



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



RSTB CLUB MEETING
 This month's RSTB meeting will be at:
 Sycamore Drive Community Center
 1692 Sycamore Drive – Room B-1
Wednesday: October 15, 2014
5:30PM (NOTE: Early Start Time)
Everyone Welcome to attend!

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


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

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS
 Peter Scifres
 Nancy Gardner
 Deidre Roberts

Upcoming Events

October 4th Happy Camp 
 Cyn Loop* 10 MRT-Moderate to Strenuous (elevation gain/loss 1300')
8AM

October 11th Devil's Punch-bowl & Devil's Chair*
 8 MRT - Moderate—Strenuous (2100' elevation gain/loss. carpool lot at Stearns and 118 freeway. **8AM**

October 15th Club Meeting
 The Sycamore Drive Community Center - 1692 Sycamore Drive - Room B-1 **Everyone Welcome to attend!**
(NOTE: Early Start Time) 5:30PM

October 18th Mt. Disappointment to Mt. Lowe * 8AM

October 25th Work Party - Wild Animal Corridor - Cache In Trash Out Event - This event is being held in conjunction with a GeoCaching.com CITO event.

Work Party - Wild Animal Corridor - Cache In Trash Out Event
 Meeting time is **8AM**. The event will end at noon. The Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District will provide all that we need. You must bring your own water, snacks, and sunscreen. Wear old work clothes, gloves, and a hat.

Weekly hikes!!



Has anyone ever told you to take 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.

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

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.



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

THE LAST REFUGE

Bud O. L. Taylor came to Ventura County in 1866 when he was four years old. After spending time in Ventura, his family moved to Nevada. In 1874 he moved to Simi Valley, where he worked as a teamster and grain rancher. One day he was looking for cattle in the far reaches of Sycamore Canyon (now Meier Canyon), when he came upon a small cluster of Chumash huts. They were not occupied at the time. The newspaper account, the text of which was provided to me by City Historian Pat Havens, does not record where in Meier Canyon his discovery was made. However, based upon physical evidence, I am certain that I stumbled upon the site. Way back in a remote section of the canyon is a place where there is nearly always water. A nice flat area is present near the water. It is possible that the site represented a well hidden refuge for Indians, who wished to avoid capture into the mission system or who had escaped from the mission system and who wanted to continue to pursue their own way of life. During the mission and rancho periods such a remote area was unlikely to have been visited. Rancho Simi was primarily a sheep ranch. There is little graze for sheep deep in the chaparral-covered steep-walled canyon. Sheep were accompanied by a shepherd. They were not allowed to free range.

Notes have been discovered in the archives of the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History from the files of Dr. Charles Rozaire, Curator of Archaeology. They were not identified as to source, but a good guess is that the research was done by Richard Van Valkenburg in the early 1930s. At that time he and his staff interviewed the listed informants, one of whom was Bud Taylor. Taylor remembered a band of about 35 Indians that lived in Spring Canyon, i.e., a branch of the eastern branch of Meier Canyon, on what is now the Brandeis-Bardin campus of the American Jewish University. He stated that they were living in brush houses (elsewhere in the notes he

describes them as "grass-covered" houses) and in rock shelters (elsewhere described as two large caves) as late as 1878. One of those caves was probably one that is in another branch of Meier Canyon. He also reported that in the fall they would come down to the valley floor to gather acorns. While the various notes are somewhat confusing, they imply that they left the canyon for Ventura in 1879. However, they returned in the fall of each year to Simi to gather acorns. This may have been the same group that is reported (personal communication during the late 1970s with the octogenarian daughter of the original owner of that ranch) to have camped for many years each fall on a ranch where Willowbrook Lane is today, while they gathered acorns in the valley.

When I found what I now am certain was Spring Canyon, and downstream from the suspected site of the grass-covered houses, I was greeted by an old hand painted sign about 20 feet up on the west wall of the canyon. The sign read: "Lost Canyon - discovered by Bud Taylor." I doubt that the sign could have been more than 10 years old. I asked Johnny Varble, the ranch manager and descendant of several pioneer families, about the sign. He said that he had no recollection of seeing it and had no memory of the story of Bud Taylor's discovery. (In his youth, he had known Bud Taylor.) Was the story of his discovery, so many years after most of the Indians were gone, passed down within a pioneer family and somehow commemorated? The sign itself may have been silent testimony of a day more than 130 years ago when a local rancher made a tantalizing discovery that bore witness to the last days of a group's hold on their old way of life.

Mike Kuhn
(12-18-08, revised 4-28-10)

SNAKE STANDING

On the Trail Blazers' December 28, 1999 hike to Rocky Peak, Arlene Altshuler, our trusted hike leader, tried

out a new skill – snake standing. The tale itself is interesting enough. As you read it, imagine that it is happening to you - you're worst nightmare!

As we do every week, we start the hike by picking up some of the trash near the trailhead. I watched Arlene begin to bend over to pick up a piece of wrapped candy, but, to my alarm, I saw that stretched out about an inch in front of her boots was a rattlesnake! Not a large one - only about 11 or 12 inches long. I yelled at Arlene - STOP! - which, to my relief, she did. Then to my horror, you see, I am fond of Arlene, she turned, moved her feet, planting one foot squarely on the middle of the snake. The rattlesnake was not amused and, no doubt, in some distress. I lunged toward Arlene, grabbed her by her nearest upper arm and jerked her violently away.

Arlene had no idea what was going on. I am not usually a violent person. Indeed, I can remember consciously controlling the force of my effort, knowing that my adrenaline rush could result in an injury to Arlene. She was not traumatized by the presence of the snake, rather she was very concerned that she might have injured it. Fortunately, it was and remained very torpid from the cold weather. The snake had tried to twist around to strike at her lower leg while she was standing on it, however, with its belly being firmly pinned in place, it could not rotate far enough to strike. The snake could not easily be moved off the road because of the steep cuts on both sides. We warned everyone coming down the trail to watch out for the snake. After all, being stepped on twice in one day would be two time too many.

What this incident should teach us is that you may encounter rattlesnakes any time of the year - even in cold weather. And....before picking up anything off of the ground, you must not remain so focused that you fail to scan the area for any of nature's striking creatures.

Mike Kuhn
11-30-04

September 20th - Long Canyon, Oak Canyon, Montgomery Canyon, Challenger Park, Canyon View Trail Loop



15 hikers gathered at the Long Canyon Trail trailhead parking lot at Wood Ranch in Simi Valley on a mild end-of-summer morning. We began hiking the Long Canyon trail as it climbed steeply 0.7 mile to a trail junction atop a ridge overlooking western Simi Valley to the north as well as the Lang Ranch Open Space to the south. We then followed a "use" trail down to the dirt road in Oak Canyon while enjoying views of the surrounding mountain



slopes. After a short break we headed eastward up a dirt connector road to a ridge that provided nice views of western Simi Valley. We continued along the dirt road as it dropped into Montgomery Canyon and headed toward Long Canyon Road. We then followed a couple of trails over to Challenger Park which was unusually vacant. After crossing Long Canyon Road and following an equestrian trail for a while we climbed steeply up the Canyon View Trail which provided views of the surrounding area including Bard Reservoir and followed it as it undulated along a ridgeline back to the trailhead parking lot, completing a

7.3-mile loop hike with 1,665' of elevation gain/loss on a pleasant day for hiking (thanks to the marine layer).

September 14th - Nicholas Flat Trail to Nicholas Pond

Seven hikers met on an already warm Saturday morning in Simi Valley to car pool to the Nicholas Flat Trail trailhead in Leo Carrillo State Park in Malibu. We had a pleasant drive through the Santa Monica Mountains via Hwy 23 to Pacific Coast Highway (Hwy 1) where we encountered limited access to the highway due to bicycle riders engaged in a sanctioned "marathon" race. Even near the ocean the morning temperature was unusually high. The hike began with a steady, fairly steep, ascent as the trail gained around 1,600' in about 2.5 miles. Except for a group of trail maintenance workers, we had the trail to ourselves. As the air temperature quickly increased we soon felt its debilitating effect, but we decided to continue the hike. The usual ocean views were obscured by cloud cover just offshore. The effects of the ongoing drought on the mountain-



side foliage was shockingly evident. Eventually we crested the mountain, descended through a large meadow, and followed the trail down to Nicholas Pond which for the first time was completely dry. After taking a rest/lunch break in the shade next to the former pond, we returned the way we had come suffering from what had become a scorcher of a day. Our unpleasant hike covered 7.8 miles with a total elevation gain/loss of nearly 2,200'.

September 6th - Mt. Islip





RSTB Calendar October



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	3 Yom Kippur	4 Happy Camp Canyon Loop* 10 MRT 8AM
5 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule	6	7 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	8	9 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	10	11 Devil's Punchbowl Trail to Devil's Chair* 8AM See Schedule
12 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule	13	14 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	15 Club Meeting 5:30PM (NOTE: Early Start Time) See Schedule Everyone Welcome to attend! Happy Birthday Peter Scifres	16 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	17 Happy Birthday Kathleen Quinn	18 Mount Disappointment to Mt. Lowe* 8AM See Schedule Happy Birthday Lesa Povinelli
19 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule Happy Birthday Tere Trabert	20	21 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule Happy Birthday Sarita Shoemaker	22 Happy Birthday Margarita Marsh	23 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	24	25 Work Party - Wild Animal Corridor - Cache In Trash Out Event 8AM See Schedule
26 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule Happy Birthday Lisa Klockenteger	27	28 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule Happy Birthday Mark Gilmore	29 Happy Birthday Tracy Frank	30 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	31 	



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REGULARLY SCHEDULED HIKES (Rain cancels – No hikes on holidays)

Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak Fire Road

Meet at **5PM** 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, located near the NE corner of Madera and Royal. (Moderate - 4.0 MRT - 675' 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.)

OCTOBER HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

October 4th Happy Camp Canyon Loop*

10 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,300' elevation gain/loss)

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

October 11th Devil's Punchbowl Trail to Devil's Chair*

8 MRT - Moderate-to-Strenuous (2,100' elevation gain/loss)

Meet at the 118 & Park & Ride at **8AM**. Bring 2-3 liters of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots.

October 15th **Everyone Welcome to attend! (NOTE: Early Start Time)**

5:30PM - The Sycamore Drive Community Center - 1692 Sycamore Drive - Room B-1

October 18th Mt. Disappointment to Mt. Lowe*

8 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (elevation gain/loss: 2,000')

We will approach the San Gabriel Peak area by vehicle from the northwest via Angeles Crest Highway and Mt. Wilson Road. Meet at 118 & Stearns St. at park and ride lot at **8AM**. Bring lunch, snacks, 2-3 liters of water, and camera. Wear boots

October 25th Work Party - Wild Animal Corridor - Cache In Trash Out Event

The event will end at noon. The Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District will provide all that we need. You must bring your own water, snacks, and sunscreen. Wear old work clothes, gloves, and a hat. This event is being held in conjunction with a GeoCaching.com CITO event. Meeting time is **8AM**.

Directions: From Kuehner Drive and the 118, head South to Smith Road and turn left. Continue to the end Smith Road, passing the public parking area. Follow the CITO Event signs, past the normally locked gate where the pavement ends, to a designated parking area, adjacent the rail road track

 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>

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		
Park District Liaison:	Jeannie Liss	WK (805) 584-4453	volunteers@rsrpd.us
Work Parties Chair:	VOLUNTEER NEEDED		Contact Mike Kuhn at: 805-583-2345
Hiking Chair:	Mark Gilmore	HM (805) 529-5581	markinthepark@sbcglobal.net
Vice Hiking Chair:	Les Wilson	HM (805) 522-2642	les.wilson@roadrunner.com
Website:	Mark Gilmore	HM (805) 529-5581	markinthepark@sbcglobal.net
Ways & Means Chair:	Marty Richards	HM (805) 526-4414	mlrrdh@yahoo.com
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.

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

Rancho Simi Foundation and mail it to RSTB, P.O. Box 630445, Simi Valley, CA 93063-0399



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