



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of 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

The March work party was done on the upper half of the Chumash Trail. Thanks so much to the hard work by Martin DeGoey, Bart Hibbs, and Mike Kuhn.

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.**



JERUSALEM CRICKETS

A good Trail Blazer often encounters this rather large insect while constructing trails. If you find them, please, gently rebury them in loose soil where they won't get crushed. They are not venomous or otherwise harmful to human beings, so leave them alone. To one Indian tribe, they were known as *woh-tzi-neh* (old bald headed man). To the Spanish/Mexicans, they were known as *nino de la tierra* (child of the earth). We often call them "potato bugs." While not poisonous, they can bite. Because their mouth parts are so large, that bite can hurt. So, be careful. They are usually found in moist loose soil where they can tunnel underground.

Mike Kuhn
11-18-04

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.

RSTB CLUB MEETING

This month's RSTB meeting will be at: Sycamore Drive Community Center
1692 Sycamore Drive – Room B-1
Wednesday: April 20, 2016
5:30PM Everyone Welcome to attend!

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

Upcoming Events

April 2nd Nordhoff Peak *
Lookout Tower via the Pratt Trail 10.6 MRT - Strenuous (~3,500' elevation gain/loss) **8AM**

April 9th Triunfo Lookout, *
Canyon View Trail, Grotto Trail 6 MRT - Moderate (935' elevation gain / 1,235' elevation loss)
Shuttle **8AM**

April 16th Work Party
Mt. McCoy Trail **8AM**

April 20th Club Board Meeting The Sycamore Drive Community Center - 1692 Sycamore Drive - Room B-1 **5:30PM Everyone Welcome to attend!**

April 23rd Horn Canyon to * Pines Trail Camp 8AM

April 30th Towsley Canyon *
6.5 MRT - Moderate (1,305' elevation gain/loss) **8AM**

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



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

February 13th - Santa Paula Peak



14 hikers carpooled to the entrance to a private ranch along Highway 126 a few miles west of Fillmore on a cool morning. After passing through a locked gate, we drove north several miles on paved and deeply rutted dirt roads to a parking area at the beginning of the route leading up to Santa Paula Peak (access to this trailhead is by permission/invitation only). After taking group photos, our strenuous hike began easily enough along a dirt road that passed through a beautiful oak woodland with lots of bright green grass. Soon we reached a hard-to-spot junction with the narrow, sloping, neglected trail (USFS 20W16) leading up the mountain. As we climbed steeply upward through chaparral and scrub, we were soon rewarded with great views of Santa Paula Peak (4,957'), nearby mountains, and pretty green mountainsides. The trail on the eastern flank of the mountain rose unrelentingly via switchbacks and provided ever-improving views of the surrounding area including the Santa Clara River Valley. We eventually reached the easy-to-miss spur trail leading to the peak; it presented a triple-threat challenge: it was narrow, steep, and contained a lengthy field of rocks that required extra caution to cross (and some of the needle-sharp yucca plants couldn't be missed entirely!). However, once we arrived at the peak the 360 degree panoramic views were spectacular, including the San Gabriel Mountains, the Peninsular Ranges, two of the Channel Islands, the Topatopa Mountains, Santa Clarita, and Ojai. We returned to our vehicles the way we came having completed an 8.2-mile hike with 2,827' of elevation gain/loss on a warm day, grateful for the opportunity to summit a little-visited peak that once hosted a fire lookout tower.

February 28th - Slide Mountain Fire Lookout from Frenchman's Flat

6 hikers met at the carpool point on a pleasant late-winter morning. Upon reaching Frenchman's Flat (2,068'), the starting point of our hike, we were greeted by 7 additional hikers (and two dogs) who joined us for the hike. We began our hike by walking 1.6

miles northward along a nearly flat, all-but-abandoned section of Old Highway 99 (aka Golden State Highway) toward the Pyramid Lake dam. We were greeted by a fierce 20-mph wind blowing directly at us. The old road crossed Piru Creek on a bridge where we heard and saw the small stream flowing in a pretty wooded riparian area. Soon we reached the entrance (2,210') to Forest Service Road/trail 18W04 which leads up Slide Mountain. The wind abated as we hiked along the steadily rising well-maintained dirt road to a small parking area known as Kermit's Corner where the "lookout" had parked his truck. At this point FSR 18W04 became a single-track trail since it is no longer being maintained to the top of the mountain. As we continued upward we enjoyed great views of the surrounding area, particularly of Pyramid Lake to the north, and then of the seemingly endless rows of rugged mountainous ridges to the southwest. Eventually we reached our destination, the Slide Mountain Lookout Tower (4,631') built in 1969; it is now "manned" by volunteers during the "fire season" and is the only remaining active fire lookout in the Angeles National Forest. Saturday's volunteer, Kevin LaSota, kindly greeted us, shared some history about the lookout, and hosted us for a very interesting tour inside the lookout tower from which there are truly spectacular 360-degree views including Mt. Pinos, Frazier Mountain, Hungry Valley, Pyramid Lake, Santa Clarita, the San Gabriel Mountains, Lake Piru, the Sespe Wilderness, the Santa Clara River Valley, and the Santa Susana Mountains. We retraced our route to Frenchman's Flat and returned home having completed a pleasant 11.5-mile hike with nearly 3,000' of elevation gain/loss on a nice day with good visibility.



March 12th - Conejo Mountain

15 hikers assembled at the signed "Powerline Trail" trailhead on Via Ricardo in Newbury Park on a lovely spring-like morning - the sky was a clear blue with a few puffy white clouds, the temperature was perfect for hiking up a mountain, and there was a wide variety of blooming wildflowers on the mountainside. The trail began gently enough and soon afforded us with views of Old Boney Mountain to the east. As we reached the Edison Road we had a brief view of Camarillo and beyond to the west. We followed the Edison Road through a landscape littered with volcanic detritus to a spur road that led up to a pair of power transmission towers at which point we regrouped and followed a "use" trail which led steeply up the eastern flank of Conejo Mountain. We were in luck since the previous day's rain had softened the dirt on the steepest section of the trail (which improved traction), but had not made it muddy. Once we summited the eastern portion of the mountain, we could see our destination: the highest point on the mountain which is "marked" by a small man-made rock cairn. We followed the "use" trail across the rock-strewn landscape to the "peak" of Conejo Mountain where we enjoyed 360-degree views of both near and distant mountains, the Pacific Ocean, and parts of several cities. We retraced our route to Via Ricardo and returned home having completed a very pleasant 5.5-mile hike with 1,600' of elevation gain/loss on a beautiful day.



RSTB Calendar APRIL



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Nordhoff Peak Lookout Tower via the Pratt Trail 8AM See Schedule
3 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Mike McCrary	4	5 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	6	7 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	8 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Louise Pomes	9 Triunfo Lookout, Canyon View Trail, Grotto Trail 8AM See Schedule
10 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Allison Cameron	11	12 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	13	14 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Clifford Cameron	15 <i>Happy Birthday</i> John Sabol	16 Work Party Mt. McCoy Trail 8AM See Schedule
17 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule	18	19 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	20 Club Meeting 5:30PM <i>Everyone Welcome to attend!</i> See Schedule	21 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	22	23 Horn Canyon to Pines Trail Camp 8AM See Schedule
24 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule	25	26 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Gary Cremeans	27	28 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	29	30 Towsley Canyon 8AM 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
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Vice Hiking Chair:	Les Wilson	HM (805) 522-2642	les.wilson@roadrunner.com
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Publicity Chair:	VOLUNTEER NEEDED		Contact Mike Kuhn at: 805-583-2345
Newsletter Editor:	Linda Mann		linda.martins.mann@simitrailblazers.com

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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

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 1231, Simi Valley, CA 93062**



U.S. Postage

RSTB
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COLD DRINKS IN EARLY CALIFORNIA

[Some of the information contained in this piece is drawn from "The Ice Harvest," in Alton Pryor, *Little Known Tales in California History* (1997), pp. 161-165.]

The sleepy town of San Francisco quickly emptied in 1849 with the onset of the California goldrush. Gold was there for the pickings. There were alluvium-choked streams. All one had to do was find alluvial deposits with gold and then use the water to separate the gold from the sand and gravel. Some of the gold miners got rich, and many merchants got rich too. Before long, San Francisco became a boom-town and a major port. Incoming miners from the east coast, Californians, Mexicans, Chileans, Australians and even Chinese nationals flooded in. Miners from the goldfields, flush with new wealth also flooded to what quickly became the premier city on the west coast. Demand for many products and services outstripped supply.

Eggs of the common murre were harvested from the Farallon Islands, which lay off the coast of San Francisco. To get them, one or more harvesters would be put ashore on the rock coast. Their first act would be to crush all of the murre eggs they could find. From that point on any egg that they found would be considered "fresh" and would be collected. About a week later their harvest would be picked up and they would be re-supplied. The chicken eventually saved the murre from extinction.

Yankees demanded ice for their drinks (by and large other nationalities were not so particular) in both San Francisco and Sacramento. The first ice came in by ship from Portland, Maine, via the Cape Horn route by sailing ships, with Boston-based carriers. The ice was harvested in Maine rivers during the winter and stored in below-ground ice houses. The ice was expensive – stored without refrigeration, the long journey and double crossing of the Equator took its toll in reduced volume. As much as 60 percent of the load was lost during shipment. By 1853 the American-

Russian Commercial Company, whose ice source was Sitka and Kodiak, Alaska, had forced the Bostonian merchants out of the California market. Ice became a competitive commodity. Ice was harvested at Lake Angela on Donner Summit. Then warehouses and ice ponds were established at Serene Lake. Eventually all ice suppliers operated ponds in the Truckee River Basin. Some ice companies used their ponds for lumber production during the summer and for ice during the winter. In 1875 the Boca Brewing Company got into the very competitive ice market. By the late-1890s it became clear that ice could be used to ship fruit from California to eastern markets via iced railroad cars.

Horses were used to scrape the snow off of the ice to expose clear ice. Blocks of 22 inches square and 22x32 inches were standard. Once the surface was cleared, the ice was scored into a checkerboard pattern. The ice was harvested to a depth of two thirds of the thickness of the ice. The ice was floated in long open channels through the ice to elevator conveyor systems to lift the ice into warehouses. In some years the Truckee ice harvests stored 300,000 tons of ice. Bad weather was the detriment to the ice harvest, and rainfall sometimes soften the ice and ruined the harvest. Snow was also bad. The weight of the snow could submerge the ice and allow the pond water to flood on top of the ice.

In 1882 the Union Ice Company was formed out of six companies – five of which were located in the Truckee area. "The Union" was essentially a marketing firm, but soon acquired its own production facilities. Eventually only the National Ice and the Union Ice companies remained. The Truckee Basin dominated ice production in the west between 1868 and 1927. It was the ready supply of ice, harvested from winter ponds, that made the Pacific Fruit Express possible and permitted the mass plantings of fruit trees, including citrus.

While refrigeration killed the Truckee Basin ice pond production, at least Union Ice still is in business. Block ice

continued to preserve a market for home delivery to "ice boxes" until well after the end of World War II. I can still remember the iceman delivering block ice to my grandmother's home in Spokane, Washington during the war. When my family moved to the Santa Clara Valley in 1943, we spent the first week in a motel with an ice box. I can remember the early morning deliveries, with the iceman having to step over me and my sister while we tried to sleep on the floor of the motel room. Even the first refrigerators included tiny freezers to make cube ice. Now ice simply drops into your glass from the fronts of some refrigerators. Block ice and bags of ice cubes are still big commodities sold at the supermarket, the mini-market and at gas stations. Those of us who car camp or picnic, knows this well.

Ice from rivers and pond was loaded with bacteria. It doesn't take much to imagine what those horses and workers were doing out on the ice while it was being harvested. However, the fact of the matter is that most water supplies throughout the United States were also loaded with bacteria until the late-1950s and early 1960s. A major health problem emerged in this country when baby formula was introduced in a big way during World War II when many mothers went to work in factories. The practice of using tap water to mix with baby formula resulted in a dramatic increase in the infant death rate. The problem was solved when it became standard practice to put the formula in bottles into boiling water for a while before giving it to babies. Having grown up in that period, in later years I was alarmed to see that new mothers from the late-1960s on were not heating the baby formula but mixing it with water straight from the tap. I had not realized that our nation had made a major advance in public health during the late-1950s through the 1960s by cleaning up our public water supplies. This is not the case in many parts of the world today, where it is unwise to consume ice in non-alcoholic drinks.

Mike Kuhn
6-17-07



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 **5PM** 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 - 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.)

APRIL HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

April 2nd Nordhoff Peak Lookout Tower via the Pratt Trail *

10.6 MRT - Strenuous (~3,500' elevation gain/loss)

We'll follow the Pratt Trail (23W09) as it winds its way northward up the south face of Nordhoff Ridge, passing trail intersections with the Foothill Trail, the Gridley Fire Road, and Cozy Dell Road along the way. When we reach Nordhoff Ridge Road (5N08) and the Nordhoff Peak Lookout Tower the views (depending on visibility) also include Matilija Reservoir, Lake Casitas, the Pacific Ocean and the Channel Islands, and the Topatopa Mountains. We'll return the way we came. 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 9th Triunfo Lookout, Canyon View Trail, Grotto Trail *

6 MRT - Moderate (935' elevation gain / 1,235' elevation loss) Shuttle

PART ONE of our two-part hike - We'll start hiking along the dirt Yellow Hill Fire Road/trail off Yerba Buena Road near Triunfo Pass. **THIS WILL BE A TWO PART HIKE.** We'll hike the Canyon View Trail to a connector trail which we'll follow down to the Grotto Trail. After exploring The Grotto area, we'll return along the Grotto Trail to the Circle X Ranch Ranger "Contact Station" and our shuttle vehicle(s). 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 13th Club Meeting *Everyone Welcome to attend!*

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

April 16th Work Party Mt. McCoy Trail

Meet at **8AM** at the western end of Washburn St. at the trailhead. Wear boots or shoes with good tread and a hat. Long pants are recommended. Bring two quarts of water, gloves, sunscreen, dark glasses and a snack. We will be working primarily the upper portion of the trail. Tools will be provided.

April 23rd Horn Canyon to Pines Trail Camp *

Option 1: 5.2 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,800' elevation gain/loss) | **Option 2:** 8.2 MRT - Strenuous (3,200' elevation gain/loss)
Option 3: 9.8 MRT - Strenuous (3,800' elevation gain/loss) 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 30th Towsley Canyon *

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

At the 2,450' high point on the trail much of the Santa Clarita Valley can be seen. We'll then descend 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.

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>