

Tierra Bella 2025 Christmas Hill Park Report  
By Melanie Clarke

## SUMMARY

The second year at Christmas Hill Park is still a relatively new venue for the Tierra Bella, but we are climbing the learning curve. Patty and Richard took over the Food responsibilities so I could concentrate on the Logistical aspects of setting up the park. This strategy made my workload more manageable. The rest stop was successful, but I can target improvements for next year.

## WHAT DIDN'T WORK

1. I did not deliver brewed coffee by the 6:30 am deadline. The Walnut water spigot did not have a lever to turn on, and I did not bring a pliers. I called Jennifer to bring one as she had not yet left the house. I had to drive over to the Mulberry Picnic area to fill the coffee urns, carry them to my car, and drive over to Walnut to get them started. Walnut has 2 outlets, each with its own circuit breaker. John, an electrical engineer, said that one outlet will only support one urn. This limit should not be exceeded as the circuit breakers will trip. We had problems with tripping the breakers at Mulberry in 2024, also. So, electrical usage always has to be carefully managed. I brought a lamp in case the lights weren't working. John plugged in the light to indicate if we tripped the breaker. Use this technique for next year. Next year, remember to bring a pliers or bring all the water needed for at least one coffee urn in jugs, to start brewing right away.
2. All the placements were good. However, I did not place a sign on the Ice Cream Truck to read, "HELP YOURSELF." Riders were reluctant to take the Fruit Bars. Only 2 varieties were loose on top, and the other flavors were in boxes at the bottom. This also reduced the demand. I need to make sure all varieties are visible. This resulted in many leftover bars.
3. The City didn't open up and clean the bathrooms until 6:40 am. Luckily, there was a porta-potty for the baseball field, but this created a long backup. The 2 restrooms near the Mulberry Picnic Area were open but clogged and without toilet paper. I called Jennifer to bring our home plunger. Next year, bring a plunger just in case. Arrange with Gilroy ahead of time to either open and clean the bathrooms by 6:00am or let us have a key to open and clean them ourselves.
4. We rented the entire CHP Park. However, a Little League insisted on playing on the softball field in between the Walnut and Mulberry Picnic Areas. We informed them that we rented the entire park, but the parents were angry, hostile, and militant about their rights for their children to be there. They drove their cars in an unsafe manner around the cyclists and parked in our Finish Line. We need to discuss this situation next year with the city before our event.
5. One of our pop-ups was broken but functional enough for the DJ. We need to replace it for next year. In addition, I placed the 10x20 canopy in front of the clothing and drink table instead of over it. It's a big effort to move such a large canopy.
6. Logistics placed the Intake Canopy and tables over the Handicapped parking area, which is in the sun. I informed them to place it on the other side, near the tree area, but next year, I will make sure of this placement, as it created hardship for Linda and Jeff.

## WHAT DID WORK

1. My experience from last year paid off. I had more volunteers to manage the workload.
2. I arranged with a Park worker to turn on the lights at 5:00 am for our event. This worked really well over the last year.
3. I blocked off the volunteer food area successfully, so we didn't experience rider incursions like we did last year.
4. All the placements: Volunteer Food, Drink Table, Clothing, Academy, DJ, Finish Line, Photo Booth, Registration Communications, and SAG were good. It's important to work with the other captains for placement, as they know what they need.
5. Once again, the spirit of assistance and camaraderie was excellent.
6. The rest stop was successful and was able to accommodate all the riders. The above issues can be easily remedied next year.

## PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR

1. Gilroy has once again permitted us to use the entire CHP Park. We will have 245 parking spots and can set up Registration at the Walnut Picnic Area once again. We may or may not use the Overflow Lot.
2. Coordinate with John Sousa to groom and mow the overflow the week before our event. He is very accommodating.
3. Arrange with Gilroy to open/clean the bathrooms at 6:00 am and give us the tool to turn on the water at Walnut.
4. Arrange with Gilroy to put the lights on the timer at 5:00 am.
5. Discuss with Gilroy about whether the Little League can reserve the softball field if we have the entire park reserved. Replace the damaged pop-up.
6. Offering coffee, tea, and snacks at Registration will work next year with the above improvements in execution.
7. The food snack selection was good, but I would like to add grapes and whole grain bagels as a low-sugar alternative. We had a lot of leftover bananas and cuties. Next year, put the snacks out at the Mulberry picnic area by 7:30am.
8. Next year, managing and remedying the areas of improvement stated above will place us very high on our learning curve.
9. It was nice having Patty and Richard manage the Food. However, I am acquiring more experience, so if I get enough volunteers, I might be able to include food in my CHP duties. Managing the final rest stop is a big job, but so is being the Food Captain. I was frightened by my experience in 2024. We can discuss our job descriptions for next year.
10. We may want to explore the possibility of having our final rest stop at another venue, as it might have better parking options. The Parking Crew does like parking riders at the Overflow Lot.