

Bulletin of the Sequoia Audubon Society
San Mateo County Volume 42, No. 1
September, 1993



This Month's Program The Midpeninsula Open Space District

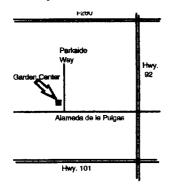
The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District is a California public agency which owns and manages more than 30,000 acres of public open space in San Matco and Santa Clara Counties...

Skyline Drive is MROSD's "main street" and most of its preserves lie west of Interstate 280. The preserves however give us an astonishing diversity of open space - from precious bay wetlands to urban historic sites.

Come to the Garden Center to hear and see MROSD's representative tell us about the preservation and main-

tenance of the natural values and beauties of these public lands.

This month's meeting is Thursday, September 9. Meetings are held on the second Thursday of the Month at the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside.



Plan Now for Coastal Cleanup Day October 2, 1993

See Page Three

Call the office or Sue Hillard for more information.

345-3724 or

r 595**-**8954

Next Month's Program

Gail and Doug Cheeseman return to the Garden Center to describe the exotic wildlife of Trinidad and Tobago. This tiny island republic just north of the Venezuelan coast offers great habitat diversity on its two main islands and Doug's photography brings its wildlife to us in amazing detail.

 Coming in November - A rescheduling of the April program that was called off because of Elaine Harding-Smith's illness - Status of the California Clapper Rail



From The President Anne Moser

Sequoia Audubon doesn't nap during the summer! We've held board meetings on June 27 and August 5 and will have another on September 2. The meeting on June 27 was followed by our annual planning meeting. The energy generated was tremendous. Now, to put our plans into action we have set these objectives for the coming year:

- 1. **Improve membership participation.** (We mail out approximately 1700 NEEDLES but our meetings average an attendance of 25. Any ideas? Call Anne Moser at 324-1718.)
- 2. Create awareness of SAS in the community.
- Develop ongoing SAS projects, e. g. conservation, restoration, preservation, etc.

Our Fall Birdseed Sale is Underway!

See Page Five for Details

- 4. Continue and enhance our relationship with the Williams Sisters Ranch Preserve.
- 5. Provide basic information to new members.
- 6. Maximize the efficient use of our existing office equipment.

We have spread the work around with some new committee chairs; Harriet Judge is now in charge of our Publicity; Rich Kuehn and Dean Schuler have taken over the Programs; and Sue Cossins is the new Circulation Editor taking over responsibility for mailing out the NEEDLES every month. (The editor acknowledges and thanks Linda Kypta for her years of selfless and anonymous service in performing this task as well as for her countless other efforts on behalf of SAS.)

There's nothing nicer than coming back from a weekend away and finding a phone message from a member volunteering to help. That's how Sue Cossins got this job. Thanks Sue! Our Membership Committee needs a chairperson. Any volunteers? For more information call me at 324-1718.

The Budget Committee met in early July and had the miserable job of balancing our increased costs against our diminishing income. (National Audu-bon's membership is down nationwide and a portion of those dues is important to our operation. Our investment income is also down because of low interest rates.) It looked for a while as if we would have to cut back on the issues of the *NEEDLES*. However we were able to find a less expensive printer and we will be able to keep 9 issues -- at least for this year.

Are there any members who prefer not to drive at night but would like to attend our meetings? Please let me know who you are by calling 324-1718. And are there any of you who would like to offer a ride to someone living nearby? Let me know who you are, too, by calling 324-1718. Then I'll match requests with volunteer drivers. Who knows, maybe you'll make a new friend!

(Continued on Page Four)



The S A S Calendar

September

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 2 - SAS BOARD MEETING. 7:30 PM at the SAS office. ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME. Please call ahead to be sure there will be enough room.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 - SAS GENERAL MEET-ING. MID-PENINSULA OPEN SPACE DISTRICT. At the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside. Social get-together with refreshments at 7:30 PM. Meeting at 8:00 with the program immediately following.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 9 through SUNDAY, SEPT. 12 - NA-TIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING at the Mark Hopkins Hotel, San Francisco. Members are invited to attend as observers.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12 - POINT REYES FIELD TRIP. A search through the "warbler traps" of Point Reyes can yield almost anything at this time of year. We'll be looking for inland and eastern vagrants but can expect migrants and some early arriving winter residents as well. Walking will be minimal but sturdy shoes are recommended. Clothing should be layered since the weather on Pt. Reyes is extremely changeable. Fall is normally the most pleasant time of year on the Point but it has the coolest average summer temperature in the continental US. We will meet at the new Point Reyes National Seashore Headquarters building at 9:00 AM. The trip will take place rain or shine. Bring lunch. The trip normally lasts until 2 PM.

LEADER

CLIFF RICHER

738-9176

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25 - THE PHIPPS' RANCH.

The public areas of this multi-use farm consist of riparian areas, open fields and wooded glades. During migration and in winter this farm has sheltered vagrant warblers, sparrows and woodpeckers, in addition to its broad representation of local resident species. The Ranch's fruit and vegetable stand is ½ mile east of the flashing red light at the center of the town of Pescadero. We'll meet in front of the farm stand at 9:00 AM. (Although there is ample parking in the area, please leave the areas closest to the farm stand for use by its regular customers.)

LEADER

DAN KELLER

726-3306

October

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2 - COASTAL CLEANUP DAY.

Sequoia Audubon Society celebrates the state-wide Coastal Cleanup Day by helping to clean up our abused bayshore wetlands. See the article on Page Three for details.

BEACHMASTER

SUE HILLARD

(Continued on Page Three)



News From Your Ranch Dan Murphy

Now it's ravens! You may remember the golder eagle which "blessed" us with its presence a few years ago. Now, a family of ravens have learned how to belly-up to the heronry for a meal. On July 4, a family of 5 ravens soaring overhead caught sight of two recently hatched great egrets. Alone in their nest the chicks were easy prey for the ravens. Startled ACR visitors witnessed one of the adult ravens swoop on the nest, grab a baby egret and fly off with it. A few hours later, the raven family returned. This time they approached from dense cover behind the nest, snatched the remaining chick and flew off.

This was the first time that this behavior had been observed. Does this happen all the time? What can we do about it? Ravens are opportunistic diners so this could have been occurring for some time without our having caught them in the act. Carrion, small vertebrates, fruit and just about anything else that is available can be a significant part of the raven's diet. They are known to be predators of seabird eggs and young so we'll just have to watch this one to see if ravens have been frequent, if unobserved, predators at ACR.

As to what we can do about it, there isn't much in the line of options. ACR acknowledges that predation is part of the natural cycle of nature and we don't interfere, even when we want to. The responsibility for caring for young birds falls on the shoulders/wings of the parents. When adult egrets abandon themests for long periods of time - as was the case on July 4 - the likelihood of predation increases. Egrets and herons with attentive parents are more likely to survive the nestling stage. Perhaps the parents of these chicks were inexperienced nesters. Perhaps they were just hungry. We aren't likely to find out.

On a brighter note, I stopped at the Ranch on July 11 and the young birds were trying their wings, crashing into trees and generally facing reality: it's a long way to the ground, it's really hard to land on just the right branch and the only way out of the Canyon is to fly. Reality is tough for all of us, I guess.

Thanks to:

- Laree Holmes for the great job she did as our 1993
 Weekend Coordinator:
- Our Ranch Guides who volunteered their weekends to help the rest of us better understand the goings-on at the heronry, the lagoon and the ponds and;
- All the Volunteer Hosts who gave a day or two to greet our visitors and to Rick Baird who coordinated their efforts for Sequoia Audubon.

Docent Training begins at Bouverie Audubon Preserve in September. The BAP Docents not only lead visiting school children through the preserve but also lead the adult guided

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Sequoia Audubon Society

Conservation Corner Bob Wilkinson

I'm always surprised to find that most of our members don't know about the workings of the Conservation Committee.

Although we participate enthusiastically in National Audubon's national and state campaigns and issues, our attention is concentrated on San Mateo County. Here we work both with other conservation organizations and on our own to better the environment. During the past year we have participated and are continuing to participate in such activities as:

- Reviewed EIRs (Environmental Impact Reports) for projected developments and timber harvest plans;
- Participated in hearings on such controversial issues as Edgewood Park and the levees at Redwood Shores;
- Studied and evaluated legislation and issued legislative alerts:
- Promoted and participated ion storm-drain marking
- Organized the Bay Cleanup in connection with the California Coastal Cleanup Day (see below);
- · Gathering signatures for the CAL-PAW Initiative;
- · Organized the County Biodiversity Week;

Environmental conscious-raising is an important objective of the Committee. Baba Dioum, a Senegal conservationist, said, "In the end we will conserve only what we love, we will love only what we understand and we will understand only what we are taught." We try to increase that understanding by the community and by our legislators.

We are not an exclusive club. We would love to become the biggest Conservation Committee in the world. We welcome your interest and participation. If you are interested in participating in any way, no matter how small - contact Bob Wilkinson at 347-8367.

Coastweek '93

Saturday, October 2 is Coastal Cleanup Day. This annual event not only cleans our beaches and bay shores but helps raise public awareness of the value of our wetlands

Each year we turn out to help clean up a section of our precious baylands. Our previous cleanup efforts at Bair Island and Belmont Slough were highly successful and are still obvious.

EVERYONE IS INVITED! We'll meet at 9:30 AM. Wear old clothes and shoes and bring gloves. Refreshments will be provided.

To get there take the Ralston Ave./Marine World Parkway Exit off Hwy. 101. Take the first left on the east side of the freeway and another immediate left on to Island Parkway. Follow Island Parkway to its end and take a left on Concourse and a right on Clipper. Look for the Sequoia Audubon signs...



The S. A. S. Calendar

(Continued from Page Two)

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7 - SAS BOARD MEETING. 7:30 PM at the SAS office. ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME. Call ahead to be sure there will be room.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9 - COYOTE CREEK RIPAR-IAN STATION - Bird-banding demonstration and field trip. Biologist Christin Shields will show us Coyote Creek's network of mist nets and demonstrate how birds are captured, recorded. banded and released. Some of the other work of the Station will be discussed and demonstrated and there will be a field trip to the adjacent ponds which have been so productive of fall and winter shorebirds in recent years. The trip is limited to 15 people so check with the office beforehand to be sure there is still enough room, to investigate possible car-pooling and to reserve your space. To get there take 101 south to Highway 237, and take 237 east to the McCarthy Blvd. Exit. From this exit take a right on Bellew, a right on McCarthy, a left on Ranch Road and a right on Milpitas/Alviso Ave. over a bridge. Look for the entrance to the Station on the right just beyond the bridge and before you come to any houses. Look for the gate on the levee We'll meet at the gate at 8:00 AM.

LEADER

CHRISTIN SHIELDS

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14- SAS GENERAL MEETING. TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO with Gail and Doug Cheeseman. Frequent Program Lecturers Gail and Doug Cheeseman will take us to another exotic and outstanding birding location. Doug, an excellent wildlife photographer, will show off his slides of this island nation and birders' paradise. At the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside. Social get-together with refreshments at 7:30 PM. Meeting at 8:00 with the program immediately following.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17-PELAGIC BIRDS FROM SHORE

The man who virtually created the concept of pelagic birding from shore will show us some of the field marks that identify those distant (and sometimes not-so-distant) off-shore birds. We'll meet at 9:00 AM just north of the Pigeon Point Lighthouse on the access road off Highway One about 30 miles south of Half Moon Bay. If weather conditions do not permit off-shore viewing, we will retreat to inland areas for a morning of birding.

LEADER

BARRY SAUPPE

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23 - LITTLE BROWN BIRDS FOR BEGINNERS at Mountainview Forebay. This is a beginner's trip in which we will explore the mysteries of identifying those little brown shorebirds scampering about on our Bay Area mudflats. This trip will follow the format of last year's beginner's trips in which a relatively short birding trip will be followed by a discussion section over coffee (or whatever) at the

(Continued on Page Four)

From the President

(Continued from Page One)

I'm writing this just before the August Board Meeting and then I'm off to the Bend, Oregon area to camp with my non-birding husband. But, don't fear, I'll get to see a few anyway! Good birding to you all!



Most of our new Officers and Committee Chairs are listed on Page Eight each month, but here are a few more of our unsung heroes and heroines who unfortunately get omitted because of the lack of space.

Audubon Canyon Ranch Representatives:

Rick Baird, Mary Bresler, Fred McElhany

Bay Area Audubon Council Representative: Bob Wilkinson

Bay Cleanup: Sue Hillard, 595-8954

Breeding Bird Atlas: Rick Johnson, 728-7916

News From Our Ranch

(Continued from Page Two)

nature walks throughout the year. The class will last through the fall and winter and trainees will join the ranks of the BAP Docents in the spring of '94. If you are interested in applying to join this docent training class, please call us at (707) 938-4554.

Our Fall Programs also begin in September. If you want to register for any of these, please call us at (415) 868-9244.

- OVERNIGHT AT TOM'S POINT with John Kelly. Free!
 Work and play at Tomales Bay.
 Saturday and Sunday September 19 & 20.
- UNDER THE HERONRY with Ray Petersen. Free! Explore behind the mystery fence at the back of the Ranch yard. Saturday, October 9.
- NOT JUST A WORK DAY at Cypress Grove with John Kelly. Free! Dusting and cleaning to help us get ready for the winter. Saturday, October 16.
- BATS, TOADS AND AUTUMN TRICKS at Bolinas Lagoon with Ray Petersen. \$100 for a family of four. Our annual Halloween weekend with the traditional sailing of pumpkins on Bolinas Lagoon.
 - Saturday and Sunday October 30 & 31.
- FALL WORK DAY at Bolinas Lagoon with Nancy, Skip, Ray and all the gang. Free! Help get the Ranch ready for winter. Saturday, November 6.
- THE WAY THEY LIVED: NATIVE AMERICAN LIFE-STYLES at Bouverie Audubon Preserve. Foley Benson and John Peterson share some of their insights about the way indigenous people of the Sonoma region lived before the Spanish came. \$30 per person. Saturday, October 30.

GUIDED NATURE WALKS at the Bouverie Audubon Preserve. **Free!** Saturdays, September 25; October 23 and November 13; 9:30 AM to 1:30 PM. Call (707) 938-4554 to reserve your place on a docent-led nature walk.

The S A S Calendar

(Continued From Page Three)

Palo Alto Airport Coffee Shop. To get there take 101 south past Palo Alto to the San Antonio Road exit. Take San Antonio Road towards the Bay until you come to its end. We will meet at the entrance to the park at 9:00 AM.

LEADER:

FRANCIS TOLDI

344-1919

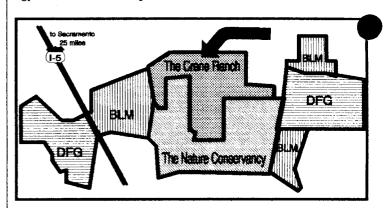
THURSDAY, OCTOBER28 COYOTE HILLS REGIONAL

PARK. Sometimes crowded on weekends, this East Bay park is ideal for a mid-week trip. We'll bird the trails and boardwalks of this park at our leisure. We'll meet at the Park Entrance at 9:00 AM. To get there cross to the East Bay on the Dunbarton Bridge. Across the bridge take Pasco Padre Avc. north to Patterson Ranch Rd. Take a left on Patterson Ranch Rd. to the Park.

LEADERS CAROL MILLER & JUDY SPITLER 355-9362

Cosumnes Preserve Enlarged

The Nature Conservancy has expanded its Cosumnes Preserve by purchasing the 1100 acre Fitzgerald Ranch. The tract is noted as prime winter habitat for greater sandhill cranes and has been renamed the Crane Ranch in recognition of its role in the ecology of this threatened species.



Although grazing will continue on portions of the ranch, the existing wetlands will be enhanced and enlarged for waterfowl as well as for the cranes and other imperiled species such as tricolored blackbirds, giant garter snakes and elderberry longhorn beetles.

This past winter ground was broken for the new visitor center and for the first time in many years the Cosumnes River was high enough to overflow its banks and replenish some of the wetland areas.

The Nature Conservancy manages the adjacent and nearby Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands as well as its own, and cooperates with the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) in the administration of the sprawling tract along the Casumnes River.

FALL 1993 SAS BIRDSEED SALE --- ORDER FORM

ALL ORDERS WITH PAYMENT MUST BE RECEIVED BY THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14TH!!!

Proceeds support local Audubon conservation and education programs

San Bruno By arrangement			Belmont		By arr	By arrangement	
Burlingame			Atherton		10/21, 10/22, after 6 pm,		
					10/23,	10/24 By arrangen	
San Mateo 10/21, 10/22, 9 am - noon, By	arran	gement	Half Mo	on Bay.	By arr	angement	
				rie,	# BAGS	\$COST\$	
AUDUBON WILD BIRD MIX		_	\$18.00	/bag			
red & white millet plus black oil sunflower		lb @		/bag			
RED/WHITE MILLET MIX		_	\$18.00	/bag		=	
	20	lb@		/bag			
BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER	50	\sim	\$25.00	/bag		_ =	
	25	\sim	\$14.00	/bag		=	
WHITE PROSO MILLET	50		\$17.50	/bag		_ =	
			\$10.00	/bag			
THISTLE		_	\$48.00	/bag			
	5	_	\$12.00	/bag			
SUNFLOWER CHIPS**	25	lb @	\$24.50	/bag			
**A new item!! Try hulled sunflower seeds and seedeaters; be sure to use a feeder that discount SALES TAX IS INCLUDE	ırage <u>D</u> IN	s large ALL P	birds. RICES ABO	VE		active to smalle	
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1993-1994 Field Trip Schedule

	Date	Day	Field Trip	<u>Leader</u>
12-	Sep-93	Sunday	Point Reyes	Cliff Richer
25-	Sep-93	Saturday	Phipps Ranch	Dan Keller
	Oct-93	Saturday	Coastal Cleanup Day	Sue Hillard
9-0	Oct-93	Saturday	Coyote Creek Riparian Station	Christin Shields
17-	-Oct-93	Sunday	Pelagic Birds From Shore	Barry Sauppe
23-	Oct-93	Saturday	Little Brown Birds for Beginners	Francis Toldi
		-	Shorebirds at Mountainview Forebay	
28-	Oct-93	Thursday	Coyote Hills Regional Park	Carol Miller/Judy Spitler
1-6	Vov-93	Saturday	Sacramento Valley National Wildlife Refuges	Cliff
7-1	Vov-93	Sunday	Gray Lodge Wildlife Area/Sutter Buttes	Richer
10-	Nov-93	Wednesday	Sparrow Identification Seminar I	Dan
13-	Nov-93	Saturday ⁻	Sparrow Identification Field Trip I	Keller
16-	Nov-93	Tuesday	Belmont Slough	Al Dimartini
18-	Nov-93	Thursday	Sparrow Identification Seminar II	Dan
20-	Nov-93	Saturday	Sparrow Identification Field Trip II	Keller
5-[Dec-93	Sunday	Princeton Harbor	Dan Keller
7-E	Dec-93	Tuesday	Princeton Harbor	Nick Coiro
18-	Dec-93	Saturday	Crystal Springs Christmas Count	Dan Keller, Compiler
2-、	Jan-94	Sunday	Año Nuevo Christmas Count	Dan Keller, Compiler
15-	Jan-94	Saturday	Foster City	Nick Coiro
22-	Jan-94	Saturday	Beginner's Trip to Palo Alto Baylands	Francis Toldi
29-				
11	Jan-94	Saturday	Los Banos Refuges	Cliff
11	-Jan-94 -Jan-94	Saturday Sunday	Los Banos Refuges Panoche Valley	Cliff Richer
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30- 5-F	Jan-94	Sunday	Panoche Valley	Richer
30- 5-F 12- 19-	Jan-94 Feb-94 Feb-94 Feb-94	Sunday Saturday	Panoche Valley Altamont Pass	Richer Nick Coiro
30- 5-F 12- 19-	Jan-94 Feb-94 Feb-94	Sunday Saturday Saturday	Panoche Valley Altamont Pass Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Tidepools	Richer Nick Coiro TBA
30- 5-F 12- 19- 26-	Jan-94 Feb-94 Feb-94 Feb-94	Sunday Saturday Saturday Saturday	Panoche Valley Altamont Pass Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Tidepools Grizzly Island	Richer Nick Coiro TBA TBA
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Beginners' Trips are indicated in Bold Italic Type.

Multi-day trips are enclosed in a double Box.

Mid-week trips are italicized.

The revival of our seminar series is enclosed in a shaded box.

TBA indicates a leader is To Be Announced

Classes for Birders Menlo Park

Two classes for birders will be offered by the Sequoia Adult School at Little House, 800 Middle Avenue in Menlo Park. Each class will consist of 8 slide-illustrated lecture sessions. Fee: \$30. Maryann Danielson is the instructor. Four field trips are also offered for an additional fee.

BIRDING BASICS — for beginning and less skilled intermediate birders. The fall sessions will focus on backyard birds, their identification, basic biology and natural history.

Wednesday evenings, 7:30-9:30 PM starting September 15.

FOLLOWING BIRDS THROUGH THE FALL SEASON -- for intermediate and more advanced birders. The fall session will highlight the fall migration of raptors, passerines and shorebirds through the Bay Area.

Monday evenings, 7:30-9:30 PM starting September 13

No advance registration required. Register at the first class.

San Francisco

San Francisco City College is offering the following courses at the Marina Middle School, 3500 Fillmore at Bay Street, San Francisco. Free parking is available. All classes meet from 7:00 to 9:30 PM. Instructor Joe Morlan is the voice and compiler of the Northern California Rare Bird Alert and co-author of *Birds of Northern California*. All classes are slide-illustrated lectures and the text is the National Geographic *Field Guide to Birds of North America*, second edition. Students should bring field guides and binoculars to all classes.

FIELD ORNITHOLOGY I meets on Tuesdays. It is an introduction to birds and birding, combining basic field skills with the study of bird ecology, biology and behavior. Part A starts September 14 and ends October 26; Part B starts November 2 and ends December 14.

FIELD ORNITHOLOGY II meets on

Wednesdays. It is a continuing in-depth

study of the identification and status of North American water birds including rails and shorebirds. Part A starts September 8 and ends October 20.; Part B starts October 27 and ends December 15.

FIELD ORNITHOLOGY III meets on Thursdays. It is a continuing in-depth study of the identification and status of land birds including swallows, wrens and thrushes. Part A starts September 9 and ends October 21.; Part B starts October 28 and ends December 16.

These classes are endorsed by Golden Gate Audubon. Fees are \$65 for each seven week course. Optional field trips are offered by the instructor. Preregistration is recommended. For more information and registration call San Francisco City College's Office of Continuing Education at 267-6514 or 561-1840.



Festival Of The

The sixth annual Festival of the Cranes will be held in conjunction with the fall in-migration of the stately birds to Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico.

The four day festival, November 18-21, Will feature birding and wildlife workshops, field trips to normally closed areas of the refuge, historical tours, exhibits and demonstrations and speakers.

For complete information call or write: Festival of the Cranes, PO Box 743 AUD, Socorro, NM 87801, Tel. (505) 835-0424

Ellman Reelected to National Board

Forty-four Western Region Chapters cast 96 votes for George Ellman to continue as our regional representative on the National Audubon Board of Directors.

Anyone wishing to contact Georeg directly can do so by writing or calling him:
George Ellman
13285 Arnold Drive
Glen Ellen, CA 95442
(707) 996-0601

Consumer Reports Enviroquiz

A recent issue of *Consumer Reports* included a 16 question multiple choice environmental quiz, which I immediately tackled with great enthusiasm.

To my chagrin I found that I got 5 wrong out of 16 questions - a nearly flunking mark of 69%.

Then - to my shock - I found that fewer than 1% of CR's test panel of 963 readers had done any better! And Consumer Reports' readers are generally considered some of the best-informed anywhere!

We still have a long way to go.

---Cliff Richer

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