



# Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



## February



### New Members

Barbara La Sala  
Ann Weeks  
Pat Burgess  
Micke Miller

Our bank will no longer accept dues or other checks made out to the Rancho Simi Trail Blazers. **ALL CHECKS must be made out to the Rancho Simi Foundation.**

### 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**

### 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 <http://www.simitrailblazers.com/index.php/calendar/> 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!

### RSTB CLUB MEETING

This month's RSTB meeting will be at: Sycamore Drive Community Center 1692 Sycamore Drive – Room B-1  
**Wednesday: February 15, 2017**  
**5:30PM** Everyone Welcome to attend!

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

### Upcoming Events

#### February 4th Backbone Trail Part 2: Mishe Mokwa Trailhead

**Reservations are required to attend.** Please go to our website calendar to make your reservation. 12.5 Miles – (900' elevation gain – 3,000' elevation loss) – Moderate to Strenuous **8AM**

#### February 11th Backbone Trail Part 3: Backbone Trailhead

**Reservations are required to attend.** Please go to our website calendar to make your reservation. 10.0 Miles – (830' elevation gain) – Moderate to Strenuous **8AM**

#### February 15th Club Board Meeting

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

#### February 18th Work Party – The Hummingbird Trail

#### February 25th Backbone Trail Part 4: Encinal Canyon Road Trailhead

**Reservations are required to attend.** Please go to our website calendar to make your reservation. 7 Miles – (1,692' elevation gain) – Moderate to Strenuous **8AM**

## December 24th – Sage Ranch Loop



4 hikers arrived at the parking lot in Sage Ranch Park in the Simi Hills on a chilly-but-pleasant early-winter morning under a clear blue sky. 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 gorgeous views of Simi Valley and the snow-covered Topa Topa mountains (and others) to the northwest. Our route was bordered by lots of bright green grass and the foliage glistened with raindrops from the recent much-needed rain. We took advantage of the opportunity to explore a variety of interesting new-to-us trails that branched off the main loop trail. 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). All-too-soon, we completed our invigorating holiday stroll (4.5 miles with 850' of elevation gain/loss).

## December 31st – Las Lajas Trail to the Shovel



Despite the possibility of rain, seventeen hikers met at the Las Lajas Canyon trailhead on Evening Sky Drive in Simi Valley on a cool last-day-of-the-year morning. We began our hike under low-hanging cloud cover by descending a short paved section of road into the canyon bottom; from there we followed the wide well-graded dirt road upstream to the north 1.8 miles, crossing the creek

three times (there was actually some water at each crossing thanks to recent rain). We then followed a “use” trail (the remnants of an old mining road) as we climbed up the eastern slope of the mountain atop which we usually have panoramic views of the surrounding area including parts of Chivo Canyon, Las Lajas Canyon, the Santa Susana Mountains, Simi Valley, and the San Fernando Valley. Eventually we reached our goal, the site of a coquina (a soft whitish limestone formed of broken shells and corals cemented together and used for building) mining operation. Various mining equipment artifacts are strewn about near the mining site, most notably a 1920 crawler-propelled P&H Model 206 shovel. Unfortunately, the cloud cover severely limited the usual panoramic views. After taking a break, we retraced our route and returned to our vehicles having completed a pleasant 6.3-mile hike with 1,100' of elevation gain/loss.

## January 14th – Cheeseboro Canyon – Cheeseboro Ridge Loop

19 hikers (+ one dog) car-pooled to the Cheeseboro Canyon trailhead in the Simi Hills on a cool clear winter morning with a forecast of strong winds [fortunately, as is frequently the case with weather forecasting, we only encountered light breezes]. Since our hike was following several days of intermittent rain we anticipated beautiful mountainsides and we weren't disappointed! We spotted a lone coyote ambling across a grassy open area as we headed north on the Cheeseboro Canyon trail toward Shepherd's Flat. It was obvious that it had rained as we skirted lots of mud puddles, but we had no trouble avoiding all but a little of the actual mud. After about three miles of nearly level hiking we reached Sulphur Springs but we could not discern any stench of Sulphur. From there the trail rose steadily, but with little incline, to Shepherd's Flat. So far the scenery had been quite pretty and the day was very pleasant. After a short break we headed east on the Sheep Corral Trail to its junction with the Cheeseboro Ridge Trail (an Edison Road) which we followed south as it climbed several hundred feet to a nice viewpoint at which we enjoyed a spectacular view of the canyons and mountains to our east/northeast, including snow-covered peaks in the San Gabriel Mountains and the nearby bright green mountainsides. Continuing on along the ridge trail the beautiful surroundings persisted. Eventually we followed a connector trail back down into Cheeseboro Canyon and returned to our vehicles completing a 9.8-mile hike with 1,300' of elevation gain/loss.





# RSTB Calendar FEBRUARY



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Caroline Carroll	2 Chumash Trail  6PM  See Schedule	3	4 Backbone Trail Part 2: Mishe Mokwa Trailhead Reservations are required to attend. 8AM See Schedule
5 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	6	7 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM  See Schedule	8  <i>Happy Birthday</i> John Atwood	9 Chumash Trail 6PM  See Schedule	10	11 Backbone Trail Part 3: Backbone Trailhead Reservations are required to attend. 8AM See Schedule
12 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Joey Simon	13	14 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule  <b>Happy Valentines</b> <i>Happy Birthday</i> Doug Marsh Paula Lightfoot	15 Club Meeting 5:30PM Everyone Welcome to attend! See Schedule	16 Chumash Trail 6PM  See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Ursula Christie	17	18 Work Party – The Hummingbird Trail 8AM  See Schedule
19 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	20  President's Day  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Mary Ann Campbell	21 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM  See Schedule	22	23 Chumash Trail 6PM  See Schedule	24  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Connie Ankrom	25 Backbone Trail Part 4: Encinal Canyon Road Trailhead Reservations are required to attend. 8AM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> David Seifert
26 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	27	28 Mt. McCoy 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](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:	<b>VOLUNTEER NEEDED</b>		<b>Contact Mike Kuhn at: 805-583-2345</b>
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:	<b>VOLUNTEER NEEDED</b>		<b>Contact Mike Kuhn at: 805-583-2345</b>
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 January issue)

## A LONG TAIL

They indicated that they had hiked up to the top of the highlands - at which point a young mountain lion ran up to them and snarled at them. Then they look up and saw a large mountain lion on a boulder - also snarling. This they thought was not good! They ended up turning and running down the fire road - panicked and thoroughly shaken. There are mountain lions in our hills - and it is not good to get between an adolescent and its mother.

There was another woman on the trail. She had two small dogs on leashes. She encountered the victims on the way up that final lift. They told her what they had experienced. She turned around and outpaced the victims down the hill (probably because the victims were delayed when they encountered the motorcycle officer, who would of gotten on his radio to let everyone else know that all was well, send home the helicopter, and tell the SUV crew to wait for the victims). No physical contact between the victims and the mountain lions had occurred, no injuries, but there are definitely mountain lions in our hills.

All of this does bring up the question about whether that may have been P-39 and one of her six-month-old offspring. Perhaps she was not killed on the freeway.

Now back to Mark Scheele. Mark encountered the woman with the two dogs. She related what she knew and urged him to turn around. She seemed astounded that he continued forward up the fire road. Mark, being a man's man, says he walked ahead until he was sure the woman was out of sight and then turned around. (Show no fear or concern to the "weaker sex" until it is safe to make your retreat.) We all had a good chuckle with Mark about that.

Once the police officer and victims continued down trail, I decided that we would all turn around - an eventful evening. There are definitely mountain lions in our hills!

Mike Kuhn  
12-21-16

## SUCCESS OF EXOTIC ANNUAL GRASSES

Prior to the coming of the Spanish, all grasses in California were perennial bunch grasses. The Spanish effected the spread of Mediterranean annual grass species into California. The effect was to displace the perennial grasses with annual grasses. In our area the dominant annual grasses include, but are not limited to red brome (*Bromus rubens*), ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), wild oat (*Avena fatua*), slender oat (*Avena barbata*), and soft chess (*Bromus mollis*). Why this occurred is poorly understood. Common explanations include frequent fires, grazing pressure on perennial grasses and the high rate of seed production among the annuals. It is now suggested that the success of the annuals is due to the viral diseases, specifically barley and cereal yellow dwarf viruses, which are major pathogens in crops, including wheat, barley, and oats - all crops that were imported by the Spanish and American settlers. "...the key to the success of the annual grasses is that virus is horizontally transmitted by aphids, rather than vertically via seeds; hence, seed survival is unaffected, and each generation is infected anew. In contrast, perennial grasses serve as long-term reservoirs for the virus and experience deleterious effects on survival and on lifetime seed production, thus facilitating the invasion by annuals." (from *Science*, Vol. 316 [April 6, 2007], p. 19, citing *Proc. Natl Acad. Sci. U.S.A.* 104, 5473 [2007]).

Mike Kuhn  
4-15-07

## SPANISH/MEXICAN TRAILS

Early Spanish travelers were probably guided by Indians. In any case, they traveled routes already established by the Indians. During the Mission Period, the route up and down California ran from mission to mission, and the shortest route between Mission San Buenaventura and the San Fernando Mission was through Simi Valley. It was the *El Camino Real*, or "King's Highway." That route ran over Santa Susana Pass,

following an Indian trail, across Simi Valley north of the Arroyo Simi, crossing the Arroyo Simi about where Erringer Road crosses today. It then ran westerly to the "Simi," or "Pico" Adobe, out through the Tierra Rejada Valley, and through the Los Posas Valley. Alfred Robinson, in *Life in California*, describes a night spent on the grounds of the Simi Adobe on his way to the Pueblo de los Angeles in the 1830s. The 1858 U.S. Government survey of the area exhibits an east-west trail just north of the Arroyo Simi at present day Tapo Street. According to Historian Charles F. Outland, until the 1860s, it is unlikely that any wheeled vehicle ever crossed Santa Susana Pass. There simply was no mechanism established to improve the trail for use by wagons.

With the secularization of the missions in 1834, the main route up and down California in this area ran between significant settlements. So the main route shifted south of the Simi Hills to what we now refer to as the "101 corridor." That route ran from Los Angeles to Santa Barbara. The old route between Ventura and the "Sime" and on to San Fernando remained and is shown on the 1858 map.

It does appear that by 1834 there were at least three routes from the San Fernando Valley to the pass.

In an 1834 report to Mexico on the precinct of the Presidio of Santa Barbara, it is reported that besides the route to the east in Simi Valley, there were three routes to the west - *Quimisa* Road, *Tierra Rajada* Road and the *Simí* Road. *Quimisa* Road ran along the northern side of the Arroyo Simi toward Moorpark, following the old Chumash Indian trail to the village of *Kimishax* (*Quimisac*) in present day Happy Camp Canyon. The *Tierra Rajada* Road was the *El Camino Real*.

Mike Kuhn  
11-30-04

(Continued in the March edition)



Due to unforeseen circumstances, all activities are subject to change without notice. Please see [www.simitrailblazers.com/activities/](http://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 on the northern side of the Rocky Peak exit from State Route 118. 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)

**(We Meet at 5PM during daylight saving time.)**

### 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 - 3.07 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 north end of Flanagan Drive.

(Moderate to Strenuous - 5.4 MRT - 1300' total elevation gain.)

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## FEBRUARY HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

### February 4th Backbone Trail Part 2: Mishe Mokwa Trailhead to the Big Sycamore Canyon

**Trailhead Shuttle Reservations are required to attend. Please go to our website calendar to make your reservation.** *This special event is open to active Trail Blazer members only.*

12.5 Miles – (900' elevation gain – 3,000' elevation loss) – Moderate to Strenuous

Meet at **8AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Please remember, this hike requires ample shuttle cars, so be prepared to drive your car from Donut Delite to both the beginning and ending trailheads. The parking fee is \$12 at Big Sycamore Canyon Campground parking lot. Shuttle car driving directions will be distributed at Donut Delite. Bring 2 – 3 quarts of water and lunch. Wear sturdy boots.

### February 11th Backbone Trail Part 3: Backbone Trailhead (across from Mishe Mokwa Trailhead) to Encinal Canyon Road Trailhead Shuttle

**Reservations are required to attend. Please go to our website calendar to make your reservation.** *This special event is open to active Trail Blazer members only.* 10.0 Miles – (830' elevation gain) – Moderate to Strenuous Meet at **8AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Shuttle car driving directions will be distributed at Donut Delite. Bring 2 – 3 quarts of water and lunch. Wear sturdy boots.

### February 15th Club Meeting **Everyone Welcome to attend!**

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


### February 18th Work Party – The Hummingbird Trail

Meeting time is **8AM**. The event will end at noon. All tools will be provided. We will do trail grooming and widening, reconstruct water bars, and also cut back some brush. Bring your own water, snacks, gloves, hat, and wear sunscreen. Boots are recommended. **Directions:** From Kuehner Drive and the 118 Freeway, head north on Kuehner Drive, and park adjacent the trailhead at end of the road. **Be sure not to park in no-parking zones.**

### February 25th Backbone Trail Part 4: Encinal Canyon Road Trailhead to Latigo Canyon Road Trailhead Shuttle

**Reservations are required to attend. Please go to our website calendar to make your reservation.** *This special event is open to active Trail Blazer members only.* 7 Miles – (1,692' elevation gain) – Moderate to Strenuous Meet at **8AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Please remember, this hike requires ample shuttle cars, so be prepared to drive your car from Donut Delite to both the beginning and ending trailheads. There are no parking fees at either trailhead. Shuttle car driving directions will be distributed at Donut Delite. Bring 2 – 3 quarts of water and lunch. Wear sturdy boots.

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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/index.php/calendar/>