



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

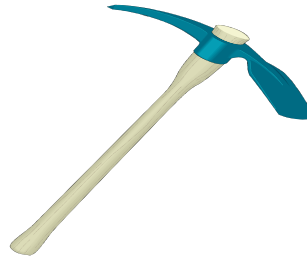


THE BANDIT JUAN FLORES

In the January issue of the Santa Susana Mountain Park Association Newsletter, Albert Knight, a professional archaeologist, provided a true story of a notorious bandit and his association with the Santa Susana Pass. The story was drawn from *The Cattle on a Thousand Hills – Southern California 1850-1880*, by Robert Glass Cleland (Huntington Library Publications, Fifth Printing 1990, pages 250-263). Since I was unable to track Al down on short notice to get his permission to reprint the story, I have taken the liberty to convey the gist of the story here in our newsletter.

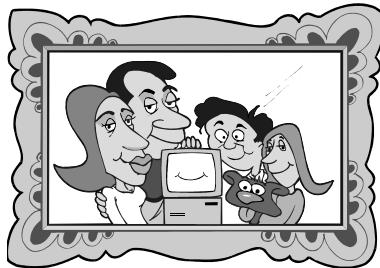
In the early days of California statehood, during the mid-1850s, southern California experienced a fairly wild social environment with *Norteamericanos* streaming into northern California and from there into southern California. The California Indians were devastated and the newly arrived easterner overwhelmed the resident Mexican population. Land passed quickly into the hands of eastern investors and there were bandits among both populations. One of those, with his band of outlaws, was Juan Flores.

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CORBA TRAIL WORK PARTY
See details in hiking schedule

RSTB CLUB MEETING
The monthly club meeting will be held at the Community Center
In the B-1 Room
1692 Sycamore Drive
At 7:00 PM
On
Wednesday, March 21st.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Mark & Diane Zorick

Heidi K. Addison

FEBRUARY TRAIL WORK PARTY

Seven girl scouts and two scout moms from Junior Girl Scout Troop 189 joined the Rancho Simi Trail Blazers on the Hummingbird Trail for the February Trail Work Party. The day was clear and cool and the ground damp from the rain. It was great weather to dig and we pulled in trail berms, filled in ruts and repaired rain-damaged switchbacks. We worked from 8:00 AM-11:00 PM and as usual met at Chuy's on our way home. Many thanks to the following workers:

Scout leaders: Beth Otto and Midori Maybin

Scouts: Chelsea Fenerin, Keli Fuquay, Hayley Glazier, Lauren Maybin, Hailey Otto, Elisabeth Savic and Brianna Valdiva.

Trail Blazers: Arlene Altshuler, Phil Ankrom, John Downey, Tom Frye, Louise Pomes, Chuck Portoghesi, John Sabol and Don Steeley.

There will be two work parties in March. A crew from

Cont. on page 2 col. 3

Flores gang robbed and terrorized the population around the southland, but eventually committed a crime that was so egregious that his days became numbered. His gang ambushed and killed the sheriff of Los Angeles and three of his posse, with only two of the party of six surviving. The community was outraged and Flores became a hunted man. Hundreds of men were committed to hunt the bandito. The strategy was to put some men on all of the passes in the southland. In that way, it was reasoned, some group was bound to encounter Flores and his men. The hunters included Anglo-Americans as well as Mexicans and Indians and soldiers from Fort Tejon. Ten soldiers were placed at El Scorpion Ranch in Chatsworth.

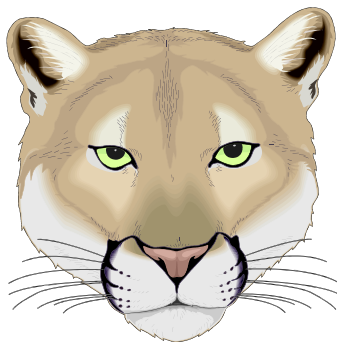
During the first week of February 1857 two soldiers stopped an unarmed Mexican at the top of Santa Susana Pass. He gave a false name but was detained and taken to the camp of the troops for questioning. There, one of Mexican posse recognized him and he was put under arrest. It seems that he was captured while scouting the trail over the pass. He denied most of the crimes of which he was accused, but was suffering from a gunshot wound, which he claimed was accidentally inflicted by himself while fleeing from the attack on the Sheriff and his posse. He asked to be taken to a priest for his last confession and to be allowed to write a letter to his mother. He and 11 of his gang were put on trial in Los Angeles. They were found guilty and their execution was reported in the *Los Angeles Star* on February 27, 1857. Justice

**WILD CUCUMBER OR
MAN-ROOT**

Marah macrocarpus

The wild cucumber is a vine that grows over many other plants. It usually grows where it is well shaded. The plant usually has a large woody root that sends up new shoot rapidly during the winter and spring. The flowers are white, with both male and female on the same plant. The seedpods are green with sharp spines, which protect the young seeds from being eaten by animals. Eventually the pods, along with the above ground runners, die and dry up during late summer. The pods split open from the lower end and scatters large shiny brown seed. The massive root of the plant may weigh as much as 100 pounds. Where one has eroded out of the ground by torrential runoff, it has been known to be mistaken as a desiccated or burned human body – hence the name “man-root.”

Mike Kuhn



CORBA (Concerned off Road Bicyclists Association) will work on the upper Hummingbird Trail on Saturday March 10. Meet at the Rocky Peak Trailhead at 8:00AM. CORBA will work from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM. The Trail Blazers work party will be held Saturday March 17, on the Chumash Trail. We will meet at 8:00 AM and work to 12:00 PM. Hope to see you there.

Work Parties Chair
John Sabol



EL PORTEZUELO

The 1834 report on the Santa Barbara Presidio District calls the road out of Simi Valley due west of the Simi Adobe El Portezuelo. The road leads to a small plain known as Tierra Rajada. El Portezuelo means “narrow pass.” While the Tierra Rejada Road through the pass between Simi and the Tierra Rejada valleys is now quite wide, it is obvious from the existing topography that the route through the pass was widened from what must of been a narrow passageway. The name, El Portezuelo, seems appropriate for the time.

Mike Kuhn

LYME DISEASE

Lyme disease was first described in 1975 and is now considered the most common vector transmitted disease in the United States. That's the bad news. The good news is that it extremely common in the east and is relatively uncommon in California. There are now about 600 cases a year reported in California.

Lyme disease is caused by a bacterium, *Borrelia burgdorferi*. Here, the main host is several species of woodrats. The disease is transmitted from rat to rat by one species of tick, which is host-specific. That tick only feeds on woodrats. Another tick, the western black-legged tick, picks up the disease from woodrats, but then feed on a great variety of hosts. Ticks can also pass the infection on to their offspring through infected eggs. Occasionally, these ticks will find a human host.

Only about one to six percent of the black-legged ticks carries lyme disease, depending upon the area. A major reason for this low rate of infection is because ticks commonly feed on western fence lizards. The blood of the western fence lizard destroys the Lyme disease bacterium in the ticks. So, look kindly on the western fence lizard. They are our guardian angels where Lyme disease is concerned. Even if a tick is infected, it will not necessarily transmit the disease to you.

From 50-80 percent of infected individuals develop a red, chronic, migrating rash within three to 30 days of receiving the tick bite. The rash often manifests itself in the form of a large ring one to three inches around the bite site. Lyme disease can go undetected. Serious effects, such as arthritis, hear abnormalities and central nervous system problems can occur.

The good new - since it's a bacterium, lyme disease is easily cured with a variety of antibiotics. So, get you to the doctor if you suspect lyme disease. Since most doctors haven't seen a case before, you may have to tell them that you had a tick bite and Lyme disease may be a possibility. Don't keep them in the dark.

For the rest of us, just keep brushing the little beggars off of your cloths and the cloths of fellow hikes. Give yourself a self inspection before showering and inspect you clothes. Carefully run your fingers across the hairy parts of your body to feel for ticks. If you find a tick, don't panic. It's not the end of the world.

Mike Kuhn

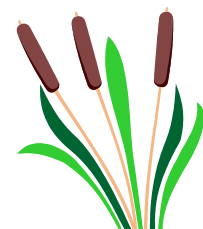


AN EARLY VINEYARD

The 1858 federal survey of the Simi Valley area exhibits a vineyard at the present day intersection of Township Road and Lemon Drive. The presence of a vineyard at that location in 1858 without irrigation seems unlikely. One is left with the conclusion that the vineyard was irrigated and part of the De la Guerra farm operation – probably an extension of the plantings in Tapo Canyon.

The Arroyo del Tapo has running water year around, and it can be assumed that those plantings of grapes and fruit trees were irrigated. Certainly, the depth to ground water made dryland grape production untenable. The depth to ground water at the intersection of Township Road and Lemon Drive exceeds 90 feet, so one is forced to the conclusion that the De la Guerras were conveying water for irrigation from well up Tapo Canyon.

Mike Kuhn



		<h1>MARCH</h1>					
		2001					
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
				1 Chumash Trail Hike 6 pm See schedule	2 Happy Birthday Martin DeGoey	3 Eagle Spring Loop Hike 8am See schedule	
4 Rocky Peak Trail Hike 4 pm See schedule	5	6	7	8 Chumash Trail Hike 6 pm See schedule Happy Birthday Colleen Janssen	9	10 CORBA Hummingbird Trail work Party 8 am See schedule & Los Robles Trail Hike 8 am, see 2nd. schedule	
11 Rocky Peak Trail Hike 4 pm See schedule	12	13	14	15 Chumash Trail Hike 6 pm See schedule	16	17 Chumash Trail Work Party 8 am See schedule Happy Birthday Rick Johnson	
18 Rocky Peak Trail Hike 4 pm See schedule	19	20 First Day of Spring	21 RSTB Club Meeting 7 pm Se page 1	22 Chumash Trail Hike 6 pm See schedule	23	24 Long Canyon to Simi Peak See schedule	
25 Rocky Peak Trail Hike 4 pm See schedule	26	27	28	29 Chumash Trail Hike 6 pm See schedule	30	31 Circle-X Ranch Hike See schedule	

RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS

EXECUTIVE CHAIR:	MIKE KUHN	HM (805) 583-2345 WK (805)583-6776
TREASURER:	BILL FUNK	HM (805) 527-9339
PARK DISTRICT LIAISON:	COLLEEN JANSSEN	OFFICE (805) 584-4400
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
OUTDOOR EDUCATION CHAIR:	BYERS (JOHN) DOWNEY	HM (805) 526-8588
COMMUNICATION / PUB.CHAIR:	BYERS (JOHN) DOWNEY	HM (805) 526-8588

-----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) _____ Address _____

_____ Birth Mo. _____ Day _____ Phone wk/hm _____

How did you find out about the RSTB _____

Please make out tax deductible member dues check for the year Sept.-2000/Sept.-2001 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 (Day & Month Only)

Check out our Web Site at ...<http://rstb.homestead.com>



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