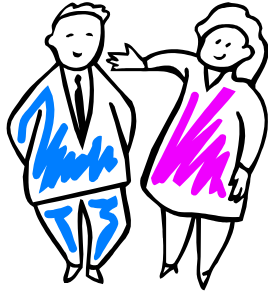




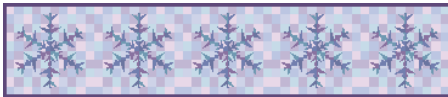
Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



Welcome, New Members!

Andrew, Michael & Linda Anderson
Tina, Kerri & Bradford McCoy
Pete Lestrel



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 as follows:

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



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



NEWS FLASH!

Congratulations to Les Wilson for assuming the position of Vice Hiking Chair – welcome, Les!

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
January 21, 2009

Happy Hiking in 2009!

MILT MCAULEY
1919-2008

Milton McAuley, who was referred to as the patriarch of hiking in the Santa Monica Mountains, died recently at the age of 89. I last ran into Milt in Topanga State Park when he was 83 years old. He told me that he had just finished leading his annual seven-day hike along the entire "Backbone Trail" in the Santa Monica Mountains. He said it was to be the last time he would do it and hinted that he was looking for someone to take over.

Milt is best known for his *Hiking Trails of the Santa Monica Mountains*, which was rejected by several publishers - after which he published it himself. To date it has sold over 100,000 copies. He authored six more guidebooks on the Santa Monica Mountains. My favorite is *Wildflowers of the Santa Monica Mountains*. It is the best flower book on our area for the non-botanist. The book contains 496 photographs of flowers and plants. The flowering plants are arranged by the colors of the flowers – making it very easy for the untrained users to find flowers in the book. It is a magnificent companion on and off hikes. I have worn out several copies.

Milt studied forestry before WWII, then spent 20 years as a pilot in the U.S. Air Force. After retiring from the Air Force, he became an aerospace engineer. Later he made and sold turquoise jewelry. He taught



UPCOMING EVENTS

Please visit the website for details on any of the following hikes and events.

January 3rd

Nicholas Flat Trail

Moderate 7.5 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous

January 10th

Santa Paula Canyon

8.1 MRT – Moderate

January 17th

Work Party - Mt. McCoy Trail

January 21st

Club Meeting

January 24th

Matilija Falls

9 MRT – Moderate

January 31st

Backbone Trail - Ray Miller

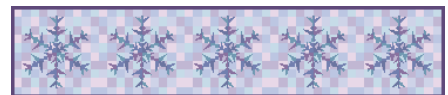
Trailhead to Big Sycamore Canyon

9.9 Miles – Moderate to Strenuous

More information on these events can be found at

<http://simitrailblazers.com>

To make reservations, please email Mark Gilmore at markinthepark@sbcglobal.net



Milt McCauley – continued

hiking classes for 20 years for Learning Tree University and was a hike leader for the Sierra Club. He also served for many years on the board of the Santa Monica Trail Council. He was much loved and respected. His love for the out-of-doors and the Santa Monica Mountains helped foster the emerging interest in hiking and the establishment of hiking trails in our area. He was special and touched the lives of many.

Mike Kuhn
12-17-08

Save the Date!

Free Wild Animal Shows

Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District and the Rancho Simi Trailblazers will sponsor two FREE family programs next March.

Simi Valley: Saturday, March 14
Oak Park: Saturday, March 28

Both programs will start at 10am. Watch for more details about these popular programs in upcoming newsletters! You may also call Colleen Janssen at (805)584-4453 or send email to volunteers@rsrpd.us for more information.

CHUMASH USE OF HOLLY-LEAVED CHERRY

The following information has been summarized from Jan Timbrook, *Chumash Ethnobotany*, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History (2007), pp. 151-154.

The holly-leaved cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*, what the Spanish called *islay* [from the Salinan Indian name for the plant – *slay*'] was probably the Chumash Indian's favorite food. The Ventureno Chumash name for the plant was '*akhtatapish*. (An example of how Chumash names varied from one dialect to another is the Barbareno name for the plant – '*akhtayukhash*). The fruit was harvested in the late summer. It has a



The December trail maintenance project was conducted on the upper Hummingbird Trail. Participants included Linda Anderson, Martin DeGoey, Bart Hibbs and Mike Kuhn. Many thanks for the good work on the trail.

very thin pulp under the skin. That pulp was eaten – either directly upon picking the fruit or the skin and pulp was removed from the hard shell, mooshed together and then dried on a rock surface. After drying, it was rolled up and eaten like fruit leather. However, the seeds within the hard shell were the real prizes of the plant.

The ripe fruit was picked from the bushes and trees one at a time – taking care not to damage the plants. Green fruit was picked at the same time but was kept separated from the ripe fruit. Often the pits were cleaned near to where they were gathered, with only the pits being transported back to the village. In some cases, the fruit was left out on a swept floor or in a basin basket for several days until the fruit pulp rotted. They then rubbed off the pulp with their hands or washed the pulp off in a stream – leaving just the pits. The pits were then heated in a basket of hot water or hot water was poured over the pits. The pits were then allowed to dry for one to three days. Then the pits were cracked open with a stone, and the kernels were removed. The shells from the green fruit were also removed, and the shells were burned into an ash, mixed with water, and molded into cakes for later use in the food processing.

After this, the dried kernels, both from the ripe and the green fruit, were mixed together. They were stored in large baskets, off the ground, in the home relatively indefinitely for later use. Before the *islay* kernels could be used, they had to be

leached to remove the hydrocyanic acid (i.e., cyanide), which rendered the kernels extremely bitter and poisonous. If they were not leached before eating, people would get very sick. According to John Harrington, during the historic period, when Indians got tuberculosis and were spitting up blood, they blamed it on *islay*.

Three processes were reported for leaching and cooking *islay*: One method was to repeatedly dip a sack of whole kernels into hot or boiling water. Another was to moosh up the kernels and place in a basket in a creek or running water for some time. And finally, the third method was to place the dried kernels into water in an *olla* made out of steatite (i.e., a type of soapstone, which does not expand when heated, so it can safely be heated directly over a fire) and then to heat it over a fire until it is nearly boiling. Then the water would be poured out and the process repeated again. Fresh kernels would be put through the process a third time.

After leaching, the kernels would be boiled until done. Since cooking took several hours, it was done in a steatite bowl. While cooking, some cook would add two fingers of the ashes from the hulls of the green fruit, because they felt that it would reduce any residual bitterness. When the water was nearly boiled away and the *islay* became soft, they stirred and mashed with a wooden paddle. When it had cooled, they scooped out some and made balls from two to five or six inches in diameter. These were then rolled in a pinole flour of juniper berries or grass seeds.

The prepared *islay* resembled beans in both flavor and reddish color. *Islay* balls were kept as long as a week and were often offered to visitors. The Chumash ate them with roasted squirrel, gopher or other meat.

Mike Kuhn
9-27-08

November 29th 2008 - Piedra Blanca Formations

After a long, but very scenic drive through Ventura, Ojai, and the Wheeler Gorge, twelve eager Trailblazers arrived at the trailhead parking lot in Rose Valley.



The trail was new to most of the hikers, so there was great anticipation. Shortly after the 7-mile round-trip hike began, the trail crossed Sespe Creek, the main watercourse in the southern Los Padres National Forest; it empties into the Santa Clara River in Fillmore. The trail entered the Sespe Wilderness as it climbed the chaparral-covered slope to the magnificent Piedra Blanca (white rock) Formations -- huge, white rounded sandstone outcroppings sculpted by wind and water. It then descended to Piedra Blanca Creek and followed it upstream to Piedra Blanca Camp, then to Twin Forks Camp (the turnaround point). Large conifers provided shade along the creek which gurgled pleasantly downstream. After a leisurely picnic lunch the hikers returned to the trailhead for the drive home, their anticipation fulfilled.

December 6th 2008 - Malibu Creek State Park

Thirteen enthusiastic Trailblazers participated in an invigorating 8.2-mile hike with over 900' of elevation gain on the west side of Malibu Creek State Park. It was cool and crisp and the sky was a beautiful blue as we began the hike near park headquarters (the old Ronald Reagan Ranch house) along the Yearling Trail which, thanks to the recent rain, was bordered by new, bright green shoots of grass. We then ascended the shady Lookout Trail to a high point that afforded a view of the eastern portion of the park. As we descended to Craggs Road (which runs through the park from east to west), we had breathtaking views to the south of Century Lake and the surrounding mountains. Next we hiked eastward to the Visitor Center and took a break at a group of nearby picnic tables shaded by towering oak trees. There were quite a few ducks apparently wintering in Malibu Creek near the bridge. After the break we followed the Gorge Trail to the Rock Pool, a large pool of water with a

backdrop of towering rock walls. After lingering for a little while we hiked to the south end of Century Lake near the dam. Leaving there we hiked to the M*A*S*H television series site further upstream; the site stirred bittersweet memories of the escapades of the 4077th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital's zany cast of characters. One could almost see and hear the helicopters coming in for a landing over the nearby mountains. We left this imaginary little bit of South Korea and retraced our path to the Forest Trail which we followed for its half-mile length along the south side of Century Lake. This beautiful trail is shaded by a variety of trees including towering conifers (which one would not expect to see at this elevation); there are even ferns growing along the trail. Retracing our steps we reluctantly left this trail's leafy embrace and headed over to the Cage Creek Trail which led us uphill to the Yearling Trail. We then climbed up to the Deerleg Trail and followed its shady up-and-down path westward to the Reagan Picnic Area (two picnic tables located among the trees beside the trail) and then returned to our trusty motor vehicles (including Roger Steffen's large motorcycle).

December 13th 2008 - Chesboro Canyon / Palo Comado Canyon Loop

Eight intrepid Trailblazers completed the 10.3 mile loop today. The Doppler radar showed no precipitation, yet there was drizzle on the way to Donut Delite. We decided to take our chances and drove to the trailhead. The hiking weather could not have been better. About half way through the hike, we enjoyed wall-to-wall sunshine. As long as we kept moving, it was comfortably warm. This year, we decided to do the loop in the reverse direction, so we could be done with all the hills after the first half of the hike. We enjoyed the slight and steady 4.5 mile down hill return trip back to the trailhead. Much to our surprise, there were a few wildflowers in bloom where there was spring or creek drainage.

December 18th 2008 - The Chumash Trail

There was snow and ice, near the top, on tonight's hike. Thanks to John Sabol for the picture!





RSTB Calendar January 2009



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|--|---|--|--|--|---|
| | | | <i>Happy New Year!</i> | 1 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Gabe Sende</i> <i>Karleen Volz</i> | 2 | 3 Nicholas Flat Trail See Schedule |
| 4 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule | 5 | 6 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Tom Siebert</i> | 7 | 8 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Glenida Billiot</i> | 9 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Angie Zarcone</i> | 10 Santa Paula Canyon See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Carmela Sereno</i> |
| 11 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Andrew Anderson</i> <i>Nick Stantz</i> <i>Jim Lightfoot</i> | 12 | 13 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule | 14 RSTB Meeting 7:00 pm See Page 1 | 15 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Emily Carroll</i> | 16 | 17 Work Party - Mt. McCoy Trail See Schedule |
| 18 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule | 19 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Mark Zorick</i> <i>Steve Fowler</i> <i>Floyd Martin</i> | 20 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule | 21 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Sherri Borden</i> | 22 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Linda Anderson</i> | 23 | 24 Matilija Falls See Schedule |
| 25 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Bradford McCoy</i> <i>Carol Loessin-Maggart</i> | 26 | 27 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Rick Ehrecke</i> | 28 | 29 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule | 30 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Daniel DeGoey</i> | 31 Backbone Trail Part 1 - Ray Miller Trailhead to Big Sycamore Canyon See Schedule |



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

Hiking Schedule



REGULARLY SCHEDULED HIKES

(Rain cancels – No hikes on holidays)

Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak

Meet 4 pm 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 1st Street heading 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)

DECEMBER HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

January 3rd **Nicholas Flat Trail***

7.5 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,650' elevation gain)

Magnificent ocean views, and a beautiful pond, near Malibu. Bring lunch, 2 to 3 quarts of water. Meet at 8 AM near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Please note, there is a \$10 parking fee at the trailhead. Please see the website for a link to more information about this hike.

January 10th **Santa Paula Canyon***

8.1 MRT - Moderate (1000' elevation gain)

The trail takes you through picturesque St. Thomas Aquinas College, along the banks of Santa Paula Creek, capped by a spectacular 25' waterfall. Bring 2 - 3 quarts water, lunch and a pair of shoes/sandals that you don't mind getting wet. Wear boots. Please see the website for more information. Meet at 8 AM near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal.

January 17th **Work Party - Mt. McCoy Trail**

Meet at the Mt. McCoy Trailhead. To get there, take Royal Avenue west of Madera Road, take a right at the "T" intersection with Acapulco Avenue and an immediate left on to Washburn. The trail begins where Washburn curves and becomes Los Amigos Avenue. Bring 2 - 3 quarts of water, hat, sunscreen, and gloves to work on the trail.

January 24th **Matilija Falls***


Moderate 9 MRT (950' elevation gain)

Hike up Matilija Creek, passing two waterfalls, turtle ponds and swimming holes. Please see the website for more information about this hike. Meet at 8 AM near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 - 3 quarts of water, a snack and a pair of shoes/sandals that you don't mind getting wet. Wear boots.

January 31st **Backbone Trail Part 1 - Ray Miller Trailhead to Big Sycamore Canyon***

9.9 Miles - (1,086' elevation gain) - Moderate to Strenuous

See website for a link to the National Park Systems Backbone Trail System flyer. See panoramic views of Simi Valley and Moorpark to the Channel Islands. Bring lunch, 2 to 3 quarts of water, binoculars/camera. Wear boots. Meet at 8 AM near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Please note, there is a \$3 per car parking fee at the trailhead.

* Not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District.  No dogs allowed on trail(s).
For 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 |
| Vice Hiking Chair: | Les Wilson | HM (805) 522-2642 | les.wilson@simitrailblazers.com |
| Website: | Mark Gilmore | HM (805) 529-5581 | markinthepark@sbcglobal.net |
| Ways & Means Chair: | Marty Richards | HM (805) 526-4414 | |
| Publicity Chair: | Carrie McCline | | |
| Newsletter Editor: | Kelli Ham | HM (805) 577-1864 | simitrailrunner@gmail.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(s) _____ Birth Mo. _____ Day _____

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

Address _____

Email Address _____ Phone wk/hm _____

Would you like to receive periodic email announcements about club activities? Yes () No ()

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



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