



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



Save the Date!



Free Wild Animal Shows

Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District and the Rancho Simi Trailblazers will sponsor two FREE family programs in February and March.

Oak Park

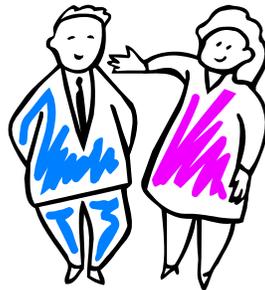
Saturday, February 20, 10:00 am
Oak Park Community Center
1000 N. Kanan Road, Oak Park

Simi Valley

Saturday, March 20, 10:00 am
Rancho Santa Susana Community Center, 5005-C Los Angeles Ave,
Simi Valley



Both programs will start at 10am. Watch for more details about these popular programs in upcoming newsletters! You may also send email to volunteers@rsrpd.us for more information.



Welcome, New Members!

Rose & Jamie Robbins

RSTB MEETING

This month's club meeting will be at the Community Center, Room B-1
1692 Sycamore Drive
at 7:00 PM
February 17, 2010

California Trail Days

The California Trails & Greenways Foundation has selected the second weekend in April to celebrate this statewide trails event which promotes trail construction and maintenance by volunteers. The Rancho Simi Trail Blazers will hold an event in conjunction with California Trail Days, so stay tuned for more information!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Please visit the website at <http://simitrailblazers.com> for details on any of the following hikes and events.

February 6th

Chivo Canyon Loop

6 MRT - Easy to Moderate (800' elevation gain)

February 13th

O'Melveny Park Trail

7 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1200' elevation gain)

February 17th

Club Meeting Not strenuous

February 20th

(Rescheduled from January 23RD)

Work Party - Upper Hummingbird Trail

February 27th

Runkle Canyon Loop Exploratory Hike

7 MRT - Moderate (750' elevation gain)

RSTB LOGO T-SHIRTS

Are your old logo T-shirts worn out? We still have short sleeve, long sleeve, and sweat shirts in assorted sizes and colors.

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



Please call Marty if you'd like to place an order: 805-526-4414

DEMISE OF THE MEGAFUNA IN NORTH AMERICA

A long debate within the archaeological community in the United States has raged over the cause of the decline and eventual extinction of 34 genera of megafauna in North America around the transition from the Pleistocene-Holocene deglaciation (18-6 thousand years ago). The lost species included, for example, ground sloths, the saber-toothed cat, the short-faced bear, mammoths, the mastodon, the dire wolf, horses, camels, two species of bison, tapirs, the American lion, and musk oxen. Simply put, many scientists have held that the extinctions were caused by climate change, while others have attributed the decline to the arrival of man in the new world. Still others have said that both were causes.

While climate change was catastrophic in many ways, the Pleistocene was marked by four major glaciations in the northern hemisphere with rapid changes in climate both going into and out of each glacial period. The die-off of the megafauna (species of 34 kg or greater in weight) in North America occurred only during the last turnaround.

Until recently, most archaeologists have held that man first arrived in the new world about 11,600 years ago, i.e., following the retreat of continental glaciers. Evidence of earlier occupations were rejected out of hand because "it could not be," because the dating of the finds were questionable, or because the finds were of questionable human origin.

A new article by Gill, Williams, Jackson, Lininger and Robinson, "Pleistocene Megafaunal Collapse, Novel Plant Communities, and Enhanced Fire Regimes in North America," *Science* (November 20, 2009), pp. 1100-1103, provides compelling evidence to suggest that the arrival of man or the event of a new technology in the hands of man

was the cause of the demise of the megafauna. The new evidence is derived from cores from the bottoms of three lakes - one in Indiana and two in New York. Dung fungus *Sporormiella* requires herbivore digestion to complete its life cycle. Runoff through the dung of the herbivore megafauna ended up in the lakes. What was found was that the high concentration of *Sporormiella* spores began to sharply decline around 14,800 years ago. By 13,700 years ago only minute traces of the spores were present. Only with the event of colonization of the western hemisphere by European man with his cattle, horses and other herbivores has the concentration of *Sporormiella* gone up again. The basic finding of the study is that the decline of the megafauna began well before the end of the Pleistocene Epoch and the rapid warming in North America that resulted. At the same time, there is now good evidence that man was present south of the glacial ice sheets by 14,800 years ago. Man was the new wild card in the environment. This suggests that man may well have overhunted the herbivores, which resulted in their demise. Some herbivore species survived - possibly because they could outwit those who would hunt them or because, as with the short-horned bison, their numbers and favorable habitat were overwhelming.

Something we do not think about as a result of the "kill-off" of the megafauna is that it resulted in a massive change in habitat. For example, during the Pleistocene in Indiana, the land was dominated by spruce forests. Some broadleaf species were present but their size and number were greatly limited by herbivore pressure. Once most of the large herbivores were gone the forest became dominated by broadleaf evergreen trees, such as ash, elm and ironwood. Charcoal from fires also began to appear. The charcoal reflected the increased fuel available and the use of fire by the Indians to modify their surroundings and drive game. Pine and oak forests emerged with the end of the Pleistocene and ash, elm and ironwood trees remained but were less dominant.

Prior to the arrival of man in the western hemisphere the megafauna were the dominant animal influence on our biota aside from climate. The removal of those megafaunal species from the environment in and of itself resulted in massive changes in the environment, however, man's use of fire also became a major environmental factor. More recently, the introduction of widespread agriculture and irrigation has greatly changed the face of the earth.

Mike Kuhn
12-20-09

AN EARLY VINEYARD

The 1858 federal survey of the Simi Valley area exhibits a vineyard at the present day intersection of Township Road and Lemon Drive. The presence of a vineyard at that location in 1858 without irrigation seems unlikely. One is left with the conclusion that the vineyard was irrigated as part of the De la Guerra farm operation - probably an extension of the plantings in Tapo Canyon.

The Arroyo del Tapo has running surface water year around, and it can be assumed that those plantings of grapes were irrigated. The depth to ground water at the intersection of Township Road and Lemon Drive exceeds 90 feet, so one is forced to the conclusion that the De la Guerras were conveying water for irrigation from well up Gillibrand Canyon or Tapo Canyon. Evidence of what may be that ditch can still be seen in places on the western side of Gillibrand Canyon. However, that ditch may well have been limited to irrigating crops in Gillibrand Canyon in the vicinity of the De la Guerra adobe. Water diversion from Tapo Canyon is the most likely source of that water.

Mike Kuhn
5-31-04

Jan 16th, 2010 - Cheeseboro Canyon Canyon / Palo Comado Canyon Loop



16 hikers (+ Heidi, a cute dog) met at the carpool point near the intersection of Royal Avenue and Madera Road on a partially overcast morning and then traveled to the Cheeseboro Canyon trailhead in the Simi Hills via Hwy 23, Hwy 101, and Chesebro Road. 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 cerulean sky dotted with white clouds. Soon the trail headed west on the Palo Comado Connector, passing a couple of horse ranches whose four-legged residents curiously watched our passage.



Heading north along the main dirt road in Palo Comado Canyon, we passed through a wide grassland dotted with occasional stands of large oak trees; it was a beautiful day. Soon after the road began its climb toward China Flat, we turned right (northeast) onto a dirt trail that led northward along a steep ridge 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 during which we watched

several riders on horseback, 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 began our return trip via always lovely Cheeseboro Canyon, first passing through terrain dominated by striking rock formations and then passing through a riparian woodland at Sulphur Springs. The bicycle traffic in the canyon increased significantly in Cheeseboro Canyon since many other people were also taking advantage of the great weather. We continued southward, passing through a dense oak woodland and then through an

open grassland, eventually reaching the lower parking lot, having completed a 10.9-mile hike with 1,254' of elevation gain on a perfect day to be outside.

January 9th 2010 - Las Lajas Canyon and Chumash Trail Loop

18 hikers (+ 2 dogs) met at the Las Lajas Canyon trailhead on Evening Sky Drive in Simi Valley on a chilly breezy 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 to the north through the canyon, crossing the creek three times; there was some water flowing in the creek, though not much. A mile or so upstream the chilly wind abated, and the next 2.5 miles up-canyon to the Poe Ranch gate were quite pleasant. The mountain hillsides were a nice shade of green combined with the usual shade of white where the slopes are very steep and there is little water. After reaching the trail/road junction just short of the Poe Ranch gate, four hikers decided to return to Evening Sky Drive the way they had come [resulting in a 7-mile hike with 500' of elevation gain]. The remaining 14 hikers and



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 wide variety of other hikers and 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 2.6 miles"), we rapidly descended the familiar trail almost to the Flanagan Drive trailhead. 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, passing what appeared to be a baby rattlesnake along the way. A short walk along Evening Sky Drive took us back to our vehicles, having completed a 9.6-mile hike with 1,793' of elevation gain.



RSTB Calendar February 2010



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 <i>Happy Birthday Caroline Carroll</i>	2 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	3	4 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	5 <i>Happy Birthday Mona Steffen</i>	6 Chivo Canyon Loop See Schedule
7 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule	8 <i>Happy Birthday John Atwood Thais Campos</i>	9 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Marilyn Ryder</i>	10	11 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	12	13 O'Melveny Park Trail See Schedule
14 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Paula Lightfoot Doug Marsh</i>	15	16 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	17 RSTB Meeting 7:00 pm See Page 1	18 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	19 <i>Happy Birthday Melissa Steffen Pete Lestrel Jamie Robbins</i>	20 Work Party - Upper Hummingbird Trail See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Mary Ann Campbell</i>
21 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Carmen Zarcone</i>	22 <i>Happy Birthday Lorraine Ferrall</i>	23 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	24 <i>Happy Birthday Connie Ankrom</i>	25 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday David Seifert</i>	26 <i>Happy Birthday Dave Goldberg</i>	27 Runkle Canyon Loop Exploratory Hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Tina McCoy</i>
28 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule						



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

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Hiking Schedule



REGULARLY SCHEDULED HIKES

(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 from the 118 Fwy. Meet at the north end of the bridge; don't park on the bridge. (Moderate to strenuous, depending on distance hiked. 4.8 MRT)

Tuesday Evening - Long Canyon

Meet at 6:30pm in Long Canyon parking lot. Directions: Take 1st Street heading south. Continue when the road's name changes to Long Canyon Road. The parking lot is at the intersection of Long Canyon Road and Wood Ranch Pkwy. (Moderate, 3.0 MRT)

Thursday Evening - The Chumash Trail

Meet at 6pm at Chumash trailhead. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flanagan Dr. Trailhead is at the end of Flanagan Dr. (Moderate to strenuous, depending on distance hiked. 5.2 MRT)

FEBRUARY HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

February 6th

Chivo Canyon Loop

6 MRT - Easy to Moderate (800' elevation gain)

Meet at **8 AM**. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and a snack. Wear boots. Trailhead: From Simi Valley, take the 118 to Yosemite Avenue and turn left (north) over the freeway. Drive 1.9 miles and then turn right (north) on Westwood Street.

Park near the intersection of Yosemite Ave. and Westwood Street. Please do your best to minimize the impact on the residents of the neighborhood. Trailhead coordinates are N 34° 18.131' W 118° 41.677'.

February 13th

O'Melveny Park Trail*

7 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1200' elevation gain)

See great views of San Fernando and Santa Clarita Valleys from Mission Point. Meet at **8 AM at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride**. Bring 2 - 3 quarts of water and lunch. Wear boots.

February 17th

Club Meeting

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

February 20th

Work Party - Upper Hummingbird Trail (Rescheduled from January)

Meet at **8:00 AM at the Rocky Peak Trailhead**. We will drive to the top of the trail and work down. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water, hat, sunscreen, and gloves to work on the trail. Wear sturdy boots. Tools will be provided. As always, you are welcome to work for a shorter time period if you desire. Hope to see you there.

February 27th

Runkle Canyon Loop Exploratory Hike

7 MRT - Moderate (750' elevation gain)

Meet at **8 AM**. Trailhead: Take Sequoia Avenue south; park **adjacent to the Equestrian Center on Chicory Leaf Place**.

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

For 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>



No dogs allowed on trail(s).

RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

Executive Chair:	Mike Kuhn	HM (805) 583-2345	hannahmike@me.com
Treasurer:	Peter Ely		
Park District Liaison:	Colleen Janssen	WK (805) 584-4453	volunteers@rsrpd.us
Work Parties Chair:		*** OPEN ***	
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:	Carrie McCline		
Newsletter Editor:	Kelli Ham		simitrailrunner@gmail.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(s) _____ Birth Mo. _____ Day _____

Please list any extra names and birthdays of more than one member (Month & Day Only)

Address _____

Email Address _____ Phone wk/hm _____

Would you like to receive periodic email announcements about club activities? Yes () No ()

How did you find out about the RSTB? _____

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

“Rancho Simi Foundation” mail it to “RSTB, P.O. Box 630445, Simi Valley, Ca 93063-0399”



U.S. Postage

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