



# Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



# AUGUST

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.**

## New Member

Janice Haynes

### July 1st – Mt. McCoy and the Reagan Library

17 hikers met at the Donut Delite car-pool location, at the intersection of Royal Avenue and Madera Road, on a foggy summer morning. From there, walked to the Mt. McCoy trailhead on Washburn Street, and stopped briefly for our group picture. The hike began along the trail heading south, and quickly began climbing westward along the well-maintained trail, leading to the summit via a series of switch-backs.

The rule for the day was to always follow the path with the least elevation gain, since there is so much damage from trail cutting by hikers.

(To read more on this date and others, go to:

<https://www.simitrailblazers.com/index.php/2017-2/>



### 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**

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.rsprd.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: August 16, 2017 5:30PM**

*Everyone Welcome to attend!*

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

### Upcoming Events

#### August 5th Newton Canyon and the Backbone Trail

7 MRT – Moderate (1,500' elevation gain/loss) \* **7AM**

#### August 12th Serrano Canyon

9 Mile Lollipop Loop – Moderate (~1,200' elevation gain) \* **7AM**

#### August 16th Club Board Meeting

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

#### August 19th Mt. Pinos to Sheep Camp

\* **7AM**

#### August 23rd – 27th Little Lakes Valley Base-Camp Backpacking Trip \*

### 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



## July 8th – Mt. San Jacinto via the Palm Springs Tramway



Five hikers arrived at the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway (with its rotating cabin providing a 360-degree view) around 9:00 a.m. on a very hot desert morning for a scenic 10-minute vertical lift from 2,643' at the Valley Station to 8,516' at the Mountain Station where the trail for our hike to the peak of Mt. San Jacinto (10,834') began in the 14,000-acre San Jacinto Wilderness and State Park.

Since our last visit in 2015, a couple of vehicle parking changes have been implemented: [1] There is now an entrance kiosk where a \$5.00 parking fee is assessed and [2] there is a free shuttle bus between the overflow parking areas and the main facility. As we began our hike we were greeted by a clear, pleasantly cool (mid-'60s), pine-scented morning with a beautiful blue sky. After pausing briefly at the nearby Long Valley Ranger Station to obtain a free day-hiking permit and have a group photo taken, we resumed our hike. The trail soon began rising through a lovely forest of conifers and was soon accompanied by the soothing sound of a small amount of water flowing in the corn-lily-lined stream parallel to the trail. After hiking about 2.5 miles, we reached Round Valley, the location of one of only four campgrounds in the park. NOTE: A pipe near the trail junction provided a steady stream of water that should be purified, but we did not avail ourselves of it. We continued our hike, heading east along the trail as it climbed steadily (and sometimes steeply) to Wellman's Divide where we took a short break and enjoyed somewhat murky views of the desert (the Santa Rosa Mountains to the east were totally obscured). Resuming our hike we headed west on the rocky trail as it climbed along the rim of a large bowl-shaped valley providing beautiful views to the north; we spotted the Tramway Mountain Station (where we had begun our hike) across the valley. Eventually we reached a switchback in the trail which allowed us to continue our climb, but now to the southeast. Soon we reached a trail junction with a sign proclaiming that a right turn would take us to the base of the summit in 0.3 mile. We soon reached

a stone shelter built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930's. From there we began scrambling carefully up large boulders to the actual mountain peak where there was a horde of "peak baggers," took photos, rested, and enjoyed the panoramic views. After a brief stay, we regrouped and retraced our steps to the Mountain Tramway Terminal and descended to our vehicles, tired but happy, having completed an 11.5-mile hike with ~2,600' of elevation gain/loss (while the Palm Springs area and Simi Valley sweltered under temperatures in the 90's and 100's). NOTE: As we began our homeward journey, we spotted a sign for the new Hadley Fruit Orchards store in Cabazon, CA. A quick detour led us to some much-appreciated great-tasting date shakes!

## July 15th – The Hummingbird Trail



15 hikers met in the paved parking area just outside the gated entrance to Hummingbird Ranch at the north end of Kuehner Drive in Simi Valley to hike up the Hummingbird

Trail. Despite the forecast of extreme heat later in the morning, it was still pleasant at 7 AM since the trail is on the west side of the mountain which was still shaded as we began our eastward climb to the Rocky Peak Fire Road.

The trail passed through (and on) a variety of imposing sandstone rock formations along the way including very large boulders and giant slabs of sandstone rock, many with small "caves." There were sweeping views of eastern Simi Valley, the Santa Susana Mountains, and the Simi Hills and even a few late-blooming wildflowers. We had the trail mostly to ourselves except for a few early morning bicyclists. NOTE: Over time bicyclists have selfishly "cut" the trail in so many places to enhance their downhill enjoyment that it is often difficult to discern the original trail. When we were over half-way up the mountain, direct sunlight finally fell upon us, but fortunately at the same time a cooling breeze sprang up and cooled us the rest of the way up to the Rocky Peak Fire Road (our turnaround point), thus allowing us to "beat the heat" all the way uphill. During a rest break at the fire road a few members of the group continued across the fire road and climbed up an extension of the trail into a maze of large boulders from which there were even better views of the surrounding area. As we retraced our route downhill, the morning temperature increased steadily until the temperature on the final (uphill) stretch of trail had reached nearly 90 degrees Fahrenheit, demonstrating the wisdom of our early start. We reached the trailhead (and our air-conditioned vehicles!) having completed a mostly pleasant 4.5-mile hike with about 1,250' of elevation gain/loss.



# RSTB Calendar AUGUST



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	2  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Elfriede Cespedes	3 Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	4  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Betty Cameron	5 Newton Canyon and the Backbone Trail <b>7AM</b> See Schedule
6 Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b>  See Schedule	7  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Cassie Simon	8 Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	9	10 Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	11	12 Serrano Canyon <b>7AM</b>  See Schedule
13 Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b>  See Schedule	14	15 Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	16 <b>Club Board Meeting The Everyone Welcome to attend! 5:30PM</b>  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Katy Cueba	17 Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	18	19 Mt. Pinos to Sheep Camp <b>7AM</b>  See Schedule
20 Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b>  See Schedule	21  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Al Richards	22 Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	23	24 Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	25	26
27 <b>Little Lakes Valley Base-Camp Backpacking Trip</b>  Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b> See Schedule	28	29 Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	30	31 Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  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) 990-1460	markinthepark@sbcglobal.net
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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	Cell: 805-501-5229	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

## SOMNA

John Peabody Harrington cites "Qui" as his source for the place name "Somna." *Somna* is a "place somewhere by Simi." Qui indicated that he thought that "*Somna*" is modern day Somis and that it means "very large *barranca*." To the Indians the geographic limits of "the Simi" extended much further west than it does today. Indeed, the area between Moorpark College and Somis is known as the "Little Simi Valley" and is so shown on the U.S. Geological Survey Simi Valley and Moorpark quadrangles of the area. A *barranca* is a gully that is deeper than it is wide at the top. Where the Arroyo Simi spills out of the Little Simi Valley through modern day Somis is a very large *barranca*.

According to Applegate (1975), the name Somis may come from the *Ventureño* "so mis," which refers to the "water of the scrub oak." Originally, so *mis* was in the Ojai.

What we learn from Qui is that the Chumash saw "the Simi" as including both what we now call Simi Valley and the Little Simi Valley. This area was a geographic reality to the Chumash and a political entity. Historically, the Simi had three Chumash Indian villages: *Ta'apu*, *Simi'*, and *Quimisac*. The chief, who was resident at the village of *Ta'apu*, was also the chief of the other two villages. *Quimisac* was located in the Moorpark area. Qui's description tells us that the geopolitical boundary between *Somna* and the territory controlled by the one chief in our area was at the western end of the Little Simi Valley. The term "the Simi" then related to the geopolitical sphere of the chief resident at the village of *Ta'apu*.

Mike Kuhn  
7-19-06 (revised 9-25-12)

## SINGING SAND

Several decades ago, I encountered in North Africa roaring sounds emitted by a sand dune as layers of sand near the top of a steep side of a dune began to move. It made me realize what E.F. Gautier, *Le Sahara* (1928),

meant when he wrote something to the effect, "When you've been lost in the dunes for days, without water, then you hear the laughter of Raoul." Raoul was a pre-Muslim genie. The reference was to travels in the *Grand Erg Oriental*, the great sand dune sheet of eastern Algeria. I encountered the same phenomenon in the Kelso Dunes in the eastern Mojave Desert. Those dunes stand more than 700 feet above the surrounding desert floor. When the surface four inches or so of sand near the tops of the dunes are dry and you move down a steep slope, taking care to get the surface layer going, then you hear the laughter of Raoul. The whole surface of the slide plain vibrates with sand grains jumped a half inch or so off of the surface and there is a roaring sound. As your feet go up and down in the sand, they generate a low frequency sound that sounds like a drum and, on a still day, it can be heard for a mile or more. Once at the summit of the dunes, I pounded the side of the dune hard with the palm of my hand and that too created the booming sound. I have heard friends say that you can get the same effect in Death Valley.

The sound of "singing" dunes was first reported in an 8<sup>th</sup> century Chinese manuscript and has been reported by many explorers. This low-pitched sound, which has been described in the literature as a cross between an airplane engine and an organ, has been reported in more than 30 deserts in the world.

Now a team of French government researchers has provided an explanation for the phenomenon. They were in southwestern Morocco in 2001 and by chance captured an audio recording of an avalanche of sand on a barchan dune. Back in their laboratory, they were able to reproduce the sound in a turning large donut filled with sand from the dunes. Their explanation is that the phenomenon operates according to a principle known as "Reynolds dilatancy," which describes a vibration created by the dilation and compression of air as grains separate and come together. The researchers found that the

unique sound required the movement of a layer of sand grains – each 0.19 mm across – about 10 cm or 500 grains deep.

By the way, the Kelso Dunes are reported to be the best location in the Western Hemisphere to hear the "laughter of Raoul."

Mike Kuhn  
12-24-04

## SIMI VALLEY IN 1874

Janet Cameron included in the *History of Ventura County, State of California, Its People and Resources* (Editor Emeritus Edwin M. Sheridan, 1940) page 182, the following description of Simi Valley in 1874, as told to her by Bud Taylor, one of the first Anglo-American ranchers in the valley. Mr. Taylor indicated that the east end was covered by oak trees (*El Roblaro*) and the flats were covered by elderberries (*Sambucus mexicana*), while the foothills to the north were covered by prickly-pears. This description of the northern foothills is consistent with a heavily overgrazed landscape, especially where sheep were involved. Sheep and cattle had been a mainstay of El Rancho Simi. Mrs. Cameron goes on to indicate the first men who farmed the valley raised sheep exclusively. Mr. Hoar, for example, ran 8,000 sheep on the 13,000 acres, which he leased through Mr. Bard. Mr. Taylor indicated that the ground was hard and dry and that the sheep ate everything, including the willows in the creek. Of course, they did not eat the prickly-pear cactus and that is why it thrived. By the late-1870s, wheat and barley had displaced some of the sheep – although in the case of Mr. Hoar, who sublet portions of his 13,000 acres to grain (wheat and barley) farmers, he reserved the right to run sheep on the stubble.

Mike Kuhn  
8-19-06



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 **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 - 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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## AUGUST HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

### August 5th Newton Canyon and the Backbone Trail \*

7 MRT – Moderate (1,500' elevation gain/loss) Meet at **7AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water, lunch and sunscreen. Wear boots. This hike begins at the point that the Backbone Trail crosses Kanan-Dume Road. The pleasant, heavily forested, and mostly shady Newton Canyon trail winds eastward to Latigo Canyon Road. It starts uphill so that it can cross Tunnel #1 on Kanan-Dume Road; it gradually descends into Newton Canyon and then rises via a series of switchbacks to Latigo Canyon Road. Our hike will then cross the road as the trail again descends into the shady canyon; the turnaround point will be where the trail begins rising steeply in the direct sunlight toward the north end of Corral Canyon Road.

### August 12th Serrano Canyon \*

9 Mile Lollipop Loop – Moderate (~1,200' elevation gain) Meet at **7AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots. The hike will begin by crossing under Highway 1 via a tunnel, followed by a stroll through the Big Sycamore Canyon Campground. We'll then follow the nearly level Big Sycamore Canyon Fire Road one mile to the junction with the Serrano Canyon Trail. Our route will then head east through the partially shaded canyon to Serrano Valley where we'll hike in a clockwise loop around the valley. There's poison oak along the trail in Serrano Canyon so, please be advised. **NOTE:** There is a parking fee at the trailhead. Each car must pay about \$12.00

### August 16th Club Meeting *Everyone Welcome to attend!*

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

### August 19th Mt. Pinos to Sheep Camp \*

Meet at **7AM** Meet at Park and Ride lot at Stearns and 118 Freeway. Hike is 8-9 miles.

### August 23rd – August 27th Little Lakes Valley Base-Camp Backpacking Trip \*

Reservations are required to attend. Make reservations on this website:

<http://www.simitrailblazers.com/index.php/rsvpmaker/little-lakes-valley-base-camp-backpacking-trip-2017-08-23/>


*This special event is open to active Trail Blazer members only. Minimum effort, MAXIMUM REWARD*

Hike 3.3 miles w/731' elevation gain along lovely Rock Creek to a base camp (10,800') in the John Muir Wilderness in the beautiful Sierra Nevada. "Mono Divide High Country Trail Map – Shaded-relief Topo Map" (Tom Harrison Maps)

**GENERAL INFORMATION** (Note: Additional information will be provided to registered participants) – – –

There is also a limit of 25 overnight hikers entering via Mosquito Flat in a single day so we may only be able to reserve fewer than 15 spaces.

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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/>