



# The Explorers Club Northern California Chapter March 2021

Also available at our web site: <http://www.explorersnorca.org>

**MONTHLY MEETING  
FRIDAY, 26 MARCH 2021, 6:30 PM  
GATHER BY ZOOM INVITATION**

## HOW CAN YOU STEWARD WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW?

### Religious and Spiritual Motivations for and the Understanding from Robotic Space Exploration

This presentation, based on ethnographic interviews with engineers from the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), focuses on the religious lives of engineers involved in space exploration. I will discuss how these space explorers-at-a-distance think about the cosmos, humanity's future in space, and the ways their awareness of just how little humanity actually knows influences their ideas about the ultimate origins of the universe.



The white room is where they were building Perseverance.

Deana Weibel (MN'20) is a professor of anthropology at Grand Valley State University in Allendale, Michigan. Her exploration of sacred sites, sacred objects, and people's experiences of them has taken her to a variety of pilgrimage centers from Chimayó in New Mexico to Lourdes in France and Boudanath Stupa in Kathmandu, Nepal. Her most recent work has focused on the idea of outer space as sacred space and the religious lives and motivations of astronomers, flight surgeons, engineers, technicians and astronauts. Weibel has conducted ethnographic research on religion and space at various NASA flight centers around the United States, the Mojave Air and Spaceport, and at the Vatican Observatory in Castel Gandolfo, Italy.



The Mars Yard at JPL is used to recreate a stuck rover scenario with the twin rovers and how to get out of it on Earth before trying to do the same thing on Mars.



Deana Weibel with a duplicate of the Curiosity rover used for problem solving in the event the real Curiosity were to get stuck. Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

The Rover landed on Mars on February 18, 2021.

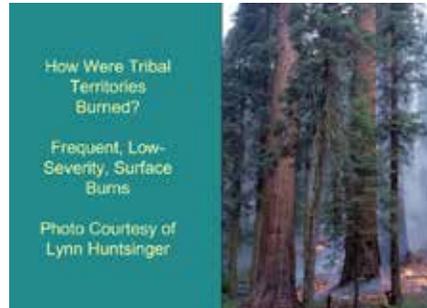
Website: <http://www.deanaweibel.space> Co-Organizer, Roger That! ([gvsu.edu/rogerthat](http://gvsu.edu/rogerthat))

# CATASTROPHIC FIRES, COLONIALISM AND INDIGENOUS LANDSCAPE PRACTICES

## The Relevancy of Cultural Burning in Rethinking the Stewardship of Public Lands in California

Kent G Lightfoot PhD, Department of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley

California is currently facing a crisis of catastrophic wildfires. While the causes are many, a crucial factor was Euro-American colonialism that prohibited Indigenous landscape practices and ushered in more than a century of fire suppression.



Catastrophic wildfires are certainly in the front of the minds of most Californians. While the causes are many, a crucial factor was Euro-American colonialism that prohibited Indigenous landscape practices and ushered in more than a century of fire suppression.

Professor Lightfoot's presentation of his work of the past 35 years was both very detailed and tremendously interesting. There were three main parts to the talk: Practices of the past both before the Spanish colonized California; the impact of the colonization both by the colonizers and the missionaries. The present level of research has documented past practices, mostly by using various ways to look at soil profiles that carry the history and using the latest tools: sampling through coring and digs; and analysis of the samples by microscope and other methods; historical records and political steps taken. And the future, from now and going forward, includes the practices of present tribal NGOs as well as changes in forest management and the use of controlled burning to reduce fuel to avoid future catastrophic fires.



In the 1000 years before the Spanish colonization of California, there was a definite distribution of tribes around the State for whom the soil records and other archaeological research revealed land management practices (controlled burning) to enhance the grass crop for crafts, plants and shrubs for food such as acorns and hazelnuts, and even crop rotation routines.

With the arrival of the Spanish, the colonizers eliminated such practices as a form of fire protection for the evolving structures of civilization in the 1700-1800s; the development of governmental efforts in forest management in the 1900s made it even worse..

In the last 20 years or so, however the pendulum is swinging back as the old tribal practices are being reintroduced.

For any particular tribe, these practices are in support of the farming to enhance the growing of such grasses as are used for basket weaving, and the harvesting of hazelnuts for food.

The development of tribal land trusts has permitted areas to be restored to that form of rotational burning to support the specific crops that fit in with tribal cultural habits both for food, and craft supplies. A tribal food restaurant was also established in Berkeley and may continue once the Covid-19 pandemic is over.



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Dr. Kent Lightfoot is Professor in the Anthropology Department at the University of California, Berkeley. He joined the Berkeley faculty in 1987. He received his BA from Stanford University and his PhD from Arizona State University. He has undertaken archaeological work in New England, the American Southwest, Alaska, Hawaii, and the Pacific Coast of North America. His recent investigations have focused on the archaeology of colonialism, the shell mounds of the greater San Francisco Bay Area, and indigenous landscape stewardship practices along the central coast of California.

**Editor's Note:** It was my suggestion to Tom Dietz FN'20, who recently joined The Explorers Club, to prepare a note to introduce himself to the Northern California Chapter. You will find that Tom has explored and developed his passions in many different ways. Be sure to introduce yourself to him when you get a chance.

Anders Jepsen FN'03

### Tom Dietz, FN'20

It is an honor to be able to introduce myself to you as a newer member of our Chapter. Growing up in New York's Hudson Valley my most memorable times were spent camping, hunting, fishing and collecting bugs. I had designs on becoming a naturalist and astronaut, and along the way I found truth in the words, it's the journey, not the destination. My path includes a Ph.D. in molecular biology and biochemistry from Washington University, a National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship in Marine Biotechnology and Ocean Sciences at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography and Oregon State University, research faculty positions at OSU and UCSF, a working cargo pilot having flown 45 different aircraft, a professional research diver, authoring over two dozen scientific publications and book chapters, a career as a Wall Street research analyst, investment banker and CEO, an entrepreneur, a musician, and a Director of both public and private for-profit and non-for-profit corporations.

While a practicing scientist my work focused on biochemical and molecular adaptations of organisms to unusual and stressful environments. I studied, and in some cases, collected animals from such environments as Antarctic waters, the deep sea and hydrothermal vents, intertidal zones, and microgravity.

Science provided me with many

unique opportunities including going to sea, conducting research dives on scuba and submersibles, operating the oldest professional telescope west of the Mississippi River, exploring many remote parts of the Baja peninsula, and seeing the first images of Neptune from Voyager 2.

I'm an avid outdoorsman and conservationist. I've traveled to over 40 countries (with dual US/Swiss citizenship), trekked off beaten paths, explored underwater caves, kayaked, fly regularly into the backcountry, backcountry ski, and enjoy viewing the night sky. I'm always looking for ways to explore big and small. I've advised appointed and elected officials at the local and national levels on biotechnology and business issues and for several years have been a judge for the bipartisan White House Fellows Program. I have an incredibly supportive wife, three boys, and a Labrador retriever.

In my business life, I've helped fund, build, and advise over two hundred science-based businesses, principally in the biopharmaceutical and agricultural biotechnology sectors. Currently, I chair a public company developing treatments for important viral infections. After many years, I recently transitioned from chairman of a ground-breaking agricultural company using soil microbes to help solve significant global crop losses from insect pests, fungal patho-



gens, and weeds. I have explored unique and remote environments to contribute microbes to the Company's diverse collection.

In an effort to share exploration and adventure with others, about ten years ago my closest friend and I formed an adventurer's club. Our goal is to inspire ourselves and others to seek out big and small adventures and tell those stories. I'm looking forward to getting to know our Chapter members, hearing their stories, and being inspired by their explorations.

### IN MEMORIUM

#### John Roush Jr, D.B.A. Col. AUS Ret. FN'80 -- Hail and Farewell

It is with sadness that we announce that John Roush, Jr. passed away at the end of January, less than a month shy of his 98th birthday. He enlisted in the Army 1942, served in Europe during WWII, and retired from the Army as a Colonel after 39 years of service. When the 91st Infantry celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2017, John was the oldest survivor. He became a member of the club in 1980 and his wife Virginia attended many chapter meetings throughout the 1980s and 1990s. I think his attendance had dropped off by the time I got involved with the club and I do not remember having met him. But, he was a life-long hunter and fisher and later in life added wildlife photography to his interests. He wrote several books about military history and several more about hunting and fishing in California and abroad. In his 80s he started attending classes with the Smith Ranch Senior Writers. He prepared a series of short essays that became his memoir, published first in 2008 as "Memories of an Interesting Life". In 2017, he revised and republished his memoir as "Vivid Memories of an Interesting Life", covering his years of exploration and ability to bring back good stories.

Lesley Ewing FN'93

**HONOR ROLL**  
Paid Up Dues 2021

**MEMBERS**

Alexander, James  
Alexander, Linda  
Allan, James  
Amaral, Julia  
Austin, Jenifer  
Ballou, Philip  
Berg, Barbara  
Boothe, Joan  
Chambers, Kimberley  
Chang, Joyce  
Chase, H. Keith  
Chirurg, James Thomas  
"Thom"  
Cohn, Francesca  
Cook, Sandra  
Cooper, Alan  
Dana, Don  
Dietz, Thomas  
Diggles, Michael  
Dolan, Thomas  
Durbin, Thomas  
Estey, Sue  
Eustace, (Robert) Alan  
Ewing, Lesley  
Ford, Art  
Fox, Susan  
Friedman, Lincoln  
Freitas, Anna  
Freitas, Paul  
Friedman, James  
Hemming, Peter  
Heydorn, William  
Higgins, Robert J.  
Horne, William  
Hutchison, Alan  
Jepsen, Anders  
Kvenvolden, Keith  
Lapham, Ellen  
Laverty, Laurence  
Lee (Akey), Katherine  
Miller, Gregory  
Nishimine, Kendall  
Prigoff, Jim  
Ross, Sandra Miller  
Saber, Rick  
Schmieder, Bob  
Smith, Steve  
Straka, Bill  
Tarter, Jill  
Winter, Mordechai  
Worden, Simon  
Wren, Sherry

**SIRDARS**

Baye, Karin  
Boothe, Barry  
Brandt, James  
Clever, Karoli  
Cohn, Lawrence  
Crowder, Wendy  
Dolan, Kathy  
Durighello, Joy  
Elkus, Nancy  
Friedman, Christen  
George, Marianne (Mimi)  
Grubbs, Melodie  
Hirzel, David  
Hutchison, Ann  
Isaac, Nancy  
Jepsen, Kathy  
Johnson, Fred  
Judd, Kathy  
Longo-Cohn, Mary  
Mani, Cassandra (Cassie)  
Nikas, A. James III  
Oesterle, Matt  
O'Keefe, Bonny  
Patterson, Tom  
Phillips, William  
Rolandson, Matthew  
Saber, Aldeana  
Schmieder, Kay (Kathleen)  
Stewart, Zach  
Straka, Barbara  
Van Austen, Bob  
Van Austen, Judy  
Weiman, Mark

**FROM THE CHAIR – March 2021**

We are now officially a year into the pandemic. We postponed our 2020 March meeting and transitioned to Zoom within a few months. It's been great to see many chapter members on the Hollywood Squares/Brady Bunch virtual platform. One of the nice advantages of the Zoom platform is that members from other chapters have reached out to join us. Our platform cannot handle opening all meetings to everyone, but when individuals ask us if they may join our meetings, we let them. That's how we met Deana Weibel, initially a member of the Great Lakes Chapter and now also a member of the Northern California Chapter. Her exploration interest is definitely a late 20th/21st century topic that examines the spiritual aspects of studying space. I've spoken with her about this topic, and she has some great stories.



I get oodles of interesting messages from HQ. Lots are about lectures, chapter connects, the winter auction and sale of merchandise. A few messages should rise to the top of your list and get some special attention. On March 9, all Club Members should have received an announcement of the April 10th 2021 Annual Meeting (starting at 11 AM EST -- but I think they forgot about Daylight Savings time and probably mean EDT. I am checking with them to be sure.). On March 10, you should have received a message from Honest Ballot for The Explorers Club. This message provides your personal password and link to the ballot to vote for no more than 5 people for the 2021 - 2024 Club Directors. If it is not in your regular in-box, check your spam folder and other places. Apparently, there is no way to be issued a new ballot. It would mean negating all the ballots and starting the election anew. If you search for the ballot and cannot find it, please let me know (lesleycoastal@gmail.com). I cannot correct the current situation that you cannot vote; but I can check to determine why you did not get a ballot and try to ensure that this omission does not happen again.

The other important upcoming election is for our chapter officers that will be held as part of our May 2021 Annual Meeting. The election will follow the same process as we used in 2019, except it will need to be virtual. Please contact Tom Dolan (tdolan@outdoorstorms.com) if you want to know about any of the officer positions or find out more about the election process.

Take care, explore safely and bring back good stories.

**Lesley Ewing, FN'93**

**ELECTION OF CHAPTER OFFICERS SCHEDULED FOR MAY 21, 2021**

Election of the Chapter officers for the coming year will take place at the Annual Meeting which is scheduled for 6:30 PM Friday, 21 May 2021. A proposed slate will be presented by the Board of Directors, and nominations from the floor will be permitted. The by-laws specify that officers of the Chapter must be Members of The Explorers Club. If you would like to be considered for an officer position, please discuss the matter with a Director.

March 2021 Issue  
Northern California Chapter  
Established 1973



**CHAPTER OFFICERS & TEAM**

Chair: Lesley Ewing FN'93  
chair@explorersnorca.org  
510-459-0858  
Vice Chair: Tom Dolan MN'14  
tdolan@outdoorstorms.com  
Secretary: Joyce Chang MN'17  
Treasurer: Anna Freitas MN'17  
Treasurer@explorersnorca.org  
Webmaster: Mike Diggles FN'92  
Newsletter: Anders Jepsen FN'03  
ajviking@aol.com  
925-322-8893

**2021**

March 26 . . . . . Deana Weibel  
Motivations for robotic space exploration . Zoom  
April 23 . . . . . Brandi DiCarli & Scott Thompson  
Farms from a box . Zoom  
May 21 . . . . . ANNUAL MEETING  
May 21 . . . . . Alison Fundis and Sonia Meyer  
Deep Diving and Caving . . . . . Zoom

**2019**

September 27 . . . . . Robert Anderson  
Material Science & Forensic Engineering . Creola  
October 25 . . . . . Michelle Westmorland  
Headhunters Revisited. . . . . Dolan  
November 22 . . . . . Dr. Barbara Bekins  
Windows into Subduction . . . . . Dolan  
December 15 . . . . . Holiday Party  
Home of Rick and Aldeana Saber

**2020**

January 24 . . . . . Dr. Jo Anne Van Tilburg  
Easter Island . . . . . Dolan  
February 28 . . . . . Dr. Robert Griffith  
Endangered Rhinos . . . . . Dolan  
March 27 . . . . . Cheryl Leonard  
Found Objects and Music . . . . . RESCHEDULED  
April 24 . . . . . Dr. Paul Auerbach  
Enviromedics . . . . . RESCHEDULED  
May 24 . . . . . Dr. Sandra Cook  
Foreign Devils on Silk Rd . . . . . RESCHEDULED  
May 22, 9:30 AM: . . . . . Roz Savage  
The Gift of Solitude . . . . . ZOOM Presentation  
May 29, 7:30 PM . . . . . ZOOM ANNUAL MEETING  
June 5, 8 PM. . . . . Eliot Jessup  
24 hr Grand Canyon Rim-to-Rim. . . . . Zoom  
September 20 . . . . . Explorers Club Chapter VP  
Intro to Northern California Chapter . . . . . Zoom  
September 25 . . . . . Liz Taylor and Sylvia Earle  
Mission Blue- Hope Spots. . . . . Zoom  
October 30 . . . . . Mimi George  
Vaka Taumako Project . . . . . Zoom  
November 20 . . . . . Cheryl Leonard  
Found Objects and Music. . . . . Zoom  
December 13. . . . . Holiday Party  
Zoom  
January 22 . . . . . Diana Pickworth & John Wilken  
Explorations (2) . . . . . Zoom  
February 26 . . . . . Kent Lightfoot  
Fires & indiginous land use practices . . . . . Zoom

**CHAPTER DIRECTORS**

**Directors (Past Chairs)**

Joan Boothe MN'07  
Lesley Ewing FN'93  
Lee Langan FN'99  
Anders Jepsen FN'03

Alan Nichols FN'84  
Bob Schmieder FE'86  
Rick Saber MN'01  
Stephen Smith FN'96

**Elected Directors**

Sandra Cook MN'16  
Paul Freitas MN'10  
Jimmy Friedman MN'19  
Kimberly Chambers MN'16

**Chapter Email Addresses and Chapter Phone Number**

chair@explorersnorca.org  
vicechair@explorersnorca.org

treasurer@explorersnorca.org  
secretary@explorersnorca.org

webmaster@explorersnorca.org  
fieldtrips@explorersnorca.org

**MEETING VIDEOS**

Our Chapter tries to record all of our dinner meetings. Videos of recent speakers' presentations are available on the Chapter Website.

**DO YOU WANT TO GET INVOLVED IN THE INNER WORKINGS OF THE CHAPTER?**

There are lots of tasks that come up during the course of a year: speakers, meetings, field trips, membership, newsletter, etc. A good place to get started is by volunteering to serve on a committee. Talk to any of the Chapter Officers or Directors for more information.

**NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER 2021 DUES**

The Northern California Chapter dues are paid for the calendar year. Dues are now due for 2021. New members who signed up in the 4th quarter of last year are covered for this year.

Sirdars have annual dues of \$50.00. In addition to their national dues, Explorer Club Members have optional dues of \$25.00. Dues can be paid by check payable to The Northern California Chapter of The Explorer's Club or by paypal. If you use paypal, there will be a \$2.00 fee for the service. If you pay by check, please mail your check to Anna Freitas, 161 Camino Posada, Walnut Creek, CA 94595.

Please note that Northern California Chapter dues can be tax-deductible depending on your individual tax situation.

**CHAPTER FIELD TRIPS?**

Suggestions are being sought for field trips to be planned for the next year. If you have any ideas be sure to share them with Jimmy Friedman who is the Chapter Director charged with organizing them. Email: sfaikido@gmail.com

**ECAD 2021**

ECAD 2021 is being planned now, with one option to be an outdoor event somewhat later in the summer. Check the main website for more details closer to Summer 2021.