

THE
AMERICAN HIKING SOCIETY

317 Pennsylvania Avenue, S. E., Washington, D. C. 20003



Please reply to 110 Sutter Street, Suite 1003, San Francisco, CA 94104

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

San Francisco, March 1, 1980

Over 10,000 hikers and long-distance backpackers are expected to walk across the top deck of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge early Sunday morning, April 13th, as part of the opening weekend activities of the American Hiking Society's HikaNation.

The HikaNation, also being co-sponsored by the U.S. Department of Interior's Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, will bring hikers together from across the United States to join the event as it traces a 14-month-long State-by-State hike from Ocean Beach in San Francisco to the Washington Monument in Washington D.C. The goal of the HikaNation is to show walking and hiking to be non-energy consuming and non-polluting activities for the entire family, and to promote the need for additional trails and footpaths in both urban and rural areas throughout the country. This will also give weekend and day hikers and walkers a chance to

take part in a major cross-country hike for a day, a weekend or a month at a time. An Assembly Concurrent Resolution (ACR 109) in support of the bridge crossing is currently being introduced in the California State Assembly by 16th District Assemblyman Art Agnos, and in the State Senate by Senator Milton Marks. San Francisco, Alameda and Yolo County Boards of Supervisors have unanimously passed similar resolutions in support of the event.

The major event of the HikaNation's opening weekend in April will be the seven mile hike across the top deck of the Oakland Bay Bridge. This will be the first time the top deck has been opened to hikers and walkers since the bridge was built in 1936. CalTrans has agreed to close off two lanes to give the hikers safe passage across the bridge to the Toll Plaza.

Opening weekend events will begin at the Polo Grounds in the western section of Golden Gate Park on Saturday morning, April 12. Hikers will be asked to arrive at the registration and information booths on the field beginning at 9:00 that morning. The registration fee will be \$3.00 per person. For this fee, the participant will get a shoulder patch, a HikaNation certificate, free gifts and information packets, as well as a ticket for a free crossing of the Bay Bridge the next morning.

The ceremonies will begin at 10:00 with noted local and national dignitaries on stage. At 11:00 a Scots bagpipe band will pipe the thousands of hikers out of the Polo Grounds and over to Ocean Beach. From there the hikers will head north along the coastline to the Golden Gate Bridge and then along the north shore of San Francisco to Fisherman's Wharf and the Embarcadero. The hike that day will cover 11 miles, mostly on level walking paths and beaches. Public transportation is available at many points along the route for those who do not wish to hike the entire distance. The Saturday hike will end at the Ferry Building at the foot of Market Street in San Francisco. Guarded and secure camping facilities will be available nearby at the designated on-ramp of the Bay Bridge for those who wish to spend the night.

Hikers who plan on camping overnight should only bring sleeping bags and pads or air mattresses as there will be no place to pitch a tent. No fires will be allowed in the camping area, however water and cleanup facilities will be available for those who bring small backpacker stoves with them. There are several restaurants nearby in the area of the TransBay Terminal. Campers are advised not to attempt to cook breakfast on Sunday morning because the bridge crossing is scheduled at a very early hour and there will be little time to break camp. Mobile caterers will be on hand with milk, coffee, and breakfast items for sale.

The crossing of the Bay Bridge will begin Sunday morning, April 13, at 6:00 am at a bridge ramp on Fremont Street between Howard and Folsom Streets. Those who registered at the Polo Grounds on Saturday will have their free bridge crossing ticket. Those newcomers who have not yet registered will be able to purchase either the \$3.00 registration packet including the bridge ticket, or a \$2.00 per person fee at the Fremont Street ramp. Everyone who crosses the Bridge must have a ticket. There will be no pre-registration for ANY Opening Weekend event. CalTrans and the California Highway Patrol have asked that no children under 10 be allowed on the bridge unless they are babies carried in back or chest packs by their parents. Since it will be seven miles from San Francisco across the Bridge ^{beyond} to the Toll Plaza, parents of older children should also consider their children and their ability to walk the distance. CalTrans and the CHP have also stipulated that there be no bicycles, roller skates, skateboards, pets, etc., on the Bridge at any time during the walk. Entrance onto the Bridge will be from 6:00 to 7:30 am. The Highway Patrol will close the Fremont Street off-ramp entrance at exactly 7:30 Sunday morning. CalTrans has ordered the two lanes of the upper deck to remain open to hikers from 6:00 to 9:30 am. All hikers must be off the Bridge by 9:30. In order to insure that all hikers are off the Bridge

by that hour, a number of buses will begin slowly moving across the bridge at 8:30 to pick up stragglers and take them on to the Toll Plaza. There will be no special transportation back to San Francisco from Yerba Buena Island or Treasure Island.

The HikaNation will continue on from the Toll Plaza area to a lunch stop (bring your own) in Berkeley's Aquatic Park and then on that afternoon to Tilden Park in the Berkeley Hills for another overnight camp. Most hikers will stop at the Toll Plaza area and will then take specially arranged public transportation back to San Francisco or throughout the East Bay. Other hikers will continue on across California, being joined either for a day or a weekend by still more hikers. It will continue throughout the Summer and Fall across the other western states being joined by still more hikers, finally arriving in Washington, D.C., 14 months later.

For those who would like to take part in the California section, or any other section of the country, can obtain further information on the HikaNation can be obtained by writing Monty Montgomery, 18600 S.W. 157th Avenue, Miami, FL 33187.

Both National and California 800 telephone numbers will be announced later to give participants last-minute information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONCERNING HikaNation:

For Opening Weekend Activities Between Golden Gate Park
and Aquatic Park -

Mike McReynolds
110 Sutter Street
Suite 1003
San Francisco, CA 94104

981-0970 (business hours)
824-4813 (after 8:00 p.m.)

For HikaNation Routing Questions Between Aquatic Park
and the Nevada Border -

Dr. Glenn T. Seaborg
Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720

486-5661

For HikaNation Questions Between Nevada border and
Washington, DC:

Monty Montgomery
18600 S.W. 157th Avenue
Miami, FL 33187

(for information packets which will be mailed)