



# Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



## Welcome New Members

Leslie Visser-Dumont  
Philip Dumont



The March work party was conducted on the top quarter mile of the Chumash Trail. Fortunately, we were able to drive to the top. The worst section of the trail was repaired. Thanks so much to Caroline Carroll, Bart Hibbs, Martin DeGoe, John Sabol and Mike Kuhn for their good work.



## 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



## Weekly hikes



Has anyone ever told you to take a hike?

Well, 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 a lot of fun taking photos, talking and just viewing the beautiful scenery like the one in this photo.

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

## Volunteers Needed



If anyone is interested in volunteering, for the **work parties** please view the last page of the newsletter and contact Mike Kuhn at: [mike.kuhn@simitrailblazers.com](mailto:mike.kuhn@simitrailblazers.com)

## RSTB CLUB MEETING

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

**Wednesday: April 16, 2014 5:30PM**  
*(NOTE: Early Start Time)*  
*Everyone Welcome to attend!*

## Upcoming Events

### April 5th Santa Cruz Island (Channel Islands National Park)\*

The boat will arrive on the island about **7:00AM** For more information send an e-mail to [sci2014reservations@simitrailblazers.com](mailto:sci2014reservations@simitrailblazers.com)

**April 12th Work Party: Upper Chumash Trail - California Trails Day** The event will end at noon. All tools will be provided. **8AM**

**April 16th Club Meeting 5:30PM - (NOTE: Early Start Time)**  
*Everyone Welcome to attend!*

**April 19th Matilija Falls\***  
9 MRT - Moderate-to-Strenuous  
(1,000' elevation gain/loss) **8AM**

**April 26th Towsley Canyon Loop\***  
6.5 MRT - Moderate-to-Strenuous  
(1,305' elevation gain/loss) **8AM**

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.

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

## CHIVO CANYON

Chivo Canyon is the main tributary of Las Lajas Canyon. The two canyons join just northeast of the northern end of Texas Street, with Chivo Canyon coming in from the north and Las Lajas Canyon coming from the northeast. Chivo means "goat" in Spanish, so it is unlikely to be a direct translation from the Chumash. However, it is possible that Chumash laborers on the rancho gave the canyon its name.

Most of Chivo Canyon is extremely steep sided. So it is easy to imagine that the name makes reference to the canyon only being fit for goats. Certainly, any attempt to graze sheep or cattle there would have been hazardous to the animals and rendered herding difficult. So, the canyon seems aptly named.

Mike Kuhn  
7-12-07 (11-14-12)

## CHUMASH AND THE SUN

Over the years I have been told about a Chumash rockshelter with rock art in it with a rather vague description of where the site is. I looked for it a couple of times, but was unable to find it. Well, someone finally offered to show it to me.

Now, I've always been a bit skeptical when someone offers to lead me to a rock art site, especially in my own backyard. Those sojourns usually reveal art (?) made with acrylic paints. In this case, the offer was from a trusted friend – so I went. Guess what – it is the real deal.

The rock art motifs closely parallel those at the well-known world class site a few miles away in the Simi Hills. The paintings certainly represent religious practices and cannot be attribute to idle sketches of a bored Indian.

One image is an anthropomorphic figure in three colors, i.e., red, white and black. It is a dance figure, probably representing a solar shaman. The legs and arms are turned upward towards the heavens and the feet and hands

are rake-like. Above the figure is a simply made solar-like image with rays radiating from a central point. Although faint, at least some of the rays terminate as "v" shapes. This figure is like the image of God, i.e., the sun, that was drawn by Fernando Librado, a Chumash Indian, for John P. Harrington, a well-known anthropologist of the 20th Century.

Another panel includes a black figure that appears to represent "swordfish." Swordfish was the antithesis of the sun. The swordfish lived in quartz crystal hut, i.e., ap, at the bottom of the sea, while the sun lived in quartz crystal ap in the sky. Swordfish is often associated with solstice celebrations. Directly over swordfish is the faint remains of a polychromatic disk, which may represent the sun. Up and to the left of swordfish is the remains of part of a red arc that seems to have short rays emanating from it.

A third panel includes five concentric circles with rays emanating from the outer circle. Below and to the right is an anthropomorphic figure, apparently a person, with arms and legs. The only elaboration on the figure is a circular appendage between the legs. What that appendage represents is not clear. The famous rock art panel in the Simi Hills includes several five ringed concentric circles. It is generally thought they may represent the five levels of the universe, which the Chumash believed in. This motif, with its radiating rays, probably is tied into the sun in some way.

Faint remains of other pigments are present. A large section of the center of the rock shelter has spalled off due to salt wedging of sand grains. No doubt the rock art was more extensive when originally done.

The soil in front of the rockshelter is dark with decomposed organic material and wood ash. This dark soil is the "midden" left by the Indians. Exposed at the surface is a mixture of rock fragments, i.e., "debitage," from tool making and fire cracked rocks as well

as pieces of bottle glass, rusty nails, cans, and pieces of milled wood, etc. – just about every bit of trash one would expect in an older residential area. Indeed, we have left far more trash during our brief period of occupation than the Indians did during the previous 10,000 years or more.

Vandalism is minimal, but there is some. The rock face has been impacted by many paint balls, so that vandalism is recent. Otherwise, the neighbors have not molested the site even though many people are probably aware of its presence. Indeed, two of the times I have visited the site resulted in a neighbor quickly appearing to make sure we weren't up to some mischief.

This modest window into what went before us, this relict of a deposed culture, makes me contemplate how long will be our tenure.

Mike Kuhn  
12-23-04 (revised 9-29-12)

## SESPE

The name "Sespe," as in "the Sespe," comes from the Ventureño Chumash word seqpe, which means "kneecap."

## PALEONTOLOGY AT ITS BEST

Back in the late-1970s I was called out to a construction site on Easy Street by a conscientious builder, who wanted to do the right thing and to comply with one of the conditions of approval on his project. That condition required that he stop work if he uncovered something of archaeological significance and notify the City. He said that they had discovered bones on the site, so he had sent the workers home and called the City. When I arrived at the site, no one was there, but I immediately spotted the "bones." As I carefully exposed the skull, I heard a voice over my shoulder - "What is it - a dinosaur?" (This really meant - What is it?) My response was, "A large California mule." Indeed, it may have been one of the same mules, working that same ground, you see in historic pictures displayed in a restaurants or two around town.

Mike Kuhn  
11-24-04

**March 8th - Devil Canyon to Las Llajas Canyon**



10 hikers met at the Las Llajas Canyon trailhead in Simi Valley and then carpoled to the Devil Canyon trailhead on Poema Place in Chatsworth. Our hike began as we descended into the heavily shaded canyon bottom where we followed the remnants of the Devil Canyon Motorway upstream as it frequently crisscrossed the creek. Though the narrow lower portion of the canyon still has debris left behind by flooding a few years ago, it provides a cool sanctuary for the hiker. Recently grown bright green grass adorned the open areas among the oak trees as the canyon widened and the flora had been cleaned by the recent rain. After passing through a cathedral-like oak woodland in the upper portion of Devil Canyon we reached Browns



Canyon Road which we followed westward to its three-way junction with Rocky Peak Fire Road and Las Llajas

Canyon Road. As we headed south on Rocky Peak Fire Road we enjoyed excellent views of the Santa Susana Mountains before we descended along an abandoned oil field road into Las Llajas Canyon where we took a lunch break. We then hiked downstream through Las Llajas Canyon to its trailhead on Evening Sky Drive, completing a pleasant 10.5-mile hike with about 1,600' of elevation gain.

**March 22nd - Edison Road, Albertson Motorway, Upper Las Virgenes Trail**

15 hikers (+ one dog) met at Vista Del Arroyo Park on Chicory Leaf Place in Simi Valley for a hiking adventure in the pleasingly green spring-time Simi Hills. At first we headed east along the Arroyo Simi but we then began climbing a north-south ridge along an Edison Road



toward the Albertson Motorway which runs east-west atop the Simi Hills. We were soon rewarded with views of the nearby mountains and canyons as well as the American Jewish University's Brandeis-Bardin campus to the east



and the recently graded Runkle Canyon slopes and beyond to the west. As we climbed higher, the Arness Fire Road appeared to the east and several unusually shaped structures on the

Santa Susana Field Laboratory property [aka Boeing/Rocketdyne] loomed into view. Eventually we reached the Albertson Moorway and enjoyed a rest/lunch break on lush green grass in the shade of some large oak trees. We continued to the south to a higher vantage point with sweeping views of the Simi Hills to the south. We then returned to our vehicles, having completed a 10-mile hike with about 2,200' of elevation gain/loss on a nice day for hiking.





# RSTB Calendar April



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b> See Schedule	2	3 Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b> See Schedule	4  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Anne Guibor	5 Santa Cruz Island (Channel Islands National Park)*  <b>7AM</b> See Schedule
6 Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b> See Schedule	7	8 Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b> See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Louise Pomes	9	10 Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b> See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Allison Cameron	11  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Gerald Pitstick	12 Work Party: Upper Chumash Trail - California Trails Day  <b>8AM</b> See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Howard Koltenuk Daniel Rios
13 Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b> See Schedule  <i>Palm Sunday</i>	14  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Clifford Cameron	15 Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b> See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> John Sabol	16 Club Meeting <b>5:30PM</b> <i>(NOTE: Early Start Time)</i> See Schedule <i>Everyone Welcome to attend!</i>  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Melanie Gnad	17 Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	18 	19 Matilija Falls*  <b>8AM</b> See Schedule
20 Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b> See Schedule  <i>Happy Easter</i>	21	22 Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	23	24 Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	25	26 Towsley Canyon Loop*  <b>8AM</b> See Schedule
27 Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b> See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Adelina Friedeborn	28  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Cynthia Zahorik	29 Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Bill Gillespie	30			



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 HIKES

*(Rain cancels – No hikes on holidays)*

### Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak Fire Road

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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.

**(Meet at 5 PM during daylight savings time.)** (Strenuous - 4.8 MRT - 1,200' elevation gain)

### Tuesday Evening - Mt. McCoy Trail

Meet at **6PM** in the parking lot, to the south of Donut Delite, located on the north east side of the intersection of Royal Avenue and Madera Road. (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.)

## APRIL HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

### April 5th Santa Cruz Island (Channel Islands National Park)\*

Boat to/from the island (Scorpion Anchorage); various day-hiking choices on the island.

If you'd like to participate in this outing, please send an e-mail message to [sci2014reservations@simitrailblazers.com](mailto:sci2014reservations@simitrailblazers.com) for further instructions regarding the trip (including payment for the cost of the boat trip). We're limiting the size of our group to no more than 19 persons. We'll take a 20-mile Island Packers boat trip from Ventura Harbor across the Santa Barbara Channel to the Scorpion Anchorage near the eastern end of Santa Cruz Island (the largest of the eight Channel Islands off the coast of southern California). The boat will arrive on the island about 9:00AM and we'll depart from the island at 4:30PM **NOTE:** Participants must arrive at the Island Packers facility in Ventura Harbor by **7:00AM** on the departure date (we should arrive back at Ventura Harbor around 5:30PM).

### April 12th Work Party: Upper Chumash Trail - California Trails Day

Meeting time is **8AM**. The event will end at noon. All tools will be provided. We will be removing rocks, doing some lopping to increase trail clearance, and some trail trimming. Bring your own water, snacks, gloves, hat, and wear sunscreen. Boots are recommended.

**Directions to Meeting Place:** Take Highway 118 to the Yosemite Avenue exit in Simi Valley. Head north 1.2 miles on Yosemite Avenue to the stop sign at the junction with Evening Sky Drive. Turn right (east) on Evening Sky Drive and drive 0.5 mile (through a stop sign) until you see the signed gated entrance to Las Lajas Canyon on your left. Park on either side of Evening Sky Drive.

### April 16th Club Meeting - Everyone Welcome to attend! (NOTE: Early Start Time)

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

### April 19th Matilija Falls\*

9 MRT - Moderate-to-Strenuous (1,000' elevation gain/loss)

As our hike begins we will pass through the private Matilija Canyon Ranch Wildlife Refuge. After crossing Matilija Creek a dirt road will take us through a lovely private ranch. At about the two-mile mark we'll follow a narrow trail as it winds through a shady poison oak paradise [long pants and a long-sleeved shirt are recommended]. Our route will follow Matilija Creek the rest of the way and will involve some scrambling and boulder hopping as well as frequent short open stretches of trail and occasional stream crossings. The reward for our effort will be beautiful scenery including the flowing creek, many large pools of water, vast expanses of sedimentary rock layers, an extensive riparian oak woodland, towering canyon walls, occasional wildflowers and, eventually, the Matilija waterfalls. 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.

### April 26th Towsley Canyon Loop\*

6.5 MRT - Moderate-to-Strenuous (1,305' elevation gain/loss)

The *Ed Davis Park at Towsley Canyon* is located in the 4,000-acre Santa Clarita Woodlands Park on the northeastern slope of the Santa Susana Mountains. At the 2,450' high point on the trail much of the Santa Clarita Valley can be seen. We'll then drop into Wiley Canyon and take the Canyon View loop trail back to the nature center before returning to the parking lot. Meet at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride at **8AM**. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots.

\* 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.** 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:	Colleen Janssen	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:	Janelle Samples	HM (310) 754-5209	janelle.samples@simitrailblazers.com
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 \_\_\_\_\_

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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 630445, Simi Valley, CA 93063-0399



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