



## Rancho Simi Trailblazers

*A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation*



**CHANGE IN EDITORS:** A big thank you to retiring Newsletter Editor Linda Martins Mann for her years of service.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Due to unforeseen circumstances, all activities are subject to change without notice. Please see <https://www.simitrailblazers.com/calendar/> for event details and the most up-to-date schedule.

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

#### *October 6, 2018*

##### ***Long Canyon, Oak Canyon, Montgomery Canyon, Challenger Park, Coyote Hills Park, Canyon View Trail Loop***

8.1 Mile loop – Moderate-to-strenuous (1,430' elevation gain/loss) or 5.2 Mile loop – Moderate (950' elevation gain/loss) or Easy-to-moderate (4-mile loop w/500' elevation gain/loss).

The trail begins at the Long Canyon Trailhead in Wood Ranch; it climbs 500' in the first 0.7 mile and then descends into Oak Canyon before ascending 500' to a ridge overlooking Montgomery Canyon. After dropping into Montgomery Canyon the trail leads north to Challenger Park. From there an equestrian trail leads westward to Coyote Hills Park. The trail then climbs 350' to the Canyon View Trail and follows it southward to complete the loop. There are excellent views of the west end of Simi Valley from the ridges. **Meet at 8 AM** at the trailhead in the parking lot just west of the junction of Long Canyon Road and Wood Ranch Parkway. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and a snack. Wear boots.

**October 8-14, 2018 Zion National Park Trip:** Reservations which were open only to Trailblazer members are closed.

#### *October 17, 2018*

##### ***Club Meeting 5:30PM Park District: 4201 Guardian Street, Activity Room #2***

Everyone is welcome to attend.

#### *October 20, 2018*

##### ***Camp Three Falls to Lilly Meadows***

7.5 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (~1,250' elevation gain/loss)

Our hike will start at the entrance (~5,255') to the Boy Scouts of America's "Camp Three Falls" in the Lockwood Valley. We'll follow the dirt road to North Falls, a seasonal waterfall. The trail (22W02) then rises somewhat steeply along the stream in a narrow canyon as it begins climbing the forested southern slope of Sawmill Mountain eventually taking us to our turnaround point at lovely Lilly Meadows (~6,500'). We'll return the way we came. **Meet at 7:00 AM** at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride. Bring your camera, water and lunch. Wear boots.

#### *October 27, 2018*

##### ***Work Party – Wild Animal Corridor – Cache In Trash Out Event***

**Meeting time is 8 AM.** The event will end at noon. The Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District will provide all that we need. You must bring your own water, snacks, and sunscreen. Wear old work clothes, gloves, and a hat. This event is being held in conjunction with a GeoCaching.com CITO event. Directions: From Kuehner Drive and the 118, head South to Smith Road and turn left. Continue to the end Smith Road, passing the public parking area. Follow the CITO Event signs, past the normally locked gate where the pavement ends, to a designated parking area, adjacent the rail road track.

## Hike Reports

### September 1st – Solstice Canyon



It was a cool and very humid morning. 13 hikers met at Donut Delite and carpooled to the Solstice Canyon trailhead. Once we arrived, we found three more hikers eagerly waiting for our arrival. Our lollipop loop out-and-back hike began on the Solstice Canyon Trail, paralleling the shaded Solstice Canyon Creek. Just over a mile up the trail, we gathered at the junction of the Sostomo Trail.

We rapidly gained over a thousand feet of elevation following, the creek through the Sycamore trees, black walnut groves, and Laurel Sumac. Taking the Deer Valley Loop Trail clockwise we began to see expansive views of the coastline, including Point Dume,

which we hiked just two weeks ago. Most everyone agreed that the hike was much harder that we remembered from past years, probably due to the very high humidity. Several us did our wet dishtowel imitation very well. After completing the “lollipop,” we found that hiking down the Sostomo trail was much easier. Once we completed the “stick” portion of the lollipop, we took an abrupt left turn, and after a short distance arrived at the ruins of the Tropical Terrace “Robert’s Home.” The once expansive and elegant home was completed in 1952 and burned down in 1982. After exploring the nearby trickling waterfall, wandering around in the shrine to the now headless Madonna, and enjoying a few snacks, we arrived back at our cars just over a mile down the canyon. We all enjoyed our hike, having completed 6.8 miles with about 1,650’ of elevation gain/loss.

### September 8th – Las Lajas Trail to the Shovel



14 hikers met at the Las Lajas Canyon trailhead on Evening Sky Drive in Simi Valley on a warm late-summer morning. We began our hike under a clear blue sky by descending a short paved section of road into the canyon bottom; from there we followed the wide well-graded dirt road upstream to the north 1.8 miles, crossing the very dry stream bed three times.

We then followed a slightly overgrown “use” trail (the remnants of an old mining road) as we climbed up the eastern slope of the mountain, atop which we enjoyed panoramic views of the surrounding area including parts of Chivo Canyon, Las Lajas

Canyon, the Santa Susana Mountains and Simi Valley. We took a break when we reached our goal, the site of a coquina (a soft whitish limestone formed of broken shells and corals cemented together and used for road building) mining operation. Various mining equipment artifacts are strewn about near the mining site, most notably a P&H Model 206 “steam” shovel. The day had warmed up noticeably but we enjoyed a mild breeze as we retraced our route and returned to our vehicles having completed a pleasant 6.3-mile hike with 1,100’ of elevation gain/loss.

### September 15th – East Canyon to Mission Point



17 hikers met at the trailhead in the “East Canyon, Rice Canyon, and Michael D. Antonovich Open Space” section of the 4,000-acre Santa Clarita Woodlands Park via Interstate 5 and “The Old Road” in Santa Clarita. It was chilly as we began hiking southward along the non-maintained and somewhat-eroded East Canyon Motorway as it followed the small (dry) creek in the canyon bottom.

The route was lined with bay laurel, black walnut, cottonwood, sycamore, and oak trees. Soon the dirt road began rising more steeply along the western side

	<h2 style="text-align: center;">RSTB Calendar October 2018</h2>					
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1  Happy Birthday Deidre Roberts	2 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM  See Schedule	3	4 Chumash Trail 6PM  See Schedule  Happy Birthday Marty Richards	5	6 Long Cyn, Oak Cyn, Montgomery Cyn, Challenger Park, Coyote Hills Park, Cyn View Trail Loop 8AM See Upcoming Events
7 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM  See Schedule	8 Zion National Park trip begins	9 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM  See Schedule	10	11 Chumash Trail 6PM  See Schedule	12	13 No hike scheduled
14 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule  Zion National Park trip ends	15	16 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM  See Schedule	17 Club Meeting 5:30PM  Happy Birthday Kathleen Quinn	18 Chumash Trail 6PM  See Schedule	19	20 Camp Three Falls to Lilly Meadows* 7AM See Upcoming Events
21 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM  See Schedule	22  Happy Birthday Margarita Marsh	23 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM  See Schedule	24	25 Chumash Trail 6PM  See Schedule	26  Happy Birthday Lisa Klockenteger	27 Work Party - Wild Animal Corridor - Cache In Trash Out 8AM See Upcoming Events
28 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM  See Schedule  Happy Birthday Mark Gilmore	29	30 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM  See Schedule	31			
<p><b>SANTA ANA WILDFIRE THREAT INDEX</b> - Provides a 6 day forecast of Santa Ana Winds Wildfire Threats on a color coded map <a href="http://psgeodata.fs.fed.us/sawti/">http://psgeodata.fs.fed.us/sawti/</a></p> <p><b>CALIFORNIA FIRE WEATHER MAP</b> - Provides actual Red Flag Warnings and Fire Weather Watches <a href="http://www.fire.ca.gov/communications/communications_firesafety_redflagwarning.php">http://www.fire.ca.gov/communications/communications_firesafety_redflagwarning.php</a> (Scroll down to map)</p>						

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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** <https://www.simitrailblazers.com/calendar/>



**RSTB**  
**P.O. Box 1231**  
**Simi Valley, CA 93062**

\_\_\_\_\_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 \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Family memberships: Please list names and birthdays of additional family members (Month & Day Only)

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone (provide up to two numbers): work/home/cell \_\_\_\_\_

*Newsletters are distributed by email only. Contact the Membership Chair if you require a copy by US mail.*

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

How did you find out about the RSTB? \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make out tax deductible member donation check for the year to:**  
**Rancho Simi Foundation** and mail it to **RSTB, P.O. Box 1231, Simi Valley, CA 93062**

<b>Rancho Simi Trailblazers</b> <i>A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation</i>			
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## REGULARLY SCHEDULED HIKES

*(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 4PM during standard 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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## HUMMINGBIRD CREEK DAM

The Hummingbird Creek Trail starts at the northern end of Kuehner Drive and descends rapidly to the filled in reservoir behind a concrete and stone dam. The dam and reservoir are off stream. Originally, the soil behind the dam was placed on the face of the dam, creating a bedrock basin to contain water. The lower part of the dam is made of mortared native sandstone, while the upper part of the dam is made out of concrete. The dam is arcuate. A finished concrete dip in the eastern wall of the dam is dated 1917.

The reservoir was fed from upper Hummingbird Creek by gravity by pipeline. Such devices were a common way of conveying water from springs at the time. However, I have seen no direct evidence of a feeder line or ditch. Archaeologist Robert Pence indicated (personal communication) that he had found evidence of a redwood siphon over the top of the dam. I have seen one reference to the reservoir being used to water a garden someplace below the dam. We do know that Judge Joseph Scott had a cabin a short distance below the dam under the small oak grove next to Hummingbird Creek just north of the 118 Freeway. Whether Judge Scott used the water to water his garden is not known. However, since the dam was on his property, it is likely.

There is some reason to believe that it may have been built by or at the direction of Charles E. Hoar, the first "American gentleman farmer" in the Simi. Mr. Hoar leased the 13,000 acre eastern half of Simi Valley in 1872 or 1873 and occupied the Hummingbird's Nest Ranch at that time. Janet Cameron reports that he bought the ranch from Juan Pucillo, who continued to reside on the ranch with his mother as employees of Mr. Hoar. We now know that that information is not accurate even though we know that Mr. Hoar lived with the Janet Scott Cameron family during his last years. Juan Pucillo and his mother did live on the Hummingbird when Mr. Hoar leased those 13,000 acres. Indeed, Mr. Hoar lived in the Pucillo adobe house with the Pucillos while he built his wood-framed house. We also know that Juan and his mother remained on the Hummingbird with Mr. Hoar.

When the Simi Land and Water Company wanted to offer the land in the valley for sale to farmers and ranchers, Mr. Hoar still held the lease on the eastern-most 13,000 acres of the valley, including the Hummingbird's Nest. He relinquished his lease in 1884-85 in exchange for an agreement for his purchase of the ranch. Mr. Hoar agreed to furnish the soon to be built Simi Hotel with two minor's inches of water - something Mr. Hoar had and the hotel would need. We know that Mr. Hoar paid \$12,000 for one parcel, but only \$5.00 for another. The \$5.00 price may have been in exchange for giving up the lease and for the water. The hotel, which was located where Simi Valley High School now stands, was opened in April 1888. Mr. Hoar had to tap the spring at the Hummingbird to furnish that water. The dam and reservoir, at least the lower portion of what now stands, may have been the device that was necessary to ensure a constant flow by providing some storage. The demands of the hotel would not have been great since little irrigation was involved and the nine-room hotel had but one bathroom. The dam is not on the land acquired by Mr. Hoar, so its connection with Mr. Hoar is speculative.

of a wooded ridge adorned with a modest smattering of cliff asters and a few other wildflowers (and lots of healthy black walnut trees). We enjoyed views of the steep slopes to the west and relics of the big cone Douglas-fir trees that once covered the mountain [several of the trees appear to have died as a result of the ongoing drought]. An intermittent breeze cooled us as the road led us upward to a junction with Bridge Road (and the Oat Mountain Motorway) which is blocked by a SoCal Gas fence and gate. Having reached the highest point in our hike, we headed southeast along the very pleasant Corral Sunshine Motorway to Mission Point which provides a fairly clear panoramic view of the San Fernando Valley and beyond. After resting/snacking, we retraced our now warmer (but mostly downhill) route to the trailhead and returned home having completed a 9.3-mile hike with about 1,750' of elevation gain/loss on a nice day for mountain hiking.

### September 22nd – Danielson Ranch



10 hikers gathered at the Wendy Trail trailhead at the south end of Wendy Drive in Newbury Park on a cool early-autumn morning. Our Santa Monica Mountains outing began as we hiked the Wendy Trail over to the Satwiwa Native American Indian Culture Center in Rancho Sierra Vista. We then headed south as the paved upper section of Sycamore Canyon Road descended into the canyon.

Immediately after crossing the bridge in the canyon bottom, we left the road [and the bicycle riders] and headed northeast on the Upper Sycamore Canyon Trail for a very short distance to a junction with the Fossil Trail which we turned right onto [the sign at the trail junction was burned so badly in the May, 2013 Camarillo Springs Fire that it is useless]. The Fossil Trail began climbing steeply to the east on a flank of Boney Mountain, gaining 760' of elevation in 0.9 mile. Aside from the large number of dead (but still upright) ceanothus trees, the effects of the 2013 wildfire are muted. When we reached the junction with the Boney Mountain Trail, we turned left and continued on up the mountain with increasingly improving distant views (there was lots of fog when we started hiking, but most, if not all, of it cleared during our hike). There were a surprisingly large number of cliff asters blooming along our route, but not much else. We eventually reached the Danielson Memorial and the ruins of the Danielson house (only a chimney remains) where we took a lengthy break in the still heavily wooded (unburned) area, enjoying the cool temperatures in the shade. As we continued our hike we descended along the Danielson Road, but didn't visit the (waterless) waterfall along the way. The day had become noticeably warmer as we followed the Windmill Trail back to the parking area which we reached having completed an 8.3-mile loop hike with about 1,975' of elevation gain/loss.

### In Memoriam Mike Howard



Michael Thomas Howard, our Simi Trail Blazer Work Party Co-chair, died on September 7th while on a rafting trip near Clear Creek Rapids in the Colorado River. Mike died a hero, jumping in the swift moving river, in a desperate attempt to save his wife who slipped while exiting the raft. Mike's wife and soul-mate Cheri survived the incident, suffering only minor bruises.

Mike was the kind of guy who immediately made friends with everyone he met and always had great stories to tell. He enjoyed maintaining our trails, but always expressed special love for the Hummingbird Trail, which became a spiritual sanctuary for him and his wife Cheri. Mike enjoyed leaning about the unique geology found in the Simi Hills.

As we hike the local hills, Mike's spirit will still be with us, as we take in our favorite views and geology. We all miss you, my friend.