



Rancho Simi Trailblazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District events can be viewed at www.rsrpd.org

~~~~~

### 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.



The RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS are looking for leaders for public hikes! If interested, please contact Michael Kuhn at [mike.kuhn@simitrailblazers.com](mailto:mike.kuhn@simitrailblazers.com). Applicants must be evaluated by the board and would be subject to the park district's standard background check.



#### **December 4, 2021 – Los Robles Trail via the Los Padres Trail and Oak Creek Canyon 8AM**

4.5 RT loop – Easy (with 750' of elevation gain/loss)

The Los Robles Trail is located in the southern portion of the Conejo Open Space; it stretches from Newbury Park to Westlake and is the only national historical trail in California. Our hike will begin along the shady Los Padres Trail which will lead us to the Los Robles Trail which we'll follow to Angel Vista overlooking the Conejo Valley, Camarillo, Boney Mountain and (weather permitting) the Channel Islands. Continuing on, we'll hike the Oak Creek Canyon Loop and then hike a short distance along the street to reach our vehicles.

**DIRECTIONS TO TRAILHEAD:** Head south (toward Thousand Oaks) on Highway 23 and drive to its intersection with Hwy 101. Head "north" (toward Ventura) on Highway 101 and stay in the right-hand lane. Immediately take the Moorpark Road exit; get in the left lane on the exit ramp. Turn left (south) onto Moorpark Road and get in the right-hand lane as you pass under Hwy 101; drive 0.35 miles to Los Padres Drive. Turn left (east) on Los Padres Drive and drive about 100 yards. Park on the right (south) side of the street (across from Woodlet Way). Bring your camera, water and lunch. Wear boots.

#### **December 11, 2021 – Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park Counterclockwise Loop**

6 MRT – Moderate (1,400' of elevation gain/loss)

The hike will start (and end) at the upper end of the Stagecoach Trail (near Lilac Lane). The exact route will be determined during the hike, but a clockwise loop is contemplated.

**DIRECTIONS TO TRAILHEAD:** In Simi Valley, take Highway 118 to the Kuehner Drive exit. Drive south 2.8 miles on Kuehner Drive (the name changes to Santa Susana Pass Road along the way) as it climbs eastward to Lilac Lane [after you pass the Box Canyon turn-off, but before you reach Rocky Peak Road]. Turn right (south) on Lilac Lane and drive 0.25 mile to a dirt parking area that is available on the left (east) side of the road.

#### **December 15, 2021 – Club Meeting – 7:00PM**

**Park District Headquarters: 4201 Guardian Street, Activity Room #2** - Everyone is welcome to attend. Masks are required.

#### **December 18, 2021 – Work Party Long Canyon 8AM – 12PM**

The Trail Blazers October trail work party will be held Saturday December 18 on the Long Canyon Trail. Meet at the trailhead parking lot on Wood Ranch at 8:00 AM. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water, a snack, hat, sunscreen and gloves to work on the trail. Wear sturdy boots. All tools will be provided. As always, you are welcome to work for a shorter time period if you desire.

**DIRECTIONS TO TRAILHEAD:** Take Hwy 118 to the Madera Road exit. Head (south) 2.9 miles on Madera Road to Wood Ranch Parkway. Turn left (south) onto Wood Ranch Parkway and drive 1.9 miles to its junction with Long Canyon Road. Turn right (west) on Long Canyon Road and drive 100 feet to the driveway leading into the trailhead parking lot. Turn left into the Long Canyon Trail trailhead parking lot.

#### **December 25, 2021 – Merry Christmas – No hike**

## HIKE REPORTS

October 30, 2021 – No Hike

November 6, 2021 – Long Canyon, Montgomery Canyon, Canyon View Trail Loop



12 hikers drove through heavy fog to meet at the Long Canyon Trail trailhead parking lot at Wood Ranch in Simi Valley on a chilly autumn morning. Fortunately as we approached the trailhead it was not foggy as was the case during our entire hike (despite lingering fog at a distance). We began hiking the Long Canyon trail as it climbed steeply 0.7 mile to a trail junction atop a ridge overlooking western Simi Valley to the north as well as the Lang Ranch Open Space to the south. We then followed a “use” trail down to the dirt road in Oak Canyon while enjoying views of the surrounding mountain slopes. After a short break we headed eastward up a dirt connector road to a ridge that provided nice views of western Simi Valley. We continued along the dirt road as it dropped into Montgomery Canyon and headed toward Long Canyon Road. We then crossed the street, walked a short distance northward and then hiked steeply up the Canyon View Trail which provided views of the surrounding area including Bard Reservoir and followed it as it undulated along a ridgeline back to the trailhead parking lot, completing a 6.2-mile loop hike with about 1,500’ of elevation gain/loss on a very pleasant morning for hiking.

November 13, 2021 – Las Lajas Trail to the Shovel



Seven hikers met at the trailhead on Evening Sky Drive on a pleasant autumn morning. We began our hike 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 dry streambed three times. We then followed a not-at-all-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 were in shade for much of the trek to the top and there was a nice intermittent breeze as we gained elevation.

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. We encountered several other people during the hike but only one bicycle rider once we left the canyon bottom. The vegetation on the hillsides was “bone dry” due to the ongoing drought and the upper section of the trail (old road) up to the AMO site has been “widened” presumably by the lack of water. There were almost no blooming plants and there was no sign of wildlife. We returned to our vehicles having completed a pleasant-enough 6.3-mile hike with about 1,050’ of elevation gain/loss, despite the temperature in the canyon having risen to about 90 degrees by the time we finished our hike.

## November 20, 2021 –Work Party Mt. Mc Coy



It was perfect weather for trail maintenance. There was a cool misty breeze for the duration of the work party. Five volunteers met at the top of Mt. McCoy, where the tools were brought up by truck, and the volunteers prepared to work their way down the mountain. They began at the very beginning of the trail by the cross. Paul Friedeborn had already covered some graffiti up at the cross. Many thanks to Paul Friedeborn, and Richard Snowden, on a beautiful job clearing rock and smoothing the trail. Thank you Mike Kuhn, who continued clearing the trail until meeting up with Daniel DeGoey, and Martin DeGoey who were working a ways down the trail, shoring up a highly eroded trail edge using pressure treated lumber. Brian Denert was there with his daughter Chloe, who filled up a huge bag of trash, and Brian covered some graffiti on one of the benches up at the top. Thank you, Brian and Chloe Denert and all in support of Rancho Simi Trail Blazers.

## November 27, 2021 – Happy Camp



13 hikers met in the dirt parking area at the north end (15100) of Happy Camp Canyon Road adjacent to the Rustic Canyon Golf Course parking lot in Moorpark. NOTE: This is the first time this group began this hike from this trailhead; previously we began from the dirt parking lot at the east end of Broadway Road in Moorpark. We followed the trail (dirt road) along the east side of the golf course for a while and then followed an actual trail to the east of the road until it reached the signed kiosk entrance to Happy Camp Canyon. We took the left fork just past the signed entrance and followed the old ranch road eastward as it rose 600' gradually in the canyon bottom between Oak Ridge (to the north) and Big Mountain (to the south). An easy several miles later we reached a shaded picnic/rest area with two tables with benches, two hitching rails and lots of shade provided by oak trees. After a very pleasant break everyone decided to continue hiking the loop (rather than an option of returning the way we came).

Continuing our hike, we followed the newly graded/widened dirt road southeast as it rose from the canyon bottom up Big Mountain to the Middle Range Fire Road. NOTE: This section was previously an abandoned, steep, and partially eroded dirt connector trail (formerly a road). It is now a "superhighway" by comparison which made it much easier to climb, but not as interesting. Once we reached the ridge, we took in the views to the south and west which were relatively clear for several miles, but were hazy at greater distances (for example, we could barely see the outlines of two of the Channel Islands). After hiking westward a few miles we descended to the signed kiosk entrance to Happy Camp Canyon, and then we made our way back to the parking lot the way we came, thus completing an 11.1 mile hike with about 1,550' of elevation gain/loss on a pleasant late-autumn day for hiking. The hillsides were "bone dry" due to the ongoing drought but we spotted a few blooming plants including some bush sunflowers. We encountered no other hikers but there were several bicyclists toward the end of the hike and we spotted a roadrunner and a few rabbits during the hike.



## WINTER SOLSTICE AT BURRO FLATS

On December 18, 1999, I had the privilege of visiting a rock art panel in the Burro Flats area of the Santa Susana Field Laboratory site in the Simi Hills. It is known as the Burro Flats Cave. The occasion was observations by Dr. Ed Krupp, Director of Griffith Observatory, to determine if the January 17, 1994 Northridge Earthquake had resulted in changes in the light and shadow effects during the Winter Solstice sunrise. It is known that the location of the field lab had shifted approximately five feet westerly and five feet vertically. Dr. Krupp also videotaped the winter solstice event (no matter that it wasn't yet December 22nd - not much change occurs over a period of about a week anyway) and a program before the pictograph panel. Five Rockwell security folks, a number of archaeologists and archaeoastronomers, and guests were there as observers. Among them were the archaeologists who first suggested that the site might be related to Chumash winter solstice and other ceremonies. Thanks primarily to Dr. Krupp's lively script and the discussion among the scholars that were present, I gained a number of fresh insights about the Chumash use of the site.

The most significant among these is the nature of the Native American's observance of the winter solstice. It is clear from sites like this one that observance on the precise date of the winter solstice probably was not the objective. The site is simply not an accurate predictor of the "date" of the solar event. Indeed, the fixation on the precise date is our own - the Indians probably didn't have that hang-up. They probably were more concerned that ceremonies be performed in association with the low sun maximum in general.

A second conclusion that can be drawn from the site is that those ceremonies may possibly have been public events. While the site is isolated high in the hills, the large number of apparently non-ceremonial bedrock mortars that would have been used for food preparation suggests the presence of substantial numbers of people for ceremonies at the various loci in the area. The "ceremonial center" is complex. While many features suggest a winter solstice connection, other ceremonies, such as the observance of the summer solstice, i.e., the longest daylight day of the year, were certainly observed there. It is possible that there may have been a small number of members of the 'antap cult present throughout the year in order to provide both public and private ceremonies.

The visit, which lasted about four and a half hours, had its lighter moments. A Hollywood producer came in a magnificent long black leather coat - the kind that most of us only admire, but can't afford - unless we sell the family sedan. At one point, I observed the gentleman shoving his way through a dense patch of leafless poison oak. When he returned I pointed out the nature of his encounter to him, he asked what he should do. I offered to provide a solvent that would remove the oil from his skin, however, I simply was at a loss to tell him how to treat his coat. The coat may prove to be a source of irritation!

At one point in Dr. Krupp's presentation he marveled at the juxtaposition of this very impressive Native American celestial observatory with the Rocketdyne complex, which has been so central to our advances during the 20th Century, towards the exploration of our own solar system. Hardware tested at that facility has visited every planet and every moon in our solar system. Perhaps there is something about the site that has caused man throughout the ages to reach for the heavens. **Mike Kuhn**

## REGULARLY SCHEDULED HIKES

*(Red Flag Warnings and Rain cancels the hike – No hikes on holidays)*

### **On Hiatus - Need Hike Leader** - Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak Fire Road

During Daylight Savings Time meet at **5PM** and during Standard Time meet at **4PM** at the Rocky Peak Fire Road trailhead on the northern side of the Rocky Peak exit from the 118 Freeway. 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 - 4.95 MRT - 1,325' elevation gain).

### **Tuesday Evening - Mt. McCoy Trail**

During Daylight Savings Time 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)

### **On Hiatus - Need Hike Leader** - Thursday Evening - Chumash Trail

During Daylight Savings Time 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.)

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.

|  | <div>RSTB Calendar</div> <div>December 2021</div> |     |                                                   |     |     |                                                                                                    |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sun                                                                               | Mon                                               | Tue | Wed                                               | Thu | Fri | Sat                                                                                                |                                                                                     |
|                                                                                   |                                                   |     | 1                                                 | 2   | 3   | 4<br>Los Robles Trail via the Los Padres Trail 8AM<br>See Upcoming Events                          |                                                                                     |
| 5                                                                                 | 6<br>Last Day of Hannukah                         | 7   | 8                                                 | 9   | 10  | 11<br>Santa Susana Pass Historic Park 8AM<br>See Upcoming Events<br><br>Happy Birthday Pat Burgess |                                                                                     |
| 12                                                                                | 13                                                | 14  | 15<br>Club Meeting 7:00 PM<br>See Upcoming Events | 16  | 17  | 18<br>Work Party Long Canyon 8AM<br>See Upcoming Events                                            |                                                                                     |
| 19                                                                                | 20<br><br>Happy Birthday Stephanie Farrar         | 21  | 22                                                | 23  | 24  | 25<br>Christmas Day<br>No Hike                                                                     |                                                                                     |
| 26<br>First Day of Kwanzaa                                                        | 27                                                | 28  | 29                                                | 30  | 31  |                                                                                                    |                                                                                     |
|                                                                                   |                                                   |     |                                                   |     |     |                                                                                                    |                                                                                     |

SANTA ANA WILDFIRE THREAT INDEX - Provides a 6 day forecast of Santa Ana Winds Wildfire Threats on a color coded map  
<https://fsapps.nwcg.gov/psp/sawti/>

CALIFORNIA FIRE WEATHER MAP - Provides actual Red Flag Warnings and Fire Weather Watches  
<https://www.fire.ca.gov/programs/communications/red-flag-warnings-fire-weather-watches/> (Scroll down to map)

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

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/>



## **Rancho Simi Trailblazers**

*A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation*

|                        |                         |                   |                                                                                              |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Executive Chair:       | Mike Kuhn               | HM (805) 583-2345 | <a href="mailto:mike.kuhn@simitrailblazers.com">mike.kuhn@simitrailblazers.com</a>           |
| Treasurer:             | To Be Announced         |                   |                                                                                              |
| Park District Liaison: | Nikki Collier           | WK (805) 584-4453 | <a href="mailto:volunteers@rsrpd.us">volunteers@rsrpd.us</a>                                 |
| Work Parties Chair:    | Martin DeGoey           | HM (805)583-3034  | <a href="mailto:martin.degoey@simitrailblazers.com">martin.degoey@simitrailblazers.com</a>   |
| Hiking Chair:          | Mark Gilmore            | HM (805) 990-1460 | <a href="mailto:markinthepark@simitrailblazers.com">markinthepark@simitrailblazers.com</a>   |
| Vice Hiking Chair:     | Les Wilson              | HM (805) 522-2642 | <a href="mailto:les.wilson@simitrailblazers.com">les.wilson@simitrailblazers.com</a>         |
| Website:               | Mark Gilmore            | HM (805) 990-1460 | <a href="mailto:markinthepark@simitrailblazers.com">markinthepark@simitrailblazers.com</a>   |
| Ways & Means Chair:    | Marty Richards          | HM (805) 526-4414 | <a href="mailto:marty.richards@simitrailblazers.com">marty.richards@simitrailblazers.com</a> |
| Membership Chair:      | Louise Pomes            |                   | <a href="mailto:louise.pomes@simitrailblazers.com">louise.pomes@simitrailblazers.com</a>     |
| Publicity Chair:       | <b>VOLUNTEER NEEDED</b> |                   | <b>Contact Mike Kuhn at: 805-583-2345</b>                                                    |
| Newsletter Editor:     | Louise Pomes            |                   | <a href="mailto:louise.pomes@simitrailblazers.com">louise.pomes@simitrailblazers.com</a>     |