



# Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



## DID YOU KNOW????

### KA?ALISAW KA?O

These Ventureño Chumash words mean "hot spring", which was located on Sulphur Mountain.



**CONEJO**

*Conejo* means "rabbit". It was used repeatedly during Spanish times in San Diego, Ventura, Fresno, Stanislaus, and Monterey counties. It first appeared in the Thousand Oaks area as Rancho El Conejo. Now there is a mountain, valley, creek and grade, which carry the name, Conejo.

Rabbits were a mainstay in the Indian diet. They were easily caught, killed and eaten. Rabbit skins, including the hair, were used for blankets, i.e., many hides sewn together, and winter robes. So, perhaps, there may have been a Chumash Indian place name in the Conejo Valley that meant "rabbit" something.

Rabbits were far less important to the Spanish. So, if the name had originated with the Spanish, it would have been used more in terms of "boy, there sure are a lot of rabbits here".

That seems like a tuff sell to me, especially for the name for a rancho. It seems more likely that it represented a pre-existing place named in the area – called El Conejo by those Chumash Indians who were translating it into Spanish from their Ventureño Chumash language. This is, of course, pure speculation.

Mike Kuhn

## SANTA SUSANA AND SAN FERNANDO

*El Camino de Santa Susana y Simi* is mentioned in the mission archives in 1804.

*Una gran cuesta conocida por Santa Susana* (a large ridge known as Santa Susana) is shown in 1834.

*Sierra de Santa Susana* is shown on the diseño of Las Virgenes (1837) – another indication that the hills/mountains south of Simi Valley were known as the Santa Susana Mountains at that time.

Santa Susana is mentioned in the Statutes of 1850. When the Somis branch of the Southern Pacific Railroad was extended into Simi Valley in 1902, the name was applied to the station (by Tapo Street) and the tunnel.

The original name honored Saint Susanna, the Roman virgin and martyr of the Third Century. Her name was included in the missal of the College of San Fernando, Mexico, from which Junipero Serra was sent to California.

So, where do you think the name of the San Fernando Mission and later the city originates?

Mike Kuhn



## RSTB CLUB MEETING

This month's club meeting will be held at the Community Center  
**Room B-1**  
 1692 Sycamore Drive  
 at 7:00 PM  
 on  
**July 18, 2007**

## 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. Prices are:

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



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



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**JULY 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>**

### Onion Valley Backpack Trip

Trailblazer members only. Please see the web site for more information.

**JULY 21<sup>st</sup>**

### Mt. San Jacinto via Palm Springs Aerial Tramway

This is an all day event. Leave Donut Delite at 6:30am. Please see the schedule for more information.

**AUGUST 16<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>**

### Dinkey Lakes Backpack Trip

Trailblazer members only. Please see the web site for more information.

More information on these events can be found at  
<http://simitrailblazers.com>

To make reservations, please email Mark Gilmore at  
[markinthepark@sbcglobal.net](mailto:markinthepark@sbcglobal.net)



## WATCH YOUR STEP!

Warm weather has been with us for the last two months or so. Many of us have been running into slithering creatures that spark our interest, and sometimes our fear and respect. Really, the only snake that we have to fear in California is the rattlesnake. In southern California we have seven different species of rattlesnake – no, they are not all the same. However, they all can bite and should be avoided.

Approximately 8,000 people each year in the United States are bitten by venomous snakes. Rattlesnakes account for about 800 of those bites, with only one or two deaths out of the 8,000. Small children are often the ones to die because they are small.

The potential for running into a rattlesnake should not deter anyone from venturing out on trails. However, you do have to use some common sense in order to avoid the unthinkable:

- When hiking, stick to well defined trails where you can see the ground on which you are stepping, with some clearance of vegetation on either side of the path;
- Wear boots that cover your ankles, and loose fitting long pants (I've been struck twice on my padded boot by one rattlesnake and three times on a pant leg by another very panicked rattlesnake. While traumatic, no damage was done.);
- Do not step or put a hand where you cannot see;
- Avoid wandering around in the dark without lighting;
- Step **on** logs and rocks rather than over them (My boot puncturing experience occurred when I stepped between two rocks – one of which had about a three-inch vertical space under it.);
- Be especially careful when climbing rocks or gathering firewood;
- Avoid walking through dense brush, high grass, willow, or other thickets;
- Be careful when stepping over doorsteps, because snakes like to lie flush against a wall where they are protected on one side.

Many useful and non-threatening snakes have been killed because they are mistaken for rattlesnakes. Gopher snakes, for example, will often mimic rattlesnakes when they feel threatened by coiling, vibrating their tails, flattening their heads and bodies, hissing and striking. These are attempts to bluff their adversaries.

Rattlesnakes have flat triangular-shaped heads with a distinct neck behind the head. Tails are blunt with one or more rattles. There is distinct banding just in front of the rattles.

The best way to keep rattlesnakes out of your yard is to attach a rattlesnake-proof fence around your back yard. Trees and bushes should be cut well away from your fence because

rattlesnakes are reasonably good climbers. The rattlesnake-proof fence should be either solid, or a screen with openings no larger than a quarter of an inch. The fence should be at least three feet high with the bottom several inches buried beneath the soil level. The fence should be angled away from your main fence by at least 30 degrees. Of course, the ever-popular block wall will serve the same purpose. Rattlesnakes will take advantage of any opening.

You should remove piles of wood in you back yard and other materials that may provide hiding places for rattlesnakes.

Keeping a gopher snake, king snake or racer in your yard will discourage rattlesnakes because they offer competition for rodents. King snakes will also kill and eat rattlesnakes.

If bitten by a rattlesnake, remain calm. If practical, elevate the bite area. Notify the hospital or other medical facility that you are coming. The chances are that the facility will not have any antivenin on hand, so it will have to be delivered to the facility on an emergency basis. Long term effects of rattlesnake bites usually are limited to tissue damage in the wound area.

[Much of this article has been drawn from Alexia Retallack, "Enjoy the Outdoors, But Take Caution with Your Steps," *Outdoor California*, Volume 68, No. 2 (March-April 2007), pp. 22-23.]

Mike Kuhn

## POISON OAK

Poison Oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*) is a member of the Sumac (*Anacardiaceae*) family. This plant is very common in the canyon bottoms and shaded hillsides around Simi Valley. This is normally an erect vine-like shrub. One example of note is found on China Flat, where the trunk is about nine inches in diameter. It grows to the top of an adjacent mature coast live oak.

The leaves are alternate with three leaflets (sometime five), are shiny green on top, turning red in response to drought or in the fall. The plant is fully deciduous. The flowers are small and greenish-white. Small white berries form and often remain on the plant throughout the winter.

Most people are sensitive to the toxic oil that is present in all parts of the plant, including the stems during the winter. A severe rash that torments its victims can develop. That rash may linger for weeks, often requiring medical attention and sometimes hospitalization. It can be contracted from pets which have rubbed against the plant, can be carried home to loved ones on clothing, and can cause severe pneumonia-like symptoms when the smoke from burning poison oak is inhaled. Those individuals who seem to be "immune" to its effects can come down with the effects with repeated exposure, and reoccurring cases of poison oak usually result in more severe symptoms. This plant should be avoided and never ingested. **"LEAVES OF THREE, LET IT BE!"**



## YOSEMITE, HETCH HETCHY, AHWAHNEE AND WAWONA

The Rancho Simi Trail Blazers have been visiting Yosemite National Park once a year for the past several years. During the 2007 trip the question came up about the origin of the names Yosemite, Hetch Hetchy, Ahwahnee, and Wawona. Here is what I have found out:

**Yosemite:** Stephen Powers was a U.S. government employee, who visited the tribes of California during 1871 and 1872. His work, *Tribes of California*, was printed by the U.S. Government Printing Office in 1877. In addition, he published at least 20 articles during the 1870s about California Indians. One of the chapters in *Tribes of California* is about Yosemite. At that time, he traveled about Yosemite with one of the male Miwok Indians who had been living in the valley when it was first discovered by the “white man.” Powers says that the name Yosemite derives from a word that other nearby Indian groups used for the grizzly bear. Indians on the Stanislaus River and north used *u-zu-mai-ti*. At Little Gap, they used *o-so-mai-ti*. On the south fork of the Merced River, they used *uh-zu-mai-tuh*. Nothing in the Yosemite Valley was ever called Yosemite by the Indians. Erwin G. Gudde, *California Place Names*, cites sources, which suggest that the name may have meant “killer.” Since the Indians were terrorized by the grizzly, the name may have been used for both the grizzly and killer. It is also possible that a long extinct band of Miwok Indians were called by that name by other Indians.

**Hetch Hetchy:** The modern version of the name is, according to Powers, derived from the original central Miwok *Hatchatchie*. Powers says it means “grass-seed valley.” Since perennial grass seeds were the primary food source for the Indians in the old days (not acorns as now taught in school), it is likely that the valley was visited in the spring for the purpose of collecting grass seeds. The Indians would also have visited the valley in the fall to gather acorns.

**Ahwahnee:** According to Powers, *A-wa-ni* was the name of the main village in Yosemite Valley. That village was located near the foot of Yosemite Falls. The Indians also called the valley by the same name. Powers lists the name as roughly mean “ruling town.” Gudde says the meaning is “deep (or grassy) valley.” It is not clear what Gudde’s source for this meaning was. L.H. Bunnell’s *Discovery of the Yosemite* (1911) says the word means “deep grassy valley” and seems to be the source for Gudde. However, the name was communicated to him by sign, rather than spoken word. Elizabeth Godfrey, *Yosemite Indians* (1977), page 35, writes that “recent linguistic studies indicate that “Ahwahnee” should probably be translated as meaning ‘place of a gaping mouth.’ The Miwok stem word AWA means ‘mouth’ and it was the Miwok practice to name places after their fancied resemblance to a part of the human body.”

**Wawona:** The Indian form of the word is *wohwoh'-nau*. The word is what the Indians called the giant sequoia (or big tree). It is an imitation of the hoot of the owl, which is the guardian spirit and deity of the giant sequoias. According to the Indians it is bad luck to fell this tree, or to mock or shoot the owl, or even to shoot in the presence of an owl. “Bethel states that they [the Indians] have often, in earlier years, tried to persuade him not to cut them down ...and that when they see a teamster going along the road with a wagon-load of lumber made from these trees, they will cry out after him, and tell him the owl will visit him with evil luck.”

Mike Kuhn

## MT. PINOS HIKE



Group shot at Mt. Pinos

Photo by Mike Kuhn



Seed pods of the Bear Valley milk-vetch (*Astragalus lentiginosus* var. *sierrae*)

Photo by John Sabol



# RSTB Calendar July 2007



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	4  <b>Happy Independence Day !!!</b>	5 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Kelli Ham</i>	6 Onion Valley Backpack Trip See Schedule	7 Onion Valley Backpack Trip See Schedule
8 Onion Valley Backpack Trip See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Joe Simon Rafael Zepeda</i>	9 Onion Valley Backpack Trip See Schedule	10 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	11 <i>Happy Birthday Carrie McCline</i>	12 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	13 Age 50+ Nature Talk Walking Tour See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Pat Winfield</i>	14 Rocky Peak via Hummingbird See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Mike Kuhn Kathy Fowler</i>
15 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule	16	17 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	18 RSTB Meeting See Page 1 <i>Happy Birthday Maurice Dunmore</i>	19 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	20 <i>Happy Birthday Donna Schero</i>	21 Mt. San Jacinto See Schedule
22 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Liz Williams</i>	23	24 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	25	26 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	27 <i>Happy Birthday Jennifer Craig</i>	28 Solstice Canyon See Schedule
29 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule	30	31 Long Canyon 6:30pm 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

Meet 5pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. (Strenuous, 4.8 MRT)

#### Tuesday Evening - Long Canyon

Meet at 6:30pm in Long Canyon parking lot. Directions: Take First Street 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. (Strenuous, 5.2 MRT)

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### JULY HIKES

#### July 6th - 9th - *Onion Valley Backpack Trip*\*\*

5.6 MRT - Moderate (1200' elevation gain)

**Space is limited, so make your reservation early.** This very special event is limited to Trailblazer members only. This backpack has some of the most beautiful lakes and flower covered meadows in the whole Southeastern Sierra.

#### July 13th - *Age 50 + Nature Talk Walking Tour - 8:30 AM, Rocky Peak*

Discussion will be on plants, animals, and geology of Simi Valley. For location map call 50+ program coordinators at (805) 583-6059. You must register for this activity with the **Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District**. Your instructor is Mike Kuhn. Registration is free.

#### July 14th - *Rocky Peak (via the Hummingbird Trail)*

8 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1750' elevation gain)

Meet at 8 AM at the trailhead. From Highway 118 Simi Valley Freeway, exit on Kuehner Drive and go north. Trailhead is on the right. Bring 2 quarts of water and lunch. Wear boots.

#### July 18th *Club Meeting*

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

#### July 21st - *Palm Springs to Mt. San Jacinto via the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway*\*\*

11 MRT - Moderate (2300' elevation gain)

This is an all day event. Please see our web site for more information about the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway and the hike to the peak. **We'll leave Donut Delite at 6:30am**, and arrive at the tramway mid-morning. We'll head on home that same afternoon/evening. The tram costs are outlined at <http://www.pstramway.com>.

#### July 28th *Solstice Canyon Loop*\*

3 to 6 MRT - Easy to moderate (500' to 1000' elevation gain)

Beautiful creek, 30 ft waterfall, mysterious ruins, hidden statue, and ocean views. Meet at 8 AM near Donut Delite, at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 - 3 quarts of water, a snack and bug juice. Wear boots.

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

 No dogs allowed on trail(s).

For more 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>

# LANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS

*A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation*

Executive Chair:	Mike Kuhn	HM (805) 583-2345	hannahmike@roadrunner.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
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-----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 \_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone wk/hm \_\_\_\_\_

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

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



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