



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



Volunteers Needed!!



If anyone is interested in volunteering for the **work parties chair** or the **Publicity chair**

contact Mike Kuhn at:
mike.kuhn@simitrailblazers.com



RSTB CLUB MEETING

This month's RSTB meeting will be at:
Sycamore Drive Community Center
1692 Sycamore Drive – Room B-1
Wednesday: February 18, 2014
5:30PM Everyone Welcome to attend!

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

FEBRUARY



Weekly hikes!!



Has anyone ever told you to take hike?

Did you know that in Simi Valley you can take many hikes with the Rancho Simi Trail Blazers and explore the beauty of Simi Valley and other beautiful locations? We have so much fun taking photos, talking and just viewing the beautiful scenery like the photo above.

Hikes are every Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, and most Saturdays

The Hummingbird Trail



Meeting time is **8AM**. The event will end at noon. All tools will be provided.

We will be removing rocks, doing some lopping to increase trail clearance and some trail trimming. Bring your own water, snacks, gloves, hat, and wear sunscreen. Boots are recommended. Meet at the intersection of Kuehner Drive and Spineflower Court. Park on the north side of Spineflower Court.

Upcoming Events

February 7th Griffith Park: Mt. Hollywood Trail from Ferndell Park*
5.2 MRT - Moderate (1,026' of elevation gain/loss) or 9-mile counterclockwise lollipop Loop - Moderate-to-strenuous (1,743' of elevation gain/loss) **8AM**

February 14th Johnson Motorway to Rocky Peak*
9 MRT - Moderate (1,600' of elevation gain/loss.) **8AM**

February 18th Club Meeting
The Sycamore Drive Community Center - 1692 Sycamore Drive - Room B-1 **Everyone Welcome to attend!**
5:30PM

February 21st Work Party - The Hummingbird Trail 8AM

February 28th New Millennium Loop Trail*
12.2 MRT - Moderate (1,000' elevation gain) **8AM**

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

Welcome New Members

Gary Hartung

RSTB LOGO T-SHIRTS

Sporting the beautiful RSTB logo, these are great shirts! Please call Mike Kuhn if you'd like to order at 805-583-2345.

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



Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District events can be viewed at <http://www.rsprd.org> to see what is happening next!

(Continued from last month)

CASA VIEJA

It is possible that either one of two conditions could have resulted in the abandonment of *Casa Vieja* as the rancho headquarters. First of all, the local fuel wood supply, which was confined to the Arroyo Simi, would have been quickly exhausted within a few years - resulting in further and further sojourns for fuel. Certainly, the Simi adobe site is better located for fuel wood purposes than was *Casa Vieja*. While *Casa Vieja's* nearby wood supply would have been largely restricted to the wood of arroyo willows, the Simi adobe was located close to a rich supply of both willow and oak trees. We do know that the end of the 18th Century and the beginning of the 19th Century witnessed a severe drought, which drove most of the Indians into the mission and rancho system as an alternative to starvation. It is possible that several years of severe drought saw the drying up of the Arroyo Simi in the vicinity of *Casa Vieja* as a general lowering of the water table occurred. This may have caused a drying of their well. We also know that in later years residents of the Simi adobe were forced to seek drinking water at some distance from the adobe during the drought of the first half of the 1860s.

Perhaps related to the availability of fuel wood is a Spanish name exhibited on a late-19th Century survey of the valley. That survey map includes the name "*Canada de Leha*" at the water gap at the northern end of Long Canyon Road. "*Leha*" does not have a meaning in Spanish. It is possible that the Anglo-American surveyors, i.e., Stow and Power, mistook a handwritten *leña* for *leha* (an "ñ" with a tilde over it). *Canada de Leña* means "firewood canyon." Oak Canyon is forested - as its name implies.

In other words, the original choice for the location of the Pico adobe may not have adequately considered the long-term supply of firewood within reasonably close proximity of the

adobe. This problem has plagued man since the beginning of time and has usually resulted in the relocation of residences. That same short-sightedness may have afflicted the Pico family.

Mike Kuhn
(4-20-07, revised 4-30-10)

CHIVO AND LAS LLAJAS REGIONAL STORMWATER DETENTION DAMS

During the late-1970s the Ventura County Flood Control District had funds earmarked for regional stormwater detention basins at the mouths of Chivo and Las Lajas canyons, located just north of the Simi Valley Golf Course. The dams were considered to be the most cost-effective way of effecting downstream flood control - all the way to the Pacific Ocean. An environmental document was prepared and considered by the county. The adequacy of that document was challenged by an environmental group largely on the basis that the effects on public health of construction-related dust-borne San Joaquin Valley fever spores had not been considered. The challenge to the environmental document and the re-drafting and circulation of the environmental impact report resulted in a two-year delay in the project. By the time the new environmental document had been approved the cost of the two-dam project had escalated beyond the monies available. Subsequently, there was only enough money to build the Las Lajas Dam. At the time, the 100-year flood discharge at the mouth of Las Lajas Canyon was calculated to be 9,500 cubic feet per second. The effect of the dam was to reduce the discharge to 500 cubic feet per second during the same peak event. That one dam has done much toward reducing the hazard of flooding in Simi Valley.

The opposition to the adequacy of the original environmental document had been led by Ann Rock, a local citizen. Subsequently, Mrs. Rock was appointed to the Simi Valley Planning

Commission and later (1982-1990) served on the City Council.

During the early 1990s the City received a multi-million dollar grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The purpose of the grant was to fund 90 percent of the costs of projects that would reduce the potential for flooding during the 100-year event. The first project to be built under that program was a stormwater detention dam upstream from the mouth of Sand Canyon (north of the eastern end of the Simi Valley Town Center). Dams were also considered and proposed on Dry Canyon (north of the Simi Valley Hospital) and at the mouth of Chivo Canyon. (Yes, the same dam that had been previously proposed.) Ultimately, both dams were rejected as not being cost effective. (Cost figures can never be fully determined until all geotechnical studies have been completed and engineering plans have been approved.) With stricter seismic standards follow the Northridge Earthquake, it was determined that it would be necessary to extend both dams down to bedrock. The necessity to do that had not been considered previously. Neither of those dams has been constructed. Until recently, a portion of the Las Lajas Channel, between the Alamo and Cochran street crossings, was relatively unimproved and underfit for the 100-year flood. In other words, there was a potential for flooding even during minor flood events. Monies from the grant were used to make necessary channel improvement in that area.

In the end, it seems that a dam at the mouth of Chivo Canyon was a bad idea. Even if no one had challenged the environmental document on the 1970s project, there probably would not have been enough money to construct the dam. Because the dam would have been over 25 feet in height, it would have been subject to review by the California Division of Safety of Dams.

(Continued in the March Newsletter)

December 13th - Sulphur Mountain Shuttle



17 hikers carpooled to the paved west end of Sulphur Mountain Road (off Highway 33) near Ojai on a chilly late-autumn morning. Most of the group boarded four vehicles for a scenic drive through the Ojai Valley to the eastern trailhead via Highway 150 and the paved east end of Sulphur Mountain Road which wound uphill through a lovely oak forest where we spotted a young buck. It was a gorgeous day as 13 of us began hiking westward/downhill along the Sulphur Mountain Recreation Trail (SMRT). We were soon treated to sweeping views of the beautiful rolling green terrain between our trail and the ocean as well as clear views of the Oxnard Plain and several of the Channel Islands (NOTE: the other four hikers hiked the trail eastward/uphill). We continued westward with the upper portion of the Sulphur Mountain Ridge immediately to our north and continuous vistas of rolling hills dotted with oak trees, grassland meadows, and valleys to the south and west. There was clear evidence in the mud of mountain lion activity. Eventually we met our eastbound fellow hikers and exchanged car keys (thus avoiding another lengthy car shuttle). We resumed our journey, continuing to walk through the beautiful pastoral countryside. Eventually the trail began providing views of the Ojai Valley and the distant towering mountains to the north and west and of Lake Casitas to the west. The last mile of the trail wound downhill, heavily shaded by oak trees. We eventually reached our vehicles, having completed a very pleasant 10.6 mile hike with 400' of elevation gain and 2,500' of gradual elevation loss on a perfect day for hiking.

December 27th - Sage Ranch Loop

Seven intrepid hikers met at the Sage Ranch Park trailhead parking lot, high above the eastern end of Simi Valley. Starting temperatures were in the low forties and the wind gusts shook our cars. Summoning up all the bravado we could muster, the decision was made to hike the loop as quickly as possible, avoiding any side trails. The northern side of the loop was definitely the most exposed, affording an expansive view of Simi Valley.

Peering out from our wind-breakers and stocking-caps, the majesty of the place was lost for us today. Thankfully, the southern side of the loop was a bit less exposed, and much more enjoyable, even though most of our views were of the Santa Susanna Field Lab. No doubt this hike was one for the Trail Blazer record books. We finished the hike in just under an hour, hiking 2.5 miles, with 660' of elevation gain.

January 3rd - Big Sky Loop



12 hikers (and one dog) met along Big Sky Place in Simi Valley on a cold winter morning for our first hike of the new year. After a short walk northward on a sidewalk on Erringer Road we turned east onto the well-signed Big Sky Trail. After crossing a small stream, we began the loop portion of the hike as we climbed fairly steeply up to the north-south ridge to the east of the development. Upon reaching the ridgetop we enjoyed views of the surrounding area including the west end of Simi Valley, the Santa Susana Mountains (particularly Whiteface Mountain), the Simi Hills, and blurry views of Anacapa Island and Santa Cruz Island. We continued our hike by heading north along the ridge nearly to Lost Canyons Drive at which point the trail turned sharply to the south as it wound its way along the oak-lined stream that runs through the Big Sky development. Recent rains had resulted in bright green grass in

places along the trail and we heard several frogs along the streambed. We finished our invigorating outing having



completed a 4.7-mile hike with 900' of elevation gain/loss.



RSTB Calendar February



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Caroline Carroll	2	3 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	4	5 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Mona Steffen	6	7 Griffith Park: Mt. Hollywood Trail from Ferndell Park* 8AM See Schedule
8 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> John Atwood	9	10 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Rex Jarrett, Jr.	11	12 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Joey Simon	13	14 Johnson Motorway to Rocky Peak* 8AM See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Doug Marsh James Taylor
15 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	16  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Ursula Christie	17 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	18 Club Meeting 5:30PM See Schedule <i>Everyone Welcome to attend!</i> 	19 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Pete Lestrel	20 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Mary Ann Campbell	21 Work Party - The Hummingbird Trail 8AM See Schedule
22 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	23	24 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Connie Ankrom	25 <i>Happy Birthday</i> David Seifert Tom Abernathy	26 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	27	28 New Millennium Loop Trail* 8AM See Schedule

SANTA ANA WILDFIRE THREAT INDEX - Provides a 6 day forecast of Santa Ana Winds Wildfire Threats on a color coded map <http://psgeodata.fs.fed.us/sawti/>

CALIFORNIA FIRE WEATHER MAP - Provides actual Red Flag Warnings and Fire Weather Watches http://www.fire.ca.gov/communications/communications_firesafety_redflagwarning.php (Scroll down to map)



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



REGULARLY SCHEDULED HIKES (Rain cancels – No hikes on holidays)

Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak Fire Road

Meet at **4PM** at the Rocky Peak Fire Road trailhead. 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)

Tuesday Evening - Mt. McCoy Trail

Meet at **6PM** in the parking lot, located to the south of Donut Delite, located near the NE corner of Madera and Royal. (Moderate - 4.0 MRT - 675' 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 end of Flanagan Drive. (Moderate to Strenuous - 5.4 MRT - 1300' total elevation gain.)

FEBRUARY HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

February 7th Griffith Park: Mt. Hollywood Trail from Ferndell Park*

5.2 MRT -

Moderate (1,026' of elevation gain/loss) or 9-mile counterclockwise lollipop Loop - Moderate-to-strenuous (1,743' of elevation gain/loss) Mt. Hollywood is by far the most popular hiking trail in all of Griffith Park. One of the reasons for its popularity is access and a million-dollar view of Los Angeles, including the Pacific Ocean and eastern San Fernando Valley. Meet at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride at **8AM**. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and a snack. Wear boots. **NOTE:** The longer hike will add hiking from Mt. Hollywood to Mt. Lee (the Hollywood sign).

February 14th Johnson Motorway to Rocky Peak*

9 MRT - Moderate (1,600' of elevation gain/loss.) The hike begins by following an easement through Indian Springs Estates ("the Bel Air of the Valley") to the lower end of the unpaved Johnson Motorway, an old abandoned dirt and sandstone roadbed. We then follow the motorway as it climbs 3.5 miles to the Rocky Peak Fire Road, passing through a landscape of dramatic rock formations and providing views of the Santa Susana Mountains and Devil Canyon to the north. Upon reaching the fire road we follow it southward for about a mile to a spur trail leading to Rocky Peak, enjoying views of both Simi Valley, the San Fernando Valley, and the surrounding mountains. We return the way we came. Bring 2-3 quarts of water, lunch/snack and wear boots. Meet at **8AM** at the trailhead. Directions to Trailhead: Take Highway 118 east to the Rocky Peak exit in Santa Susana Pass. Turn right (south) and then turn left (east) onto Santa Susana Pass Road. Follow Santa Susana Pass Road 1.3 miles as it descends into the San Fernando Valley. Turn left (north) on Iverson Road and drive 0.3 mile to the Highway 118 overpass. Park alongside Iverson Road on either side (without blocking the road).

February 18th Club Planning Meeting - Everyone Welcome to attend!

5:30PM - The Sycamore Drive Community Center - 1692 Sycamore Drive - Room B-1

February 21st Work Party - The Hummingbird Trail

Meeting time is **8AM**. The event will end at noon. All tools will be provided. We will be removing rocks, doing some lopping to increase trail clearance and some trail trimming. Bring your own water, snacks, gloves, hat, and wear sunscreen. Boots are recommended. Meet at the intersection of Kuehner Drive and Spineflower Court. Park on the north side of Spineflower Court.

February 28th New Millennium Loop Trail*

12.2 MRT - Moderate (1,000' elevation gain) We'll start (and end) our hike on the Bark Park Trail (775') in the Santa Monica Mountains near Calabasas. As Robert Stone notes, the loop trail "follows chaparral-covered ridges, forested canyons, riparian waterways, rolling grasslands, oak woodlands, and scenic overlooks [1,300]" as it rises and falls along its route. Meet at **8AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water, lunch and sunscreen. Wear boots.



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 <http://www.simitrailblazers.com/activities/index.html>

RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

Executive Chair:	Mike Kuhn	HM (805) 583-2345	hannahmike@me.com
Treasurer:	Santiago Homsí		
Park District Liaison:	Jeannie Liss	WK (805) 584-4453	volunteers@srpd.us
Work Parties Chair:	VOLUNTEER NEEDED		Contact Mike Kuhn at: 805-583-2345
Hiking Chair:	Mark Gilmore	HM (805) 529-5581	markinthepark@sbcglobal.net
Vice Hiking Chair:	Les Wilson	HM (805) 522-2642	les.wilson@roadrunner.com
Website:	Mark Gilmore	HM (805) 529-5581	markinthepark@sbcglobal.net
Ways & Means Chair:	Marty Richards	HM (805) 526-4414	mlrrdh@yahoo.com
Publicity Chair:	VOLUNTEER NEEDED		Contact Mike Kuhn at: 805-583-2345
Newsletter Editor:	Linda Mann		linda.martins.mann@simitrailblazers.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 _____ Birth Month _____ Day _____

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

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

How do you want to receive the Newsletter? Check all that apply.

Mail Mailing address _____

Email Email address _____

How did you find out about the RSTB? _____

Please make out tax deductible member dues check for the year to:

Rancho Simi Foundation and mail it to RSTB, P.O. Box 630445, Simi Valley, CA 93063-0399



U.S. Postage

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