



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



DAVID CAMPBELL

March 4, 1935 – October 11, 2006

David Campbell, husband of Mary Ann Campbell, succumbed to a long illness on October 11. He was a life long outdoorsman and active member of the Audubon Society. We will miss his wisdom and genial nature.

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.

DID YOU KNOW... ???

The Ventureño Chumash words

KA?ALIŠAWKA?O

mean "hot spring", which was located on Suphur Mountain.

Mike Kuhn

**A Big
!!! THANK YOU !!!
goes to
Martin DeGoey and Family
for their \$100 Donation
to the Rancho Simi Foundation**

**WANTED
NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

Arlene Altshuler has been doing our newsletter for the past five year and is getting burnt out. It is time that someone takes over for awhile. Training is available. If you are interesting in hearing more about the job, please contact Mike Kuhn or Arlene.

A NOTE OF THANKS

Goes to **Judi Sevcik**, for her fine work as Publicity Chair the last few years.

**WANTED
PUBLICITY CHAIR**

Judi is moving out of state. We will need someone to get publicity out on Trail Blazer events. Contact Mike Kuhn if you are interested.

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
November 15, 2006



Welcome!

Stephanie Scher

OCTOBER WORK PARTY

On October 21 our trail work party was focused on the Lower Stagecoach Trail. The trail was rendered usable.

Much thanks to Alan Cueba, Martin DeGoey and Michael Kuhn.

UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER 4th - 5th

Mt. San Antonio Ski Hut

6 MRT - Strenuous overnighter - (2,200' elevation gain)

Space is limited. **To reserve your place, please R.S.V.P. Mark Gilmore.** See page 5 for more details.

NOVEMBER 18th

Work Party – Upper Stagecoach Trail - See page 5 for details.

MARCH 1st – 4th

Death Valley Hiking & Camping Trip

APRIL 7th

Wildflower Walk – Antelope Valley

More information on these events can be found at

<http://simitrailblazers.com>

To make reservations, please email Mark Gilmore at

markinthepark@sbcglobal.net.

IS GLOBAL WARMING CAUSING MORE, LARGER WILDFIRES?

(Summarized from Steven W. Running, "Is Global Warming Causing More, Larger Wildfires?", *Science*. Vol. 313 [August 18, 2006], pp. 927)

The above-noted news article postulates, based on a number of technical sources, that higher spring and summer temperatures in the western United States has resulted in earlier snowmelt and the extension of the wildfire season and area extent of wildfires. Most of the article draws from Westerling *et al.*, "Warming and Earlier Spring Increase Western U.S. Forest Wildfire Activity", *Science*, Vol. 313 (August 18, 2006), pp. 940-943. In summary, and largely in Running's own words:

Global warming has had the following effects on wildfires in the western U.S. during the last 37 years (Note that this is not a projection of what might happen in the future, but what has already happened):

Warmer temperatures appear to be increasing the duration and intensity of the wildfire season. Since 1986, longer, warmer summers have resulted in a fourfold increase of major wildfires and a sixfold increase in the area of forest burned, compared to 1970-1986. The same thing has happened in Canada. The length of the active wildfire season (when fires are actually burning) in the western U.S. has increased by 78 days, and the average duration of large fires has increased from 7.5 to 37.1 days. This is attributed to an increase in average spring and summer temperatures of 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit and a 1-4 week earlier melting of mountain snowpacks.

The hydrology of the west is dominated by mountain snowpacks. Seventy-five percent of annual streamflow in the west comes from snowpack. Snowpack keeps the fire danger low in these summer-arid forests until spring melt is complete. Once the snow melts, forests become combustible within one month because of low humidities and sparse summer rainfall. The early snowmelt, i.e., longer dry summer years, had five times as many wildfires as years with late snowmelt. Higher forests that previously were protected by late-snowpack are becoming increasingly vulnerable to wildfires. Thus, four factors – early snowmelt, higher summer temperatures, longer fire seasons, and expanded vulnerable area of high-elevation forests, have resulted in a massive increase in the area burned in most years. Really great fires (about 5 %) account for more than 95 % of burn areas. The 1988 fire in Yellowstone National Park, for example, burned more than 600,000 hectares, cost \$120 million and resulted in the deployment of 25,000 fire fighters. The fire was only extinguished when snow began to fall in mid-September.

Fire is an important process for recycling dead biomass in the arid west, where natural decomposition rates are extremely slow. Wooden fence posts in high forests are often found to be perfectly sound after 100 years.

According to nearly all climatic models, projected increases in average summer temperatures by 2040 to 2069 are at least 5.4 degrees Fahrenheit, which is more than three times that observed over the last 37 years.

Currently wildfires add to the atmosphere approximately 40 % of the carbon emission each year. If increases in wildfire burn area come to fruition over the next several decades, wildfire carbon emissions will greatly exacerbate global warming. This effect has not been considered in current climatic models.

Mike Kuhn



AMOLE OR SOAP PLANT

The *amole*, or soap plant (*Chlorogalum pomeridianum*), is very common in the hills around Simi Valley. Indeed, it has a wide geographical distribution in California, Oregon and Nevada. A *Liliaceae* (lily family), it is characterized by a three to six inch long bulb, which is heavily sheathed in a brown fibrous husk. Most of the year the bulb remains dormant. The fibrous top is often exposed in trails. The leaves are eight to 24 inches long, with wavy edges arising from the bulb. The stalk appears in the spring. It is erect, free-branching, and from two to six feet tall. The flowers are widely spaced on the branches, white, with what appears to be six narrow petals (actually three petal and three sepals). The flowers open during cloudy days and in the evening from 6:00 p.m. to midnight.

The Indians, and later the settlers, used the bulbs as soap. The bulbs were crushed and rubbed on the hands or on clothing in water to make a lather. It was considered an excellent shampoo. The Indians baked the bulbs in a roasting pit, usually over night. The cooking eliminated the soapy taste and, oh yes, the toxins in the bulb. The bulbs were dried and stored. The harsh outer husks were made into brushes by the Indians. Early settlers reportedly used the husks to stuff mattresses. While young, the leaves reportedly were eaten raw, and the dry leaves were used by the Indians to wrap acorn meal in making bread. The cooked juice was used as a glue, to treat new bows, and to create green tattoos. Large quantities of crushed bulbs were thrown into dammed pools in streams to stupefy fish - another good reason to cook the bulbs before eating.

All of this aside, these plants are rich additions to the Ventura Coast Sage Scrub vegetation association. Since there is now so many of us and we are so hard on our environment, the *amole* is best left alone.

Mike Kuhn

A MOUND OF STONES

Nothing persists like stone. Archaeology is fixated on stones. Cultures are described by their stone tool assemblages.

Stone lasts, where other materials, such as wood, baskets, and even bone, perish. When Moses first came down off of Mt. Sinai, according to the book of Exodus, he found the Hebrews worshipping a golden calf. He threw down the two stone tablets, on which were written the laws, and broke them. If the story is true, and because they were in the desert, those broken tablets may well still be on the surface of the ground, unrecognized, but still there. A man lines up some stones, carries a stone from one place to another, or builds a wall. For all practical purposes, he is creating a permanent record of an event, a cultural practice, a moment in the life of man. Stone lasts.

The 1861 U.S. Surveyor General's Office survey of El Rancho Simi exhibits a "mound of stones" at a turning point along the southwestern boundary of the rancho on the top of the ridge south of the southern end of Wood Ranch Parkway. The mound of stones was part of the survey. The mound, if it still exists, is a cultural artifact and deserves recognition and preservation.

So, I thought it would be fun to see if it is still there. Locating the mound would not be as hard as it might seem, considering how apparently crude the map, without contour lines, is. That survey was done with a transit and chain, and was the basis of permanent property boundaries. Those same boundaries exist today. All you have to do is follow the fence lines.

So, I took a hike. Not surprisingly, the boundary is marked by a barbed wire fence, and the turning point is marked by a steel pipe with a cap on it. Stones of a relatively uniform size are somewhat scattered about three feet away, with a couple of the stones adjacent to the modern boundary marker. Other than those stones, the surface near the boundary marker is pretty much free of rocks.

Given the persistence of stone, the relative uniformity of the size of each stone and the concentration of those stones exactly where you would expect to find them, it is clear, at least to me, that they are the original mound piled there by the survey crew. A more recent survey, using better instruments, would have yielded a slightly different result even though the same surveying data were used. It is standard surveying practice, when re-surveying, to destroy old survey markers when new ones are installed. In any case, the presence of the original stones is comforting.

Another "mound of stones" is noted at another turning point on a high isolated ridge to the south southeast, west of Simi Peak. I'll look for that one, one of these days.

Mike Kuhn



Sea Lions off the coast of Santa Cruz Island



Saddle Peak, left to right: Margarita Marsh, Doug Marsh, Alan Cueba, and Rafael Zepada.

Photo by John Sabol



Echo Mountain, left to right: Linda Barry, Doug Marsh, Roger Steffen, Alan Cueba, Margarita Marsh, Linda Travis, and Tom Travis

Photo by John Sabol



RSTB Calendar November 2006



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	3	4 Mt. San Antonio Ski Hut See Schedule
5 Mt. San Antonio Ski Hut See Schedule	6	7 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Joe Ferrall</i>	8	9 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	10	11 Cheeseboro Canyon to Sheep Corral See Schedule
12 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Heidi Portoghesi</i>	13	14 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	15 RSTB Meeting See Page 1 <i>Happy Birthday Jim Keppler</i>	16 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	17 <i>Happy Birthday Oliver Grimley</i>	18 Upper Stagecoach Trail Work Party See Schedule
19 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Randy Klockenteger</i>	20	21 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	22 <i>Happy Birthday Janet vanBibber</i>	23 Happy Thanksgiving!! No Hike	24 <i>Happy Birthday Arlene Altshuler</i>	25 Sage Ranch See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Florence Reichert</i>
26 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Isabel Johnson</i>	27	28 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	29	30 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Mallory Ham</i>		



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

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Hiking Schedule



REGULARLY SCHEDULED HIKES

(Rain cancels – No hikes on holidays)

Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak

Meet 4pm 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)

NOVEMBER HIKES

November 4th – 5th Mt. San Antonio Ski Hut**

6 MRT - Strenuous overnighter. (2,200' elevation gain)

The Ski Hut is at the base of Mt. San Antonio (Mt. Baldy) at 8,200'. We'll only do 3 miles the first day and we have all day to do it. Coming back the next day is all down hill. We'll spend the night in the hut. All you need to bring is food, your sleeping bag, good boots and 2 - 3 quarts of water. We will cook our food on the hut's wood burning stove. Space is limited. The cost is \$10 if you are a Sierra Club Member, and \$15 for non-members. To reserve your place, contact Mark Gilmore. We'll meet at 8 AM, near Donut Delite on the corner of Madera and Royal. We'll cancel if there is bad weather, so please be prepared for a substitute hike.

November 11th - Cheeseboro Canyon to Sheep Corral**

10 MRT - Easy to Moderate (500' elevation gain)

Walk among the oaks and follow a stream to Sulfur Springs and then on to Sheep Corral. Meet at 8 AM near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water, lunch, bug juice, sunscreen. Wear boots.

November 18th - Work Party - Upper Stagecoach Trail


Help maintain a short but very scenic trail. Directions: From Simi Valley, exit the 118 Freeway at Kuehner and go south, continuing up Santa Susana Pass. Lilac Lane is on the right, just before Rocky Peak Road. From the San Fernando Valley, take 118 to Rocky Peak Road. Go over the Freeway and turn right(west) onto the Santa Susana Pass Road. Turn left on Lilac Lane. Meet at the trailhead about 1/2 mile up Lilac Lane on the left side of the road. We will be working from 8AM - Noon. Tools will be provided. Bring 2 - 3 quarts of water, hat, sunscreen, and gloves to work on the trail.

November 25th - Sage Ranch

2.6 MRT loop - Easy to Moderate (300' elevation gain/loss)

Check out the local plant life and beautiful scenery. Meet at 8 AM near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. For people who decide to meet us at the trailhead, please note that there is a \$3.00 parking fee at the trailhead. Bring 1 - 2 quarts of water and a snack. Wear boots.

** 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>

RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

Executive Chair:	Mike Kuhn	HM (805) 583-2345	hannahmike@adelphia.net
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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 ____

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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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