



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



Happy Holidays



*Come & Enjoy
our annual casual
&
social potluck!*

*Ursula Christie's
Home*

Friday, December 4, 2015

Time: 6:30 PM
576 Pinecliff Place
Simi Valley, CA 93065

*South on 1st Street, right on
Mellow Lane, right on Pinecliff
Place to end
Members Only*



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

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

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



RSTB CLUB MEETING
This month's RSTB meeting will be at:
Sycamore Drive Community Center
1692 Sycamore Drive – Room B-1
Wednesday: December 16, 2015
5:30PM Everyone Welcome to attend!

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

Upcoming Events

December 4th Christmas Holiday Party Potluck* Members Only - Come and enjoy our casual and social holiday potluck! **6:30 PM**

December 5th Ray Miller Trail to La Jolla Valley, Mugu Peak and down the Chumash Trail (Shuttle)* 9.3 Miles One-Way - Moderate to Strenuous (1,800' of elevation gain/loss) - (Short car shuttle) **8AM**

December 12th Zuma Ridge Trail and Ocean View Trail Loop Hike* 10.7 miles – Moderate-to-strenuous (2,700' of elevation gain/loss) **8AM**

December 16th Club Meeting
The Sycamore Drive Community Center - 1692 Sycamore Drive - Room B-1 **5:30PM Everyone Welcome to attend!**

December 19th Work Party - Chumash Trail 8AM

December 26th Big Sky Loop
4.5 Mile Loop - Easy to Moderate (815' of elevation gain/loss) **8AM**

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.



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

October 24th - Work Party - Wildlife Corridor Corriganville Park



This is the seventh time the Trail Blazers teamed up with the local Geocaching group, to clean up the Wildlife Corridor above Corriganville Park. 18 of us removed six bags of garbage and painted over the graffiti at the Corridor. Two more volunteers stayed back at the Camp Rotary picnic tables to take care of our snacks and drinks. As in past years, again we finished in record time. We were done well before the heat of the day. The massive Corridor cement maintained the coolness well from the previous night. It was a very clear day, so we enjoyed fine views of Simi Valley from the far eastern side. Many thanks to the RSRPD, for providing all we needed. We had a lot of fun and enjoyed some good conversation. Let's do it all again next year!

October 31st - Sandstone Peak via the Mishe Mokwa Trail



10 hikers traveled to Triunfo Pass (2,100') in the Santa Monica Mountains (SMM) on a warm fall morning. The clockwise loop hike began on the Mishe Mokwa Trail but we soon took a connector trail over

to the Sandstone Peak Trail, a portion of the SMM Backbone Trail (BBT). The trail climbed steadily upward to a junction with a spur trail leading to Sandstone Peak, gaining 850' in the process; after gaining an additional 150' on the spur trail we reached the summit of Sandstone Peak (3,111') aka Mt. Allen, the highest peak in the Santa Monica Mountains. The peak is just a hunk of grayish-white rock, but it provides a stunning 360-degree view (depending on the air quality) of the ocean,

the surrounding mountains, and the Oxnard Plain. Visibility was fairly good on this day and an ocean breeze mitigated the rising air temperature; we could see six (6) of the channel islands: Anacapa, Santa Cruz, Santa Catalina, Santa Barbara, San Nicholas, and San Clemente. After enjoying the view and returning to the BBT we continued on to its junction with the western end of the Mishe Mokwa Trail which we followed as it descended to the shady Split Rock picnic area in Carlisle Canyon. After taking a leisurely break, we followed the Mishe Mokwa Trail back to the parking lot, enjoying excellent views of the reddish-colored Echo Cliffs (a long stretch of sheer vertical sandstone rock faces) against the green side of Boney Mountain, and Balanced Rock, a huge house-sized boulder precariously balancing atop a smaller boulder. We headed home having completed a pleasant 6.6-mile hike with ~1,600' of elevation gain/loss.

November 7th - Happy Camp Canyon Middle Range Fire Road loop



12 hikers met on a windy Saturday morning in the dirt parking lot at the east end of Broadway Road north of Moorpark. The wind was particularly ferocious as we hurriedly hiked one mile to the entrance to Happy Camp Canyon, "a lush riparian oak woodland with an intermittent stream." Mostly protected from the wind, we followed an old ranch road eastward as it rose gradually in the canyon bottom between Oak Ridge and Big Mountain. At 4.5 miles we took a break at the Mower Memorial Trail Rest in an oak grove with picnic tables and hitching rails. We then climbed steeply for 0.5 mile up Big Mountain to the Middle Range Fire Road via an abandoned, partially eroded dirt road. Once we reached the ridge we were treated to unusually clear distant views to the south and west including the Santa Monica Mountains and two of the Channel Islands (Anacapa and Santa Cruz). We were subjected to intermittent gusts of wind during our return trip along the ridge. We eventually reached the parking lot, having completed a 10.9-mile hike with 1,200' of elevation gain/loss.



RSTB Calendar DECEMBER



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	2	3 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	4  Holiday Party	5 Ray Miller Trail to La Jolla Valley, Mugu Peak and down the Chumash Trail (Shuttle)* 8AM  See Schedule
6 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule  HAPPY HANUKKAH <i>Begins</i>	7	8 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	9	10 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Robert D. Galletly	11	12 Zuma Ridge Trail and Ocean View Trail Loop Hike* 8AM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Daisy Wang
13 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Bill Cespedes	14 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Randy Shoemaker	15 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	16 Club Meeting 5:30PM <i>Everyone Welcome to attend!</i> See Schedule	17 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	18 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Chris Quinn	19 Work Party - Chumash Trail See Schedule
20 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Stephanie Farrar	21	22 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	23	24 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	25 	26 Big Sky Loop 8AM See Schedule
27 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	28	29 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	30	31 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule 		

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		
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.

- 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

(Continued from November)

VEGETATION BURNING BY THE CHUMASH

From the diary of Fr. Juan Crespi, who accompanied the Portola expedition in 1769-1770:

August 24, 1769 along the Santa Barbara coast: *....We were soon stopped here, and went up to some low-rolling tablelands that end in high bold cliffs near the sea, but are all very good dark friable soil, well covered with very fine grasses that nearly everywhere had been burnt by the heathens.*

August 29, 1769 north of Point Arguello: *...We went almost all the way over salt-grass, all very much burnt off by the heathens, ...nor was there grass for the animals, as it had all been burned off...although it had been burned off, there were spots that had not been and where there was good grass for the animals...(reaching the plains of Santa Maria)...fine soil and dry grass almost all of which had been burned by the heathens.*

May 7, 1770 north of Point Arguello: *...fields all abloom with different kinds of wildflowers of all colors, so that as many as were the flowers we had been meeting all along the way and on the Channel, it was not such plenty as here for it is all one mass of blossom, great quantities of white, yellow, red, purple, and blue ones; many yellow violets ...On this whole march, three leagues from the point ...we have seen not a bush nor a single heathen.* (This was the same land that had been covered on August 29, 1769 – the previous summer – and which had been burned the year before.)

Fr. Juan Crespi attributes the burning of the land to fires deliberately set by the “heathens.” He also describes areas along the Santa Barbara coast as grasslands in 1769 that are now covered by dense chaparral.

From the diary of Fernando Rivera y Moncado (military governor of California from 1774-1777):

April 25, 1776, along the Santa Clara River near the coast: *...The gentiles destroy and consume the pastures with their burnings.* (In a later journal entry he laments the difficulties that he has experience in not being able to stop his march due to the lack of pasture for the livestock.) *...due to the horses and mules not having grass, all occasioned by the great fires of the gentiles, who, not having to care for more than their own bellies, burn the fields as soon as they gather up the*

seeds, and the (burning), is universal that although on some occasions it happens it may be greater or less, according to the winds or calm.

In his descriptions of the Monterey area, Rivera y Moncada stated that the heathens burned “so that new weeds may grow to produce more seeds.” (p. 169). Grass and sage seeds were important in the diets of the Indians. They also feed on fresh green shoots in the spring – a practice that was abetted by burning of the land in the late summer or early fall.

In 1791 and 1792 naturalist Jose’ Longinos Martinez traveled California making many observations for the King of Spain. Referring to the Santa Barbara Channel he states: *...Their wars are frequent and always originate over rights to seed-gathering grounds, ...The gentiles living between San Diego and San Buena-ventura store up against the winter the plants that bear the most seeds...These nations (north of Santa Barbara) continually keep on hand small baskets of seeds and other foodstuffs...In all New California from Fronteras northward the gentiles have the custom of burning the brush, this for two purposes: one, for catching rabbits; two, so that with the first light rain or dew the shoots will come up which they call pelillo (little hair) and upon which they feed like cattle when the weather prevents their seeking other food.*

What emerges from these eye witnesses is a suggestion that the Chumash were involved in a sophisticated land management practice that employed the setting of fires to clear land in order to improve the production of native grass and other seeds, perhaps to improve acorn production – or at least to recover a high proportion of the acorn production – to promote favorable environmental conditions for the growth of plants with seeds that were desired by the Chumash, and possibly to assist in game drives. The fire followers included species of bunch grasses, herbaceous plants in the sunflower, mustard (Yes, there are some native mustards.), parsley, pea, buttercup, evening-primrose, sage, figwort and lily families. Plant parts consumed includes seeds, shoots, leaves, and corms or bulbs. Fires tend to favor forbs over grasses, so forbs would tend to fill in the gaps between grasses. Bunch grass will resprout from their root mass following burning. There is one report, which describes land being demarcated by ownership and individuals broadcasting seed

over the field following the fields being burned over. This behavior suggests proto-agriculture.

Another reason for setting fires was to keep the California grizzly bears at bay. Grizzlies were chaparral creatures. By keeping the areas within miles of villages clear of chaparral, the Indians greatly decreased the potential for encounters with the monsters - which liked Indians.

The practice of intentionally setting fire to fields during the late-summer or fall would have favored grasslands with forbs and oak/grass savannas over coastal sage scrub and chaparral. What resulted within the coastal Chumash sphere, and much of California for that matter, was an environment that was managed to maximize grasses and other plant and animal resources. What happened when the Spanish and eastern Americans came was catastrophic for the Chumash. In a very simple way their worlds collided.

Put simply, the Spanish and later the Americans needed grass for the grazing of livestock. Unlike today, even transportation was dependent upon livestock. The practice of burning fields every year or, in some cases, every two or three years had to be suppressed by the Spanish immediately. Laws were passed and rules were adopted. Punishment was swift. The result was that the Indians’ way of life collapsed. They became even more dependent on the missions and ranchos for food. Indians, especially in times of drought, flocked to the missions and later to the ranchos. They became shepherders, domestic and farm laborers and, later, vaqueros. In the beginning, the mission system provided about half of the food needs of the Indians, who worked for the missions. The Indians were given time off to harvest their wild products. With their primary land management tool denied them, the Indians became more and more dependent upon the missions and later the ranchos. The natural world changed. Grasslands were reduced. Oak woodlands were more easily damaged by fire, coastal sage scrub vegetation expanded – as did the area of chaparral. Changes continue to abound – even now. Is it all for the better?

Mike Kuhn
6-16-08 (revised 10-11-12)



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.)

DECEMBER HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

December 4th Christmas Holiday Party Potluck*

Members Only - Easy (2' elevation gain/loss) Come and enjoy our casual and social holiday potluck! **Time: 6:30PM**

Directions to Trailhead: Ursula Christie's Home - 576 Pinecliff Place, Simi Valley, CA 93065 (South on 1st Street, right on Mellow Lane, right on Pinecliff Place to end)

December 5th Ray Miller Trail to La Jolla Valley, Mugu Peak and down the Chumash Trail (Shuttle)*

9.3 Miles One-Way - Moderate to Strenuous (1,800' of elevation gain/loss) - (Short car shuttle)

We'll complete our one-way hike as we descend the Chumash Trail to its trailhead along Pacific Coast Highway. 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. 

December 12th Zuma Ridge Trail and Ocean View Trail Loop Hike*

10.7-mile Loop – Moderate-to-strenuous (2,700' of elevation gain/loss) When we reach the junction [at 2.6 miles] of the Zuma Ridge Trail with the Zuma Edison Road we'll head eastward 3.9 miles to the 0.7 mile-long Zuma Canyon Connector Trail and then head south 1.3 miles on the Kanan-Edison Road. Then we'll hike 1.2 miles west on the Ocean View Trail and complete our loop via the Ridge Canyon Access Trail (0.6 mile). 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.

December 16th Club Meeting 5:30PM - The Sycamore Drive Community Center - 1692 Sycamore Drive - Room B-1
Everyone Welcome to attend!

December 19th Work Party - 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.

December 26th Big Sky Loop

4.5 Mile Loop - Easy to Moderate (815' of elevation gain/loss)

This hike follows a trail that loops around the Big Sky housing development north of Highway 118. It climbs up an eastern ridge in the foothills of the Santa Susana Mountains then heads north along the ridge providing views of mountains in all directions including nearby Whiteface Mountain. The return portion of the loop winds along the oak-lined stream that runs through the development. Meet at 8 AM. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots.

DIRECTIONS TO THE TRAILHEAD: Take Hwy 118 to the Erringer Road exit. Head north 0.2 mile on Erringer Road (passing Alamo Street) to Big Sky Place (just before the entrance to the Big Sky housing development). Turn right on Big Sky Place, park on the left (west) side of the street close to its junction with Erringer Road.

 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>