



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



Happy Birthday

Karen Cruise



FREMONT GAVE A SPEECH

Upon the conquest of California by the United States, General John C. Fremont, according to John Peabody Harrington's Fernandeano informant, gave a speech at San Fernando Mission, saying that there would be no more slavery, that all were free now.

Whether or not the speech was given is less important than its being a reflection of one Fernandeano Indian's perception of the condition of some California Indians during the late-1840s.

Mike Kuhn
11-14-04

Volunteers Needed!!



If anyone is interested in volunteering for the **Work Parties Chair** or the **Publicity Chair**

contact Mike Kuhn at:
mike.kuhn@simitrailblazers.com

Weekly hikes!!



Has anyone ever told you to take a hike?

Did you know that in Simi Valley you can take many hikes with the Rancho Simi Trail Blazers and explore the beauty of Simi Valley and other beautiful locations? We have so much fun taking photos, talking and just viewing the beautiful scenery like the photo above. We even enjoy going on overnight events. **Please join us** and see for yourself how much fun we have!

Hikes are every Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, and most Saturdays



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.

Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District events can be viewed at <http://www.rspd.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

Wednesday: January 20, 2016
5:30PM Everyone Welcome to attend!

** Not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District.*

Upcoming Events

January 2nd Charmlee Natural Area Loop* 4.5 Mile Loop - Easy (~600' elevation gain) **8PM**

January 9th Mugu State Park - Hidden Pond Trail Lollipop Loop* 12 MRT - Strenuous (2,300' elevation gain/loss) **8AM**

January 16th Work Party - The Chumash Trail **8AM**

January 20th Club Meeting
The Sycamore Drive Community Center - 1692 Sycamore Drive - Room B-1 **5:30PM** Everyone Welcome to attend!

January 23th Sunset Hills Open Space to Oakbrook Regional Park Hike (Shuttle)* 7.4 MRT - Moderate (1,350' elevation gain) **8AM**

January 30th Oak Flat Trail to Whitaker Peak to Old Hwy 99* 10 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (~2000 elevation gain/loss) **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



November 14th - Piedra Blanca Trail to Twin Forks Camp



10 hikers carpoled to the Piedra Blanca Trail [aka Gene Marshall National Recreation Trail] (22W03) trailhead at the east end of Rose Valley Road (6N31 off Hwy 33) in the Los Padres National Forest north of Ojai, CA. It was a beautiful morning as we began the hike by descending to and crossing bone-dry Sespe Creek/River, the main watercourse in the southern Los Padres National Forest; it empties into the Santa Clara River in Fillmore. While admiring the brilliant fall colors (mostly yellow) along the creek, we followed the trail as it entered the Sespe Wilderness and climbed the chaparral-covered slope to the magnificent Piedra Blanca (white rock) Formations -- huge white rounded sandstone outcroppings sculpted by wind and water. We then descended to Piedra Blanca Creek and followed it upstream to the large shady Piedra Blanca Camp where we viewed pictographs created by Chumash Indians on some of the boulders. We continued on to Twin Forks Camp (the turnaround point) where large conifers provided shade along the nearby creek which provided musical sounds of flowing water at times. After a leisurely lunch break we returned to the trailhead for the drive home, having completed a pleasant 7-mile hike with about 1,200' of elevation gain/loss.

November 28th - Sage Ranch Park Loop

13 hikers arrived at the parking lot in Sage Ranch Park in the Simi Hills on a pleasant winter morning. The 625-acre park is located just north of the Santa Susana Field Laboratory (SSFL) (aka Rocketdyne/Boeing) at an elevation of 2,000'. It is chock-full of world-class sandstone rock formations and has lots of picnic tables shaded by large oak trees. Shortly after we began our hike, we were rewarded with views of Simi Valley and the mountains to the north. After hiking for a while we climbed up on Sandstone Ridge, a long, steep rock formation rising alongside the trail on the west side; it afforded us with excellent views of the once-bustling SSFL (many of the structures have been removed from the property as the

cleanup effort continues). The effects of the continuing drought were evident on the parched flora in the area. All too soon, we completed our short, but invigorating, post-holiday stroll (3 miles with about 500' of elevation gain).

December 4th - Christmas Holiday Party Potluck



As the holiday season marked the passage of another eventful year, a couple of dozen Trail Blazers got together for an evening of camaraderie and dining. As in recent years Ursula Christie again volunteered to host us in her beautiful home which is decorated with an amazing array of unusual items, many of which she has acquired during her numerous trips abroad. Guests dressed in seasonal attire began arriving bringing with them a variety of interesting foods. Many of us marveled at how different everyone looked when not dressed in their hiking gear. Conversations bloomed as we caught up on events in the lives of friends whom we hadn't seen for months and reminisced about shared experiences in the past. And then it was time for the main event, a potluck dinner! As usual there was a wide variety of dishes and more food than we could consume in a single meal, but we gave it our best try. After more conversation and laughter, it was time for dessert. Although all of the desserts were wonderful (and some of us tried each of them!), the crowning dessert was the one that Betty Cameron created; it was indescribably delicious. Eventually we extended holiday well wishes, promised to do it again next year, and made our way home, feeling blessed to have had yet another opportunity to spend time with good friends. Thanks again to Ursula who is a true Trail Blazers treasure.

December 5th - Ray Miller Trail to La Jolla Valley, Mugu Peak and down the Chumash Trail

Seven hikers carpoled to the crowded Chumash Trail parking area along Pacific Coast Highway (Hwy 1) opposite the Seabee Rifle Range on a beautiful late-autumn morning. After dropping off one shuttle vehicle there, we headed on to the otherwise-empty parking lot in La Jolla Canyon. Our hike began along the Ray Miller Trail (one-end of the Santa Monica Mountains Backbone Trail) as it wound its way gently up the mountain, affording great views of the Pacific Ocean and Anacapa and Santa Cruz Islands in the Channel Islands National Park. Upon reaching the Overlook Trail (dirt road) we followed it northward to its junction with the La Jolla Valley Trail, enjoying sweeping views eastward of Serrano Valley and Boney Mountain. We descended into La Jolla Valley and the followed the La Jolla Canyon Trail southward (downstream) to its junction with the Mugu Peak Trail. We followed it uphill to a spur that took us to the mountain peak with its flagpole and American flag and panoramic views of ocean, mountains, islands and the Oxnard Plain. We descended steeply to the Chumash Trail, itself a busy steep trail, which we followed to our shuttle vehicle. After retrieving our other vehicles and then the remaining hikers, we headed home having completed a very pleasant 9.6-mile one-way hike with 2,050' of elevation gain/loss on a great day for hiking.



RSTB Calendar JANUARY



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 	2 Charmlee Natural Area Loop* 8AM See Schedule
3 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	4	5 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	6	7 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	8	9 Mugu State Park - Hidden Pond Trail Lollipop Loop* 8AM See Schedule
10 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	11 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Jim Lightfoot	12 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	13	14 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	15	16 Work Party - The Chumash Trail 8AM See Schedule
17 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	18 Martin Luther King Jr.	19 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Steve Fowler	20 Club Meeting 5:30PM <i>Everyone Welcome to attend!</i> See Schedule	21 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	22 <i>Happy Birthday</i> John Quinn	23 Sunset Hills Open Space to Oakbrook Regional Park Hike (Shuttle)* 8AM See Schedule
24 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	25	26 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Shelby Crandell	27	28 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	29	30 Oak Flat Trail to Whitaker Peak to Old Hwy 99* 8AM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Daniel DeGoey
31 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Aileen Vandenberg						

SANTA ANA WILDFIRE THREAT INDEX - Provides a 6 day forecast of Santa Ana Winds Wildfire Threats on a color coded map <http://psgeodata.fs.fed.us/sawti/>

CALIFORNIA FIRE WEATHER MAP - Provides actual Red Flag Warnings and Fire Weather Watches http://www.fire.ca.gov/communications/communications_firesafety_redflagwarning.php (Scroll down to map)

RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

Executive Chair:	Mike Kuhn	HM (805) 583-2345	hannahmike@me.com
Treasurer:	Santiago Homsí		
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Publicity Chair:	VOLUNTEER NEEDED		Contact Mike Kuhn at: 805-583-2345
Newsletter Editor:	Linda Mann		linda.martins.mann@simitrailblazers.com

-----cut out and return with your payment-----

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.

Mail Mailing address _____

Email Email address _____

How did you find out about the RSTB? _____

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

Rancho Simi Foundation and mail it to RSTB, P.O. Box 1231, Simi Valley, CA 93062



U.S. Postage

RSTB
P.O. Box 1231
Simi Valley, CA 93062

WHERE DID ALL THE INDIANS GO?

Chumash Indians and their ancestors lived, at least seasonally, in the Simi Valley area for at least 9,000 years, and, perhaps longer. (A direct ancestor of the Chumash lived on the northern Channel Islands as early as 13,500 year ago.) At the time of first contact with the inhabitants of the villages of *Simi* and *Ta'apu* by the Spanish there is thought to have been at least several hundred Chumash Indians living in Simi Valley. So, where did they go and what happened to them? Are there any of their descendants still around? These are questions that I have been occasional asked. The answer to these questions can only be answered generally. In any case, here are some thoughts about these questions.

We are certain that the first Spanish contact with the Indians of Simi Valley occurred during the 1769 expedition, commanded by Gaspar de Portola', on their expedition north. The expedition camped for several days near the village of *Kamulus* (now known as Camulos) along the Santa Clara River. Portola' sent a contingent of soldiers to the south into the Santa Susana Mountains to look around. We know that they at least over-nighted in lower Gillibrand Canyon in the vicinity of the Chumash Village of *Ta'apu*. When the Gillibrand family first settled in Gillibrand Canyon, they recorded that some of their "cowboys" told them that several generations ago a group of soldiers came over the mountains from the north, no doubt using the "*Ta'apu* Trail," and camped under a small grove of oak trees before returning north. What this story suggests is that those "cowboys" were descendants from some of the Indians of that village. So at least some Indians remained in the area, perhaps having been part of the "mission Indians" and/or rancho employees in-between. Chumash Indians often married native Americans from other tribe and from other parts of the Chumash greater sphere. Today, the California Native Heritage Commission recognizes Beverly Folkes of Thousand Oaks and her descendants as direct descendants from the people of the village of *Ta'apu*.

Some decades prior to the first Portola' expedition it is believe that at least one pandemic disease from the eastern hemisphere spread overland from Mexico into southern California - killing perhaps a quarter of the population in the coastal and near coastal areas. So, the native population met by members of the Portola' expedition had already been diminished by at least one European virus. Put

simply, American Indians had no resistance to eastern hemispheric diseases. The first Indian that contracted, say, smallpox, might survive the infection. However, with each subsequent infection in the chain of infections, the effects of the disease became more serious. Often the third person in the chain of infections would die. In the end, there was an approximately 70 to 80 percent mortality within the first two years of infection.

One effect of the mission system and of the rancho system was to concentrate Indians in relatively tight living conditions, which left them very vulnerable to infectious diseases. The culture of the Spanish and the Mexican periods of settlement was that those who came from Mexico and Spain and their descendants became the *genre de raza'n*. The Indians did nearly all the work. In the end, the mission padres and the owners of ranchos competed for labor. While some Indians entered the mission system voluntarily, they could not quit the system. Historic villages were raided and neophytes were taken at the points of pikes, until their were no more Indians to be had. Indian villages became only memories. To a certain extent the mission system collapsed because it ran out of Indians. The Indians fared better on the ranchos, yet their culture had been destroyed and their societies fragmented. While the Catholic Church was the bedrock of Spanish and Mexican societies, the owners of ranchos were not happy with the raids of the missions to remove Indians from the lands of the ranchos.

Indian culture included the setting of frequent fires during the late-summer and early-fall period to clear and renew the land. The ash from the fires fertilized the land and favored the growth of fire-following plant on which the Indians depended. The Spanish, on the other hand, were depended upon grass for their livestock. They enforced laws, which forbade setting of fires to natural vegetation. The Indians were dependent on a fire-climax environment for their very livelihood. That was denied them forever. They had little choice but to take part in the new culture - if only at the bottom.

The acquisition of California by the United State of America resulted in the effective destruction of Californio society, placed even more pressure on native Americans. They became the new, even lower rung, of the new society. They largely hid within sight. They became "Mexicans." Many, or perhaps, most lost all knowledge of their native American heritage. With the exception of the Santa Inez Band of the Chu-

mash Indians, they are not recognized by the Federal Government.

Some pockets of Indians continued to live more or less as they had before the coming of the Spanish. These were refugees hidden where little observed. In the Simi Valley area, one band of 25-35 (as reported by O. Bud Taylor in 1878) lived deep in the Simi Hills - coming out into the valley in October of each year to gather acorns. That band is said to have left the valley and moved down to Ventura to be with the community of Chumash living there. There is some evidence that their descendant continued to return to Simi Valley each October to gather acorns well into the 1920s.

No full-blooded Chumash Indians exist today. Most people who identify themselves as Chumash Indians include an ancestry of two or more native American groups and people of other backgrounds. Now, at least, one can take pride in whatever ancestry they have.

Mike Kuhn
6-5-15

CHUMASH USE OF BLUE DICKS AND MARIPOSA LILIES

The bulbs of blue dicks, often called brodiaea (*Dichelostemma capitatum*), and mariposa lilies (*Calochortus* ssp.), both called *shi'q'o* in *Ventureño* Chumash, were collected by the Chumash in May and June, after the flower stalks had dried up. They were dug up using digging sticks. The bulbs were transported to a communal roasting pit for immediate cooking. A fire was prepared in the pit. After the fire had burned down, the bulbs were placed on the coals - often in a layer several inches thick. They then covered the bulbs with ashes and coals and then covered everything with a layer of dirt. The bulbs were uncovered and eaten when they were done.

Bulbs at different elevations and of different species were ready to harvest at different times. So these bulbs were an important food resource for the Indians over a period of a month or more for each group. In general, they became available after many herbaceous plants had died and were no longer available as food.

Most of this information has been taken from Jan Timbrook, *Chumash Ethnobotany*, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History (2007), p. 75.

Mike Kuhn
9-10-08



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 HIKE (Rain cancels – No hikes on holidays)

Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak Fire Road

Meet at **4PM** 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.

(We Meet at 5PM during daylight saving time.) (Strenuous - 4.8 MRT - 1,200' elevation gain)

Tuesday Evening - Mt. McCoy Trail

Meet at **6PM** in the parking lot, located to the south of Donut Delite, near the NE corner of Madera and Royal.

(Moderate - 4.0 MRT - 600' elevation gain)

Thursday Evening - Chumash Trail

Meet at **6PM** 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 - 1300' total elevation gain.)

JANUARY HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

January 2nd Charmlee Natural Area Loop*

4.5 Mile Loop - Easy (~600' elevation gain)

This area (also known as the Charmlee Natural Area) overlooks Malibu and the Pacific Ocean on its south side. It contains live oak woodlands, coastal sage scrub, and grassy meadows. The hike follows the Botany Trail to the Fire Ecology Trail to an ocean overlook, then other trails to an old reservoir and the ruins of the original ranch house. Meet at **8AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots.

January 9th Mugu State Park - Hidden Pond Trail Lollipop Loop*



12 MRT - Strenuous (2,300' elevation gain/loss) Our hike in the Point Mugu State Park section of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA) will begin at the Satwiwa Native American Indian Culture Center at Rancho Sierra Vista [Newbury Park]. Meet at **8AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots.

January 16th Work Party - The Chumash Trail

8AM to Noon. Meet at the northern end of Flannigan Drive. All tools will be provided. Bring two quarts of water, snacks, gloves and sun glasses. Wear a hat, long pants, and hiking shoes or boots.

January 20th Club Meeting 5:30PM - The Sycamore Drive Community Center - 1692 Sycamore Drive - Room B-1
Everyone Welcome to attend!


January 23rd Sunset Hills Open Space to Oakbrook Regional Park Hike (Shuttle)*

7.4 MRT - Moderate (1,350' elevation gain) We'll follow this trail uphill to a 1,765' peak, after which we'll take a spur trail out-and-back to a 1,875' lookout promontory. We'll complete our hike along the Hidden Meadows Trail in Oakbrook Regional Park. Meet at **8AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots.

January 30th Oak Flat Trail to Whitaker Peak to Old Hwy 99*

10 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (~2000 elevation gain/loss)

There will be views of Pyramid Lake and Lake Piru during the hike. We'll return along Whitaker Peak Road to Old Hwy 99 [aka Golden State Hwy] (2,943') and carpool 1.3 miles back to Camp Verdugo Oaks. Meet at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride at **8AM**. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots.

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.

Full descriptions of these hikes and activities are available at <http://www.simitrailblazers.com/activities/index.html>