and
Anna Freitas, on the ferry

Below:
Ferry to Ellis Island





Chair: Joan Boothe MN'07
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hoodoskr@aol.com
Vice Chair: Stephen E. Smith FN'96
925-934-1051
ecna@oceaneearth.org
Secretary: Von Hurson MN'10
Trekking@sonic.net
Treasurer: Sandra Cook MN'16
cook_sandra@comcast.net
510-653-3665
Webmaster: Mike Diggles FN'92
Newsletter: Anders Jepsen FN'03
ajviking@aol.com
925-322-8893

Chapter Calendar of Events
(Venues are identified as soon as known.)

2017

April 28. Sandy Ross
Afghanistan pre-Taliban Grace Luth Ch
May 26 J.R. Skok
Seeking Life Signs on Mars Spengers, Berkeley
June 24 Chapter Picnic

Earlier Chapter Events
2015

December 13. Holiday Party
. Home of Joan Boothe

2016

January 22 Ted Cheeseman
Modern Ocean Exploration . . Grace Lutheran Ch
February 26 Rosemarie Twinam
Game Counting in Africa . . Grace Lutheran Ch
March 11-13. ECAD New York
March 25 Daniel Lin
Navigation on Polynesian Voyages Grace Luth Ch
April 21 (Thursday). Autodesk
Technology in exploration. Gallery, 1 Market, SF
May 27 Anne Sanquini
Surviving the 2015 Earthquake in Nepal GLChurch
June Crissie Field
September Drakes Bay Field Trip
September ?????
November 18, 2016 Dr. Bob Schmieder
2016 Heard Island Expedition . . Grace Luth Ch
December 11 Holiday Party
Home of Chapter Chair Joan Boothe

2017

January 27 David Helvarg
The Blue Ocean Grace Luth Ch
February 23 David Rumsey
Rumsey Map Center Stanford University
March 31. Eric Weiss
Expedition Medicine Grace Luth Ch

Send address changes and
corrections by email to Sandra Cook
sandra_cook@comcast.net

OTHER EVENTS, EXPEDITIONS, etc.

May 5, 2017: Kim Chambers MN'16 leads a good will swim for a human rights group called Colibri from California to Mexico, with 12 swimmers and 6 kayakers from South Africa, Mexico, USA, Israel and New Zaland.

June 22-July 8, 2017: Expedition to Mongolia with a member of our Chapter. Susan Fox FN'14 will be leading a 2-week of examination of areas that she has been studying for the past several years.

For information, contact Susan Fox at sfox@foxstudio.biz or at 707 496 1246

Editor's note: Dan Akerman AN'14, submitted Mount Everest last year. At my request, Dan agreed to write about it. In Part 1, Dan described the experiences that led up to him deciding to attempt to summit Mount Everest. Part 2 took the team to Camp 2. Part 3 appears below. The final installment will appear in the next newsletter.

MY MOUNT EVEREST EXPERIENCE: PART 3

After having spent a rest day at Camp 2 we began moving toward Camp 3 the morning of May 12th. It soon became evident that my climbing partner was not getting any better. Within 30 minutes of the climb toward Camp 3, my climbing partner collapsed and realized that she had reached her limit.

After six hours of climbing on the steep Lohtse Face, my Sherpa Furtemba and I made it safely to Camp 3, the point where you start to breathe bottled oxygen. The air here is very thin and every movement requires a significant amount of effort.

The next morning at 6AM we began our climb up to Camp 4, the final Camp before the summit of Mt. Everest. The climb from Camp 3 to Camp 4 was challenging, not because of the high altitude or technical aspects but due to the temperature. The combination of strong sun and no wind that day made it feel like it was 100 degrees outside. Climbing in a downsuit, ski goggles and a rubber oxygen regulator made it feel like I was trying to climb in a sauna.

After six hours of climbing we finally reached Camp 4 (26,000ft) around midday. We would spend the next ten hours here before continuing on toward the summit. At this altitude there is only 1/3 the amount of oxygen compared to sea level and every ounce of energy spent is not regained; this is where you begin to die.

PHOTO AND STORY OF THE MONTH

Got a favorite picture from your explorations? How about an interesting personal story? Please submit them to the Newsletter editor (ajviking@aol.com) so the rest of the club can enjoy them - picture, story or both.

ANNUAL MEETING / CHAPTER MEETING
Friday, May 26, 2017

Date: Friday, 26 May, 2017
Place: Spenger's Fish Grotto
1919 Fourth Street
Berkeley, CA 94710
Time: 6:30 - reception
7:15 - dinner; 8:00 - program
Meal Options: salmon or Chicken Piccata
Veggie option — Pasta Primavera
Cost: \$49 in advance, \$60 after 23 May; Students: \$35.
(2017 dues: Members \$25, Sirdars \$50)
Please mail reservations, checks & dues to Joan Boothe
email: Joan at hoodoskr@aol.com; or Call 415-233-1697 or
mail to 2435 Divisadero Street, San Francisco CA 94115

We have an established PayPal account.

With an account, you can sign up and remit your meal costs, dues, etc. to the NorCA Chapter
There is a PAYPAL BUTTON on our website (www.explorersnorca.org); easy to use!