



# Rancho Simi Trail Blazers



## HIKING SCHEDULE CHANGE

With Daylight Savings Time now ended, the **Sunday Evening Hikes** will begin at **4pm** through the winter months.

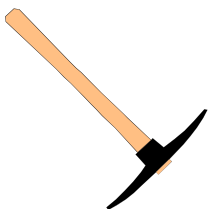
Arlene Altshuler  
Hiking Chair

## OCTOBER WORK PARTY

Seven Trail Blazers turned out on Saturday 19 October to work on the Chumash Trail. We worked on 3 projects located at the sharp turn in the trail several hundred yards below the 2-mile marker. The first project fixed a narrow spot on the trail by using 3 peeler logs to form a retaining wall and filling between the wall and trail with rocks and dirt. The second involved leveling the trail to force down canyon water drainage to cross the trail at a right angle at one spot rather than spilling down the trail causing erosion. Rocks were then placed off trail in the downstream drainage area to prevent soil wearing away. The third project involved filling a long deep vee, formed by large sloping rock slabs, with layers of loose rock and pouring wheelbarrows full of dirt on top to level the trail. Many thanks to the following workers:

Bob Altieri, Arlene Altshuler, Mike Kuhn, Chuck Portoghesi, Marty Richards, John Sabol and Terry DeSilva.

Work Parties Chair  
John Sabol

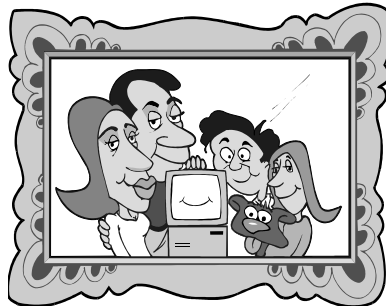


## NOVEMBER WORK PARTY

The next Trail Blazers work party will be on **Saturday, 16 November** on the **Upper Stagecoach Trail**. If time permits we will also work on the upper portion of the Lower Stagecoach Trail.

**Meet at the trailhead on Lilac Lane at 8:00 AM.** (Directions: Go south on Kuehner Drive, which turns into Santa Susanna Pass Road. Continue up the Pass Road. Lilac Lane is on the right just before the top of the pass. Trailhead is on the left approx. 1/4 mile up Lilac Lane). We will work from **8:00 AM to 12:00 Noon**. Hope to see you there.

Work Parties Chair



## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**Sharon Gochoel**  
**Rob Larkin and Annie Hess**  
**Linda and Tom Travis**  
**James Wahe**

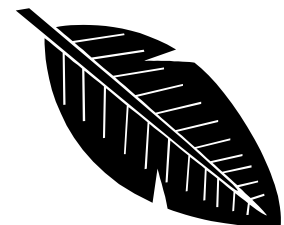
## RSTB CLUB MEETING

The monthly club meeting will be held at the  
Community Center  
Room B-1  
1692 Sycamore Drive  
At 7:00 PM  
On

## TOBACCO AS A CURE

(From Fernando Librado, *Breath of the Sun*, page 57)

"Once I had a lame arm from shearing sheep. Manual Borrego went and got a piece of a pesibata ball (A mixture of ground tobacco with fine, white lime and water. It was taken internally and would induce a form of intoxication as well as vomiting. Native tobacco contains approximately 100-200 times as much nicotine as domesticated tobacco. The native tobacco was traded in from the Tejon area. The Chumash smoked it in small pipes in ceremonial functions, and also made offerings of tobacco in ritual contexts. Small quantities were ingested to impart strength and endurance, often as a substitute for food.), made the Indian way, but without any lime in it. Sometimes the Indians made such balls without lime, and these were stronger than those with it. The lime moderated the tobacco, they said. Anyway, Manual put a piece of it on the palm of his hand with some water, and began to rub my arm with it. I felt almost immediate relief. Soon I was shearing sheep again. I have heard that there is much coyote tobacco, somewhere in Tejon or in the southern San Joaquin country, which has leaves sometimes as big as cultivated tobacco. There is also a plant called marijuana which is known to the Spanish Californians, but it is not tobacco. Martinez knows it from the gardens in Los Angeles."



**ECHOES OF THE PAST**

Throughout history, wherever one culture has appeared to supersede another in a dramatic and rapid fashion, some elements of the older culture have remained as an echo of the past. No better example of the persistence of cultural flotsam can be found than the European settlement experience in the new world.

In California today, the thread of continuity with the culture that inhabited Simi Valley for many thousands of years before the coming of settlers from Mexico would seem to be practically non-existent. We think that the settlement of the central and southern coastal portions of California by citizens of New Spain resulted in the complete annihilation of the presence and cultural remnants of the Chumash people. That there is a Spanish vestige is very clear from the names of streets, places and cities. In Simi Valley we have Santa Susana Pass and Mountains, Tierra Rejada Road, the Arroyo Simi, Brea Canyon, Alamos Canyon, Chivo Canyon, Las Lajas Canyon, and the Tripas. We are, of course, at least one culture removed from the valley's Chumash heritage.

The Spanish, like the later Anglo-Americans, viewed their own cultures as superior to those that came before and generally overwhelmed most vestiges of past cultures. The Spanish were viewed by the Chumash, at least initially, with awe, as possessing great supernatural power, and as having spectacular material things, including domesticated animals, metal, glass objects, writing and food crops. Indeed, the Chumash generally blamed their own medical practitioners for the high rate of death that accompanied the first few years of settlement. Many Chumash shaman were killed by their own people.

Most Chumash strove to assimilate to the extent possible and become an accepted part of Hispanic culture. A large percentage of those individuals who migrated from Mexico were mestizos, mulattos and Indians. Many settlers of purely Spanish descent married Indian

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women and some local Indians were recipients of Spanish and Mexican land grants.

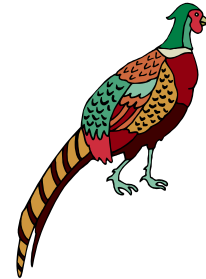
The Anglo-American invasion more closely resembled a classic barbarian invasion. Indians had lower status than slaves. On the frontier, at least some elements in our settlement of the Americas advocated and practiced the physical annihilation of Indians. Among the Anglo-American settlers, the Chumash hid, effectively becoming Mexicans. So afraid were they of the public exposure of their Chumash heritage, that their children were usually unaware of it. They were romanticized once they were gone, but seriously discriminated against when they were here. To the Anglo-Americans, the Mexican settlers at least were bearers of European culture. Their way of life also was romanticized. However, they were a conquered people - fundamentally different than "Americans." With this background, we should be surprised if any of the Chumash past filtered down to us.

When I first moved here, I was aware that the name "Simi" came to us from the name of the Spanish and later Mexican rancho and that the name came to the rancho from the name of the historic Chumash village, which was located somewhere at the western end of Simi Valley. Later, I addressed the question of what Chumash place names had been recorded in anthropological notes and found that some of those names are still present on the land in their Spanish and, sometimes in their Chumash forms. "Tierra Rejada" and "Tapo" are examples of that. Finally, I found that there were never more than a few Spanish/Mexican settlers in Simi Valley at any one time during the rancho period.

Then who were the sheepherders, the vaqueros and the laborers? The answer is simple and obvious. The Chumash filled those roles. While most, as high as 80-90 percent, had succumbed to European diseases, those that remained learned Spanish and acculturated, and were essentially assimilated into California's society. Since this was the case,

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perhaps there is something to learn of the Chumash people as reflected in Spanish names on the land, both past and present, and of how they looked at the land. With this thesis, I have continued the odyssey that had already begun before the intellectual frame-

**MONTGOMERY RANCH  
PHEASANT FARM**

During the late 1970s the Montgomery Ranch was sold off in 40-50 acres parcels. The land that later became the Bridle Path Homeowners' Association was the first to be developed.

Southeast of the present day intersection of Highland and Sinaloa roads was a pheasant farm and pheasant shooting club. Once a buyer had been found for the land, something had to be done with all those pheasants. No doubt, nostalgia ran high among the club members. The decision was made to release the birds and to have one last good day of shooting for the benefit of the members. Those of us who were in the valley that day and out of doors did not understand what was happening. It sounded like a small war had broken out down in that part of the valley. The shooting went on for several hours. Eventually, the shots became less and less frequent - and then it stopped all together. The last pheasant shooting club was no more- eventually to be replaced by up-scale homes.

Now and again over the next few months, as I traveled over the ranch roads, reviewing the land for urban development, I would catch sight of a lone pheasant. One or more had survived that last day of club shooting and enjoyed some time in the wild.

NATURALIZED EXOTIC PLANTS AMONG US

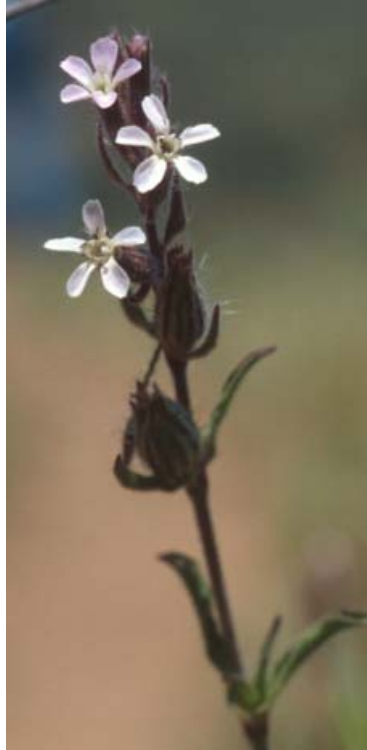
Many of the plants that we encounter in the "natural environment" have been introduced from outside of California, more than often originating in Europe or Asia. The annual grasses of our valley are all introduced, for California had only perennial grasses before European and Mexican settlers arrived. Red brome, ripgut brome, foxtail, wild oats, are the more common weedy grasses. The seeds stick to the coats of our pets and to our socks.

Other exotic plants which have become naturalized include the California (Peruvian) pepper, tumbleweed (Russian thistle), which came to Canada with Russian red wheat and arrived in Southern California with railroad-borne cattle in the 1880s,



**horehound** (below), which was brought by early settlers as a sore throat remedy, sweet fennel, common yarrow, field bindweed, poison hemlock, chicory, bull thistle, prickly lettuce, common groundsel, prickly sow-thistle, dandelion, oyster plant, shepherd's purse, sweet alyssum, wild radish, water cress, London

Cont. in Col. 2



rocket, oriental mustard, **windmill pink** (above), Australian salt-bush, Mexican tea, common morning glory, French and Spanish brooms, bur-clover, white and yellow sweet clover, winter vetch, Bermuda buttercup, English plantain, common plantain, curly dock, scarlet pimpernel, moth mullein, puncture vine, tree tobacco and dozens and dozens others. Some of these plants are of economic benefit. **Long-beaked filaree** (below)



and stem



**red-filaree** (below)

Cont. in Col. 3

present a high protein browse for cattle. Other plants, such as **black** and **Mediterranean mustards** (below),



Russian thistle, milk thistle, castor-bean, and yellow star-thistle, present economic problems for ranchers. All crowd out native species and profoundly affect ecosystems.

Many weedy species have naturalized in our city, where we have created a humid lands environment, complete with irrigation. They are bothersome, since we have to constantly weed them out of our gardens. Common purslane, for example, has invaded my roses just in the last few years. Prickly lettuce and dandelions are bothersome in the same way.

Mike Kuhn



# November

2002



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Lower Zuma Canyon See Schedule
3 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Don Hunt</i>	4	5	6	7 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	8	9 Ferndale See Schedule
10 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule	11	12 <i>Happy Birthday Heidi Portoghesi</i>	13	14 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	15 <i>Happy Birthday Jim Keppler</i>	16 Stagecoach Trail Work Party See Schedule
17 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule	18 <i>Happy Birthday Erin Hirsch</i>	19 <i>Happy Birthday Randy Klockenteger</i>	20 RSTB Meeting See Page 1	21 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	22	23 Long Canyon to Simi Peak See Schedule
24 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Arlene Altshuler</i>	25	26 <i>Happy Birthday Isabel Johnson</i>	27	28 NO HIKE <i>Happy Birthday Matthew Carman</i>  <i>Happy Thanksgiving!</i>	29	30 Serrano Valley Loop See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Peter Nielson</i>



# *Rancho Simi Trail Blazers*

## *Hiking Schedule*



**November 2 Lower Zuma Canyon Exploratory Hike**

Explore Zuma Canyon starting from the lower end. This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and

**November 3 Sunday Evening Hike**

Meet 4pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. (Strenuous, 5 MRT)

**November 7 Thursday Evening Hike**

Meet at 6pm at Chumash trailhead. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flanagan

**November 9 Ferndale**

Approx. 6 MRT, easy to moderate hike through St. Thomas Aquinas College to Ferndale. This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. Meet 8am near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Wear

**November 10 Sunday Evening Hike**

Meet 4pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. (Strenuous, 5 MRT)

**November 14 Thursday Evening Hike**

Meet at 6pm at Chumash trailhead. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flanagan

**November 16 Stagecoach Trail Work Party**

Help maintain a short but very scenic trail. Directions - From Simi Valley, exit 118 Fwy at Kuehner and go south, continuing up Santa Susana Pass. Lilac Lane is on the right, just before Rocky Peak Road. From the SF Valley, take 118 to Rocky Peak Road. Go over the Fwy and turn right (west) onto Santa Susana Pass. Turn left on Lilac Lane. Meet at trailhead on the left side of Lilac Lane. We will be working from 8am - Noon. Tools will be provided. Bring 2 - 3 quarts of water, hat, sunscreen,

**November 17 Sunday Evening Hike**

Meet 4pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. (Strenuous, 5 MRT)

**November 21 Thursday Evening Hike**

Meet at 6pm at Chumash trailhead. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flanagan

**November 23 Long Canyon to Simi Peak**

Strenuous 9 MRT with 1300' elevation gain/loss. Come explore a new trail. Directions: take 118 Fwy to First Street exit. Take First Street south (it becomes Long Canyon Rd) approx. 4 miles, until it intersects Wood Ranch Pkwy. Meet at 8:30am

**November 24 Sunday Evening Hike**

Meet 4pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. (Strenuous, 5 MRT)

**November 28 Happy Thanksgiving—No Hike**

**November 30 Serrano Valley Loop**

Moderate to strenuous 8 1/2 MRT with 1100' elevation gain and loss. This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park district. Meet 8am near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 - 3 qts. water and

**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. Hikes will be cancelled if it rains.

**RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS**

EXECUTIVE CHAIR:	MIKE KUHN	HM (805) 583-2345, WK (805)583-6776
TREASURER:	PETER ELY	HM (805) 523-1409
SECRETARY:	STEFANI HOWARD	HM (818) 885-0407
PARK DISTRICT LIAISON:	COLLEEN JANSSEN	WK (805) 584-4453
WORK PARTIES CHAIR:	JOHN SABOL	HM (805) 583-2541
WORK PARTIES VICE CHAIR:	BOB ALTIERI	HM (805) 526-6749
HIKING CHAIR:	ARLENE ALTSHULER	HM (805) 581-9735
WAYS & MEANS CHAIR:	MARTY RICHARDS	HM (805) 526-4414
WAYS & MEANS VICE CHAIR:	CONNIE ANKROM	HM (805) 526-2747
COMMUNICATION / PUB.CHAIR:	ARLENE ALTSHULER	HM (805) 581-9735

-----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 630399, Simi Valley, Ca 93063-0399**  
Please list any extra names and birthdays of more than one member (Month & Day Only)



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