



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



New Members

Keith Farrar & Family
Joanne Sulkoske



Martin Luther King, Jr.

His real birthday is January 15, however, we celebrate his birthday on January 21, 2013, to give everyone a three day weekend.

According to Wikipedia, King was the chief spokesman for non-violent activism in the civil rights movement, which successfully protested racial discrimination in federal and state law. The campaign for a federal holiday in King's honor began soon after his assassination in 1968. Ronald Reagan signed the holiday into law in 1983, and it was first observed on January 20, 1986. At first, some states resisted observing the holiday as such, giving it alternative names or combining it with other holidays. It was officially observed in all 50 states for the first time in 2000.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Luther_King,_Jr._Day



December 8th - 2012 Holiday Party



The 2012 RSTB Christmas Party was again hosted by Ursula Christie at her lovely home. Dozens of Trailblazers attended the potluck party dinner and enjoyed a wide variety of tasty appetizers, entrees, and desserts -- and wine! More importantly, the gathering offered the opportunity to catch up on the past year with friends, to swap tales of past Trailblazer experiences, and to discuss potential future adventures. Glad to be members of the Trailblazers "family," everyone had a wonderful time. Thanks again to Ursula for her hospitality.



Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District events can be viewed at <http://www.rsrpd.org> to see what is happening next!

RSTB CLUB MEETING

This month's RSTB meeting will be at:
Sycamore Drive Community Center
1692 Sycamore Drive – Room B-1
January 16, 2013

Upcoming Events

January 5th - Happy Camp Canyon Loop* 10 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (elevation gain & loss 1300') - Meet- **8AM**

January 12th - La Tuna Canyon Park to Plantation Lateral* 8 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,900' of elevation gain) - Meet- **8AM**

January 16th - Club Meeting - 7 PM

January 19th - Nicholas Flat from Leo Carillo State Park* 7.5 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (elevation gain 1,900') - Meet - **8AM**

January 26th - Work Party - The North Ridge Trail - Meet- 8AM

RSTB LOGO T-SHIRTS

Sporting the beautiful RSTB logo, these are great shirts! Please call Mike Kuhn if you'd like to order at 805-583-2345.

short sleeve \$12
long sleeve \$14
sweat shirt \$18



Due to unforeseen circumstances, all activities are subject to change without notice. Please see www.simitrailblazers.com/activities/ for event details and the most up-to-date schedule.

A SHAMANIC PICTOGRAPH IN OAKBROOK PARK

A rock art panel in a north-facing rockshelter in Oakbrook Park in the City of Thousand Oaks contains a single red figure. The figure is undoubtedly the recording by a Chumash shaman of a vision. At the Chumash Interpretive Center, I have heard it referred to as a possible "water strider." However, I believe that another interpretation is more reasonable given what is now known about rock art in general.

The panel appears to represent an anthropomorphic figure in a common dance motif, i.e., a figure with the lower legs bent upward at the knees. The headdress that is shown is a vertical line with a "V" at the terminal end. In much Chumash rock art, the rays of the sun, shown as the supreme deity, terminate in the same way. This head decoration may identify the figure as a solar shaman. There are several photographs, taken in 1878 by Leon de Cessac, of Rafael Solares, in the Simi Valley Branch of the Ventura County Library. One of the photographs shows Mr. Solares in the full ceremonial regalia of a solar shaman. A broad white "V" is painted on his chest. His Spanish name, i.e., Solares, refers to his profession as a solar shaman. It should be noted, however, that his headdress does not include a "V." It is a stick figure, so a "V" could not be shown on its chest. A rock art panel in a cave on the southern side of Simi Valley exhibits several images of the sun with forked terminal rays. Some of the rays make contact with anthropomorphic figures, whose arms and legs terminate in the same way. Those figures undoubtedly represent solar shaman.

Another possible interpretation of this figure is that it represents a swordfish dancer. John Peabody Harrington's

Chumash informant Fernando Librado (kitsepawit), in *The Eye of the Flute* (1977), pages 75-76, describes: the swordfish "...dancer had a crown consisting of two long feathers of egret, *pilipil*, on his head as shown in Fig. 13." Figure 13 shows the feathers crossed above the head in a similar way as is exhibited in the pictograph. Certainly the pictograph depicts a dancer.

On a boulder a few meters east of the dance figure is a pictograph of an anatomically correct, vertically oriented swordfish. God, i.e., the sun, lived in a quartz crystal hut, i.e., *ap*, in the sky, while swordfish lived in a quartz crystal *ap* at the bottom of the sea. Swordfish, as the complement of the sun, is represented as a bearded swordfish.

The "hands" and the feet of the Oakbrook Park figure each have three (3) digits. Elsewhere I have written that in shamanistic visions, the shaman often sees himself as being transformed into a bird, with bird feet. In this transitional state to the spirit world, the shaman can fly to the spirit world. The vision of a shaman was thought to represent his experience in the spiritual world and was recorded immediately afterward in order to avoid the short-term memory loss that accompanies all forms of dreaming. The three (3) digit hands and feet on the Oakbrook pictograph represent the spiritual bird form of the shaman.

Is either of these interpretations correct? It's impossible to say at this late juncture. However, this analysis should caution one against giving interpretations that simply reflect what the latter day viewer thinks a pictograph looks like through our own cultural perspective.

Mike Kuhn
12-5-04 (revised 4-25-10)

ANOTHER ENDANGERED PLANT SPECIES FOUND IN SIMI VALLEY

From 1947 to the early 1980s the Braunton's milk vetch (*Astragalus brauntonii*) went unreported. The plant was assumed to be extinct.

The plant is a fire-follower and is restricted to limestone soils. The recorded sighting in 1947 was at the Silvernale Ranch, which was on Burro Flats at the top of the Simi Hills south of the Metrolink Station - the site of the present day Boeing/Rocketdyne Santa Susana Field Laboratory. Since that facility has one of the best fire suppression systems anywhere, it is unlikely that the plant exists there today. Until 1999, the 1947 sighting was the last in the Simi Valley area.

In 1999 Mary Ann Campbell, an active Rancho Simi Trail Blazer, reported three locales within the Bridle Path Homeowners' Association open space area. Where observed, the plants were located within the area that is kept graded for trails - which simulates the kind of disturbance you get following a fire. As a Federal Endangered Species (1997), it is nice to know there are still some growing in the the Simi Valley area. Thanks Mary Ann.

Mike Kuhn
11-1-04



November 24th - Las Lajas Canyon, Rocky Peak Fire Road, and Chumash Trail clockwise Loop



16 hikers (+ 2 dogs) met at the Las Lajas Canyon trailhead on Evening Sky Drive in Simi Valley on a warm breezy autumn morning. The hike began by descending a short paved section of road into the canyon bottom; from there a wide graded dirt road followed a stream north through the canyon, crossing the streambed three times; the stream was dry. The steep canyon walls provided shade as we enjoyed an easy 3.5 mile trek up the canyon. Two hikers turned around before reaching the trail/road junction just short of the Poe Ranch gate and returned to Evening Sky Drive the way they had come (as did a third hiker a while later). The remaining 13 hikers (+ 2 dogs) took the right (east) fork and continued up the dirt road leading to an abandoned oil field and then on up to a junction with the Rocky Peak Fire Road, savoring the great views along the way. After reaching the Rocky Peak Fire Road, we turned right and headed south toward the upper end of the Chumash Trail. Along the way we passed Fossil Hill (named for the shells of sea creatures left behind when the area was under a vast sea) and a number of bicycle riders. We enjoyed the panoramic views of mountains and canyons to the east, south, and west. Upon reaching the upper end of the Chumash Trail (adorned by a new sign proclaiming "Chumash Trail 2.7 miles to Flanagan Drive trailhead"), we stopped for a rest/lunch break and then rapidly descended the familiar trail encountering several horseback riders along the way. We then turned right (west) and followed a short trail to a closed, but not locked, gate in a fence at the east end of Evening Sky Drive. A short walk along Evening Sky Drive took us back to our vehicles, having completed a pleasant 9.6-mile hike with 1,793' of elevation gain.



December 1st - Simi Peak from the Long Canyon trailhead via the Albertson Motorway and China Flat



It was a dark and stormy morning... Six intrepid hikers, and two dogs, took full advantage of the short-lived break in the storm today. Visibility was poor at best, with the almost constant light drizzle. We enjoyed a dry lunch at the top, with the sun trying ever so hard to break through, if even for a moment. The expansive views from trips past, were nowhere to be found. Paul Simon's "slip slidin' away" lyrics were stuck in our minds, especially on trail sections just before the peak. The mud was sticky too, and would often add an inch or so to our height. Everyone was sure footed, so aside from our muddy shoes, we stayed clean, but damp. It was a pleasure returning to the trailhead, having hiked 10 miles, with 2,500' of elevation gain/loss.

December 8th - Cheeseboro Canyon – Palo Comado Canyon clockwise Loop

14 hikers (+ two dogs) carpoled to the Cheeseboro Canyon trailhead in the Simi Hills on a gorgeous fall morning. The hike began on the Modelo Trail as it rose to the north from the main parking lot along a ridge, providing views of the rolling countryside under a clear blue sky. Soon the trail headed west on the Palo Comado Connector trail, passing a couple of horse ranches whose four-legged residents curiously watched our passage. Heading north along the wide dirt road in Palo Comado Canyon (PCC), we passed through a grassland dotted with occasional stands of large gnarled oak trees; the road was bordered by bright green grass stimulated by recent rain. Soon after the PCC Road began its climb toward China Flat, we followed a narrower dirt trail that led up to an overlook of Palo Comado Canyon to the south. We shared our overlook perch with a group of bicycle riders. After a short break to rest, snack, and enjoy the view, we headed east, descending toward Shepherd's Flat at the north end of Cheeseboro Canyon and passing the abandoned Sheep Corral along the way. Turning southward, we headed down through always lovely Cheeseboro Canyon, first passing through terrain dominated by chaparral and striking rock formations and then through a riparian woodland at Sulphur Springs. We continued southward, passing through a dense oak woodland and then through an open grassland, eventually reaching the parking lot, having completed a 10.4-mile hike with 1,255' of elevation gain/loss on a great day to be outside.



RSTB Calendar January



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 No Hike New Year's Day 	2	3 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	4	5 Happy Camp Canyon Loop* 8 AM See Schedule 
6 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4 PM See Schedule	7	8 Mt. McCoy Trail 6:00PM See Schedule	9	10 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	11	12 La Tuna Canyon Park to Plantation Lateral* 8 AM See Schedule
13 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	14	15 Mt. McCoy Trail 6:00PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Emily Carroll	16 Club Meeting 7 PM See Schedule <i>Everyone Welcome to attend!</i>	17 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	18	19 Nicholas Flat from Leo Carillo State Park* 8AM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Floyd Martin 
20 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	21 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Today  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ City Hall: Closed ▶ State offices: Closed ▶ Federal offices: Closed ▶ County Courthouse: Closed ▶ RRTA: Regular schedule ▶ State liquor stores: Closed ▶ Mail: No regular delivery ▶ Banks: Most closed ▶ Schools: Most closed <small>Don Morris/Staff</small>	22 Mt. McCoy Trail 6:00PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Norvan Zanders Marlene Bradley	23	24 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	25	26 Work Party - The North Ridge Trail 8 AM See Schedule
27 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	28	29 Mt. McCoy Trail 6:00PM See Schedule	30 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Anand Janev Daniel DeGoe	31 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Joanne Sulkoske Katie Martinez		



Due to unforeseen circumstances, all activities are subject to change without notice.
Please see www.simitrailblazers.com/activities/ for event details and the most up-to-date schedule.



REGULARLY SCHEDULED HIKES

(Rain cancels – No hikes on holidays)

Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak Fire Road

Meet at **4 PM** at the Rocky Peak Fire Road trailhead. Take the Rocky Peak exit on the 118 Freeway and head north over the freeway. Park at the trailhead or across the bridge on the Santa Susana Pass Road. (Strenuous - 4.8 MRT - 1,200' elevation gain.)

Tuesday Evening - Mt. McCoy Trail

Meet at **6:00PM** at the parking lot on the north side of Royal Avenue approximately 75 feet east of Madera Road. (Moderate - 3.2 MRT - 500' total elevation gain.)

Thursday Evening - The Chumash Trail

Meet at **6 PM** at Chumash trailhead. Directions: Take the 118 Freeway to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite and turn right on Flanagan Dr. The trailhead is at the end of Flanagan Drive. (Moderate to Strenuous - 5.4 MRT - 1,210' total elevation gain.)

JANUARY HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

January 5th

Happy Camp Canyon Loop*

10 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (elevation gain & loss 1300'.)

See panoramic views of Simi Valley and Moorpark to the Channel Islands. Bring lunch, 2 to 3 quarts of water, binoculars/camera. Wear boots. Meet at **8 AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal.

January 12th

La Tuna Canyon Park to Plantation Lateral*

8 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,900' of elevation gain)

From the trailhead (1,347') on La Tuna Canyon Road, the shady heavily wooded La Tuna Canyon Trail follows two canyons and Horny Toad Ridge two miles up to the Verdugo Motorway (2,300') which the hikers follow for another two miles to the turnaround point at Plantation Lateral (2,988') where there are benches, shade, and 360-degree views of the Verdugo Valley, the San Gabriel Mountains, Griffith Park, the Los Angeles skyline, the Santa Ana Mountains, the Santa Monica Mountains, and even Santa Catalina Island on a clear day. Bring 2-3 quarts of water and lunch. Wear boots. Weather permitting, meet at **8 AM** at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride.

January 16th

Club Meeting

7 PM - The Sycamore Drive Community Center - 1692 Sycamore Drive - Room B-1

January 19th

Nicholas Flat from Leo Carillo State Park*


7.5 MRT- Moderate to Strenuous (elevation gain 1,900')

See magnificent ocean views and a beautiful pond near Malibu. Bring lunch, 2 to 3 quarts of water. Meet at **8 AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Please note, the parking fee is \$10 at the trailhead.

January 26th

Work Party - The North Ridge Trail

Meet at **8:00 AM** at the northern end of the trail along Evening Sky Drive (on the southern side of the road nearly opposite from the Las Lajas Canyon Trailhead). Wear boots if possible, gloves, a hat, sunscreen and pants. Bring water and a snack. All tools will be provided.

* Not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District.  No dogs allowed on trail(s). For additional information on hikes/work parties, contact the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District at 805-584-4400. **Special Note: On all hikes and work parties, bring water and wear lug-soled boots.** <http://www.simitrailblazers.com>

RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

Executive Chair:	Mike Kuhn	HM (805) 583-2345	hannahmike@me.com
Treasurer:	Craig Malin		
Park District Liaison:	Colleen Janssen	WK (805) 584-4453	volunteers@rsrpd.us
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Hiking Chair:	Mark Gilmore	HM (805) 529-5581	markinthepark@sbcglobal.net
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MEMBERSHIP

Please enroll me as a New () or Renewing () member of the Rancho Simi Trail Blazers for the annual donation fee of Single.....\$10 Family.....\$15

Name _____ Birth Month _____ Day _____

Family memberships: Please list names and birthdays of additional family members (Month & Day Only)

Phone (provide up to two numbers): work/home/cell _____

How do you want to receive the Newsletter? Check all that apply.

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Please make out tax deductible member dues check for the year to:

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