



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



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short sleeve \$12
long sleeve \$14
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RSTB CLUB MEETING

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

February 20, 2013

New Members

Deboah & Rick Bradds
Sandra Richeson
Robert & Bonnie Bastian
Anne-Marie & Nancy Calderone
Cynthia Zahorik
Phil & Mary Pratt
Beth & Ralph Davis

December 15th - Work Party - The North Ridge Trail



Four Individuals turned out to work on the North Ridge Trail for the

December 15 work party. The newsletter stating that the meeting location was at the north end of the trail on Evening Sky Drive was in error and caused some confusion. Work was needed on the south end of the trail starting at the Yosemite Ave. Flanagan Drive trailhead.

The weather was great, sunny and cool but it had rained on Friday and the clay soil stuck to our boots. At the first ascent of the trail we encountered a lot of tumbleweed crowding the trail. The large bushes were removed, pushed off-trail and stomped on so they wouldn't blow away. There was already a lot of new grass growth on the trail and in places had to be cut away. Other work involved removing the many dried stalks of Mustard that grew alongside and were overhanging the trail. We made good progress and cleared about three quarters of the portion of the trail from the Yosemite/Flanagan trailhead to the Geronimo Ave. trailhead. The remaining quarter is mostly clear.

Many thanks to the following workers:
Bart Hibbs, John Sabol, Janev Veettil and his son Athul Janev.

Upcoming Events

February 2nd

Griffith Park: Mt. Hollywood Trail from Ferndell Park*

5.2 MRT - Moderate (1,026' of elevation gain/loss) or 9-mile counterclockwise lollipop Loop Moderate-to-strenuous (1,743' of elevation gain/loss) - **8AM**

February 9 - Johnson Motorway

9 MRT - Moderate (1,600' of elevation gain/loss.) - **8AM**

February 16th - Work Party

Lower Stage Coach Trail - 8AM

February 20th - Club Meeting

Meet – **7PM**

February 23rd - Whiteface Mountain Exploratory Hike

9.3 Miles One-Way - Moderate to Strenuous (1,700' 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.

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



ECHOES OF THE PAST

Throughout history, wherever one culture has appeared to supersede another in a dramatic and rapid fashion, some elements of the older culture have remained as an echo of the past. No better example of the persistence of cultural flotsam can be found than the European settlement experience in the New World. In California today, the thread of continuity with the culture that inhabited Simi Valley for many thousands of years before the coming of settlers from Mexico would seem to be practically non-existent. We think that the settlement of the central and southern coastal portions of California by citizens of New Spain resulted in the complete annihilation of the presence and cultural remnants of the Chumash people. That there is a Spanish vestige is very clear from the names of streets, places and cities. In Simi Valley we have Santa Susana Pass and Mountains, Tierra Rejada Road, the Arroyo Simi, Brea Canyon, Alamos Canyon, Chivo Canyon, Las Lajas Canyon, and the Tripas. We are, of course, separated from the Chumash Indian period of settlement by at least one culture. The only local place name that most people are aware of that is of Chumash origin is "Simi."

The Spanish, like the later Anglo-Americans, viewed their own culture as superior to that which came before and generally overwhelmed most vestiges of the past. The Spanish were viewed by the Chumash, at least initially, with awe, as possessing great supernatural powers, as evidenced by having spectacular material things, including domesticated animals, metal, glass objects, writing and food crops. Indeed, the Chumash generally blamed their own religious practitioners for the high rate of death that accompanied the first few years of Spanish settlement. Many Chumash shaman were killed by their own people. Most Chumash became bilingual and strove to assimilate to the extent possible and become an accepted part of Hispanic culture. A large percentage of those individuals who migrated from Mexico were mestizos, mulattos and Indians. Many settlers of purely Spanish descent married Indian women and some Indians were recipients of Spanish and Mexican land grants. The Spanish policy

was that of protecting the Indians, conversion to Catholicism in order to save their souls, and assimilation. Still, the Indians, including the Chumash, did not fare well under the Spanish. They became part of the Spanish cast system, and they were at the bottom of the social order.

Those who migrated from Mexico were mostly of mixed blood. In California those of purely Spanish ancestry were at the top of the social order. However, Alta California was the Spanish frontier – isolated from New Spain and generally on its own in terms of human resources. Those who came from what we now refer to as Mexico and their descendants tended to meld somewhat as one social order. During the Spanish period a new census was taken every ten years. They did not count the Indians. The racial background of each person was listed. For example, in order to serve as an officer in the army, you had to be of pure Spanish descent. By looking at the same individual from one census to the next, you can see that one person, who is serving in the Army as an enlisted man, is listed as a mestizo or mulatto in one census and in the next census, when they have been promoted into the rank of an officer, is listed as a Spaniard. With the conquest of Alta California by the United States, land-owning Mexicans generally claimed that they were Spaniards.

The Anglo-American invasion more closely resembled a classic barbarian invasion. Indians had lower status than slaves. On the frontier, at least some elements in our settlement of the Americas advocated and practiced the physical annihilation of Indians. Among the Anglo-American settlers, most Chumash hid, effectively becoming Mexicans. So afraid were they of the public exposure of their Chumash heritage, that for many decades their descendants were unaware of their cultural background. They were romanticized once they were gone, but seriously discriminated against when they were here. To the Anglo-Americans, the Mexican settlers at least were bearers of European culture. Their way of life also was romanticized. However, they were a conquered people - fundamentally different from "Americans" or other people of European origin. With this background, we should not be surprised of what little of the

Chumash past has filtered down to us. When I first moved here, I was aware that the name "Simi" came to us from the name of the Spanish and later Mexican rancho and that the name came to the rancho from the name of the historic Chumash village, which was located somewhere at the western end of Simi Valley, and from the name of the valley. Later, I addressed the question of what Chumash place names had been recorded in anthropological notes and found that some of those names are still present on the land in their Chumash, Spanish and English forms. Finally, I found that there were never more than a few Spanish/Mexican settlers in Simi Valley at any one time during the rancho period. Then who were the shepherders, the vaqueros and the laborers? The answer is simple and obvious. The Chumash filled those roles. Those who came up from Mexico were few. It was the Chumash and other Indian peoples who supplied the labor that was necessary to sustain the missions and the ranchos. While most Indians, perhaps 85-95 percent, had succumbed to European diseases, those that remained learned Spanish and acculturated, and were essentially assimilated into Spanish/Mexican society and intermarried with people of other cultures. Later, they also learned English. Since this was the case, perhaps there is something to learn of the Chumash people as reflected in Spanish and English names on the land, both past and present, and of how they looked at the land. With this thesis, I have continued the odyssey that had already begun before the intellectual framework of the thesis had taken form. The "echoes of the past" began to be revealed.

Mike Kuhn

7-3-06 (revised 1-24-13)

Part II in next issue of the Trailblazers Newsletter



December 22nd - Simi Valley: Long Canyon, Oak Canyon, Montgomery Canyon, Challenger Park, Coyote Hills Park, Canyon View Trail Loop



Frost was evident as 13 hikers (+ 1 dog) traveled to the trailhead parking lot on a cold, but clear, morning. Eager to warm up, 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 hillsides sporting new bright-green grass. After a short break we headed up a dirt connector road to a ridge that provided 360-degree views of western Simi Valley. We continued along the dirt road as it dropped into Montgomery Canyon and then followed unmarked trails to Challenger Park. After crossing Long Canyon Road, we climbed steeply up the Canyon View Trail which provided excellent views of the surrounding area including Bard Reservoir and followed it along a ridgeline back to the trailhead parking lot, completing a 7.2-mile loop hike with 1,580' of elevation gain/loss on a pleasant day for hiking.

January 5th - Happy Camp Canyon Loop



18 hikers met in the dirt parking lot at the east end of Broadway Road north of Moorpark on a cool, clear, sunny morning. We followed a well-maintained trail beside the Rustic Canyon golf course

one mile to the entrance to Happy Camp Canyon, "a lush riparian oak woodland with an intermittent stream". We followed an old ranch road eastward as it rose gradually in the canyon bottom between Oak Ridge and Big Mountain. At 4.8

miles we reached a pleasant oak grove with picnic tables and hitching rails where we took a leisurely rest-and-snack break. Resuming our hike we soon found ourselves climbing up the steep gets-your-heart-pumping connector road to the Middle Range Road. Once there we headed west along the ridge, enjoying spectacular views of the surrounding area. After descending to the Happy Camp Canyon dirt/sand road we returned along the trail we had followed for the first mile of our hike to our vehicles, having completed a 10.75-mile hike w/1,300' of elevation gain/loss on a beautiful winter morning.

January 12th - Verdugo Mountains: La Tuna Canyon Trail to the Verdugo Motorway to Plantation Lateral to the Grotto Trail loop









12 hikers carpoled to the La Tuna Canyon trailhead parking area (1,347') along La Tuna Canyon Road in the Verdugo Mountains on a cold winter morning. The grass along the trail had frost on it and there was a chilly breeze as we began climbing the east side of a shady canyon via a series of long switchbacks. After a while we reached a level section of the trail where there was warming sunlight before the trail dropped down into a parallel heavily wooded canyon and began climbing gradually southward; it then rose at a steep 25 percent grade for half a mile leading to Horny Toad Ridge where we were treated to expansive views of the San Fernando Valley and mountains to the west and north as a more-moderate trail led to the Verdugo Motorway. After resting briefly we followed the gradually rising dirt road eastward to Plantation Lateral (2,988') with its pine trees and benches to sit on. After a break to enjoy the magnificent views of the surrounding mountains, we followed the single-track Grotto Trail (aka the La Tuna Foot Trail) as it undulated, mostly downward, to the Grotto trailhead. We then walked along La Tuna Canyon Road a short distance to our vehicles and returned home having completed a 7.3-mile hike w/2,200' of elevation gain/loss on what turned out to be a perfect day for hiking in the mountains.



RSTB Calendar February



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Caroline Carroll	2 <i>Griffith Park: Mt. Hollywood Trail from Ferndell Park*</i> 8 AM See Schedule
3 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4 PM See Schedule	4	5 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Mona Steffen	6 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Phil Pratt	7 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	8 <i>Happy Birthday</i> John Atwood	9 <i>Johnson Motorway to Rocky Peak</i> 8 AM See Schedule
10 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	11	12 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Joey Simon	13	14 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Doug Marsh	15	16 <i>Work Party – Lower Stage Coach Trail</i> 8AM See Schedule
17 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	18	19 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Melissa Steffen Pete Lestrel	20 CLUB MEETING See schedule <i>Everyone welcome to attend</i> 7PM <i>Happy Birthday</i> Mary Ann Campbell	21 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Nancy Calderone	22	23 <i>Whiteface Mountain Exploratory Hike</i> 8AM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Norma Zanders
24 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Connie Ankrom	25 <i>Happy Birthday</i> David Seifert	26 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	27	28 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule		



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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 PM** 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.)

FEBRUARY HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

February 2nd

Griffith Park: Mt. Hollywood Trail from Ferndell Park*

5.2 MRT - Moderate (1,026' of elevation gain/loss) or 9-mile counterclockwise lollipop Loop - Moderate-to-strenuous (1,743' of elevation gain/loss) Mt Hollywood is by far the most popular hiking trail in all of Griffith Park. Meet at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride at **8 AM**. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and a snack. Wear boots. **NOTE:** The longer hike will add hiking from Mt. Hollywood to Mt. Lee (the Hollywood sign). [View website for more details](#)

February 9th

Johnson Motorway to Rocky Peak

9 MRT - Moderate (1,600' of elevation gain/loss.)

The hike begins by following an easement through Indian Springs Estates (“the Bel Air of the Valley”) to the lower end of the unpaved Johnson Motorway, an old abandoned dirt and sandstone roadbed. We return the way we came. Bring 2-3 quarts of water, lunch/snack and wear boots. Meet at **8 AM** at the trailhead. [View website for more details](#)

Directions to Trailhead: Take Hwy 118 east to the Rocky Peak exit in Santa Susana Pass. Turn right (south) and then turn left (east) onto Santa Susana Pass Road. Follow Santa Susana Pass Road 1.3 miles as it descends into the San Fernando Valley. Turn left (north) on Iverson Road and drive 0.3 mile to the Hwy 118 overpass. Park alongside Iverson Road on either side (without blocking the road).

February 16th

Work Party – Lower Stage Coach Trail

Meet at **8 AM** at the eastern end of the Corriganville Park parking lot, which is located at the eastern end of Smith Road. Wear boots or shoes with aggressive soles, long pants, gloves, a hat, sunglasses and bring adequate drinking water and a snack. All tools will be provided.

February 20th

Club Meeting

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

Everyone Welcome to attend!

February 23rd

Whiteface Mountain Exploratory Hike

9.3 Miles One-Way - Moderate to Strenuous (1,700' of elevation gain/loss)

The hike begins by climbing steeply up Whiteface Mountain (which can be seen from Hwy 18 and Hwy 23) via a “use” trail. There are panoramic views of the city and the surrounding mountainous terrain. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water, lunch/snack, and wear boots. Meet at the trailhead at **8 AM**. [View website for more details](#)

Directions to Trailhead: Take Hwy 118 to the Erringer Road exit. Head north 1.1 miles to the stop sign at Lost Canyons Drive. Turn right (northeast) onto Lost Canyons Drive and drive 1 mile to the signed (“Simi Dog Park”) entrance to the Big Sky Park. Turn left into Big Sky Park and immediately turn right into the parking lot next to the softball fields.

* 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

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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

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

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

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