



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



Our bank will no longer accept dues or other checks made out to the Rancho Simi Trail Blazers. **ALL CHECKS must be made out to the Rancho Simi Foundation.**

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



Thank you to the Hardcore trail work group that showed up at Mt. McCoy:
Mike K, John, Martin, Jamie and Cheri and me. Martin didn't think carrying all the tools was enough, so he added carrying two 2"x14"x8' boards on a wheelbarrow up the hill (with some help from Jamie).

The rest of this article can be found at:
<https://www.simitrailblazers.com/index.php/2018-2/>



Weekly hikes!!



Has anyone ever told you to take a 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. We even enjoy going on overnight events. **Please join us** and see for yourself how much fun we have!

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

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.

RSTB CLUB MEETING
This month's RSTB meeting will be at: Sycamore Drive Community Center 1692 Sycamore Drive – Room B-1
Wednesday March 21, 2018 5:30PM
Everyone Welcome to attend!

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

Upcoming Events

March 3rd Griffith Park: Fern-dell Park to Mt. Hollywood and Mt. Lee * 5.2 MRT – Moderate (1,026' of elevation gain/loss) or 9-mile counterclockwise lollipop **8AM**

March 10th Malibu Creek State Park * 9 Mile Loop – Moderate to Strenuous (1,500' elevation gain) **8AM**

March 17th Work Party – Lower Stagecoach Trail The event will end at noon. All tools will be provided. **8AM**

March 21st Club Board Meeting The Sycamore Drive Community Center - 1692 Sycamore Drive - Room B-1
Everyone Welcome to attend! 5:30PM

March 24th Conejo Mountain * 6 MRT – Moderate to Strenuous (1,600' elevation gain/loss) **8AM**

March 31st Mentryville Park and Pico Canyon * 7 3/4 MRT – Moderate to Strenuous (1,350' elevation gain) **8AM**

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

January 27th – Nicholas Flat Trail from Leo Carrillo State Park to Nicholas Pond



11 hikers met on a pleasant Saturday morning in Simi Valley to car pool to the Nicholas Flat Trail trailhead in

Malibu; two other hikers met us at the trailhead. We drove through the Santa Monica Mountains via Hwy 23 to Pacific Coast Highway (Hwy 1) and then headed to the parking lot at Leo Carrillo State Park.

Thanks to relatively mild overnight “devil winds” our journey provided magnificent views of mountains, valleys, the Pacific Ocean, and a clear blue sky. The hike began with a steady, fairly steep, ascent as the trail gained around 1,600’ in about 2.5 miles which tested our pulmonary and circulatory systems. The mild morning temperature and a light breeze combined perfectly to keep us from overheating. There were great views of the Santa Monica mountains, Point Dume, and the ocean as well as views of Santa Catalina, Santa Barbara, Anacapa, and Santa Cruz Islands plus the vague outline of San Nicholas Island. We crested the mountain, descended through a large meadow, and followed the trail down to Nicholas Pond which contained a surprising amount of water [it had been bone-dry during our last visit] and several ducks/coots were floating on the pond. We then followed a short trail up to some large boulders and enjoyed the view toward the ocean looking out over San Nicholas Canyon. After a while we returned the way we came, taking the Willow Creek Trail on the last leg of our journey. We had most of the hike to ourselves although we did encounter several hikers, particularly on our way back down. Our very pleasant outing covered 7.2 miles with a total elevation gain/loss of nearly 2,200’.

February 3rd – Cheeseboro Canyon – Cheeseboro Ridge Loop

7 hikers carpoled to the Cheeseboro Canyon trailhead in the Simi Hills on a pleasant non-winter-like morning. We began our hike by heading north on the Cheeseboro Canyon Trail (a dirt road) under a clear blue sky. We soon passed through an open grassland in the wide canyon bottom and then through a drought-weakened oak woodland; the effect of the prolonged drought was obvious from the number of dead trees lying on the ground.

Still the oak woodland was very appealing with its bright new green grass and we spotted a couple of woodpeckers taking advantage of some dead/dying oak trees that were still standing. Eventually we reached Sulphur Springs which in the past produced a strongly pungent smell, but this day there was no water and no stench. As we were hiking, scores of bicyclists passed us, many more than we’d seen on this route before on a Saturday (it was also a nice morning for bike riding). Continuing we soon reached Shepherd’s Flat at a trail junction. After a short break we headed west on the Sheep Corral Trail (the corral is all but gone) and ascended the ridge between Cheeseboro and Palo Comado Canyons. Our immediate objective, an overlook of Palo Comado Canyon, was filled with a large group of bicyclists but they soon left and we enjoyed a rest/lunch break and enjoyed the surrounding views. We then began hiking south through Palo Comado Canyon and soon realized that the morning had heated up to a summer-like degree. The final portion of our hike became difficult for some of the participants so we slowed our pace and worked on our hydration. Eventually we reached the trailhead parking lot having hiked approximately 11 miles with about 1,300’ of elevation gain/loss.

February 10th – New Millenium Loop Trail



Despite a longer-than-usual hiking distance, 8 hikers met at the Bark Park on Las Virgenes Road in Calabasas on a slightly chilly mid-winter morning. We began our hike under an overcast sky along a 1.2-mile gently rising connector trail to a junction with the New Millennium loop Trail that circles around mountainous terrain in the Santa Monica Mountains.

Electing to hike in a counterclockwise direction, we headed south and then east along chaparral-covered hillsides adorned with bright green grass and occasional blooming plants including sunflowers and tree tobacco. Reaching the southeast corner of the loop, the trail climbed via a series of exposed switchbacks to panoramic views of the area, including Calabasas Peak to the east and the mountain-top enclave of Calabasas Park Estates immediately to our west. As we headed northward the trail rose and fell near the fence line of the mountain-top community before dropping through a verdant grassland dotted with oak trees to Parkway Calabasas (and the gated entrance to the Oaks of Calabasas community). Continuing northward we climbed via exposed switchbacks to a large water tank at the crest of the mountain. After taking a lunch/rest break we continued as the trail dropped down the beautiful grassy, oak-dotted mountainside and began heading westward and then climbed back up the mountain to an old dirt road. Ignoring the noise pollution from Hwy 101, we followed the dirt road until it dropped into a canyon to the south. We took a shortcut down to a series of wooden steps that reunited us with the New Millennium Trail at a junction at which we took the right fork and followed long easy switchbacks as the trail made its final climb southward. We soon reached the junction with the trail connecting to Bark Park and followed it down to the parking lot completing a magnificent 13.8-mile hike with 2,600’ of elevation gain/loss on a nearly perfect day for hiking – giving thanks to whoever invented gentle switchbacks.



RSTB Calendar MARCH



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Roger Steffen	2 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Martin DeGoey Eileen Descallar Ringwald	3 Griffith Park: Ferndell Park to Mt. Hollywood and Mt. Lee 8AM See Schedule
4 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM <i>Happy Birthday</i> William James	5	6 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	7	8 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Colleen Janssen	9	10 Malibu Creek State Park 8AM See Schedule
11 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule 	12	13 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	14	15 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	16	17 Work Party – Lower Stage- coach Trail 8AM See Schedule St. Patrick's Day
18 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule	19	20 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	21 Club Board Meeting The Everyone Welcome to attend! 5:30PM <i>Happy Birthday</i> Songmi Margolin	22 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	23	24 Conejo Mountain 8AM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Judy Cohen
25 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule Palm Sunday	26	27 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	28	29 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	30	31 Mentryville Park and Pico Canyon 8AM See Schedule Good Friday Passover begins

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)



U.S. Postage

RSTB
P.O. Box 1231
Simi Valley, CA 93062

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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

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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 _____

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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 and mail it to **RSTB, P.O. Box 1231, Simi Valley, CA 93062**

RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

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INDIAN HILLS

The Chumash Trail is named after the Chumash Park, which lies on the eastern side of Flanagan Drive and was part of the Indian Hills Planned Development, approved by the City in 1975. So what? What is the connection to the Chumash Indians and how did it all come about?

When the Indian Hills project was first proposed, it was widely known throughout the community that part of the property contained massive sandstone outcroppings which were used by the Indians. Rockshelters are present with dozens of bedrock mortars (for pounding soft seeds into meal) and other evidence of the use of the area by the Indians. So the developer chose to honor the local tradition by naming the project "Indian Hills."

At the time, the developer (the late Evan Murphy) asked me if I could come up with Chumash Indian names that they could use as street names. I tried to explain to him that names that come from a completely different language, i.e., Ventureño Chumash, contain sounds that are difficult to render in English, let alone lend themselves to be remember, spelled, etc. However, I tried, giving them about 40 Chumash words that possibly might be usable. I assumed that company personnel would be forced to reject all of my suggestions for some names that would be more user-friendly. Even if they did not reject them, the Ventura County Fire Department probably would (They have right of refusal on street names so that responses to emergency calls are not accompanied by any confusion on where to send equipment and personnel.). What came back were Indian names, with one exception, not Chumash names, which we all recognize. These other Indian names and their spellings had already been rendered into English. In that way, the project could still honor the first Americans – if not the specific group that settled the area. A few examples are Sioux, Seneca, Pawnee, Mohave, Maricopa, Cochise, Choctaw, Anasazi, Obsidian, Mesquero, Yana, and Chumash. They did have the good taste to include the name "Flanagan Drive" – after the family that had occupied and owned the ranch during the late-historic period.

So, what we have is a project that is named for the local Indians – for a good reason – and street names that recognize Native Americans. The names of most developments are named for marketing purposes. I am surprised, for example, that we don't have an "Ocean View" development in town. You laugh, but I re-

member seeing an advertisement from the 1880s for a new agricultural subdivision in San Bernardino by that name. The name of the Indian Hills development may be the most relevantly named project in town.

Mike Kuhn
11-16-05

INTERPRETATION OF INDIAN ROCK ART

Over the years I have had an interest in visiting Indian rock art sites, photographing the motifs, and in some cases recording them. Those images, after all, are the closest form of a lexicon or writing that we have. Again and again, the question arises about the meaning of those images. I have often rendered my own interpretation of some of the images. In some cases the interpretation is simple - such as "an eagle dancer," a "big horned sheep," an "atalatl," or a "rattlesnake." Those interpretations are superficial at best and in some cases may be wrong. They do not tell us why they were made or their meanings.

The fact is that it is very difficult to interpret images from a very different, long gone culture. It is likely that interpretations of the meaning of some of that rock art even by contemporaries of those who make the images would not always be correct. Like me, you have probably observed graffiti on railroad cars, freeway retaining walls, overpasses, etc., and wondered what they mean. Attempts at interpretation by individual of an alien culture sometimes thousands of years removed strikes me as feeble at best.

A review of the recorded oral traditions of Indian groups presents some promise of added insights into the meaning of rock art. In his work in the Coso Range on the China Lake Naval Weapons Center, Dr. David Whitley uses oral history of several nearby groups in drawing the conclusion that rain-making shaman had big horned sheep as traditional "dream helpers" and that rattlesnakes were often associated with rainmaking ritual. The great abundance of the big horned sheep motif in the Great Basin has often been attributed to "hunting magic." However, Dr. Whitley argues that rainmaking is the real significance of some of those images. Certainly, it is unlikely that big horned sheep were ever abundant enough to offer a major source of food for Great Basin peoples.

A complete inventory of rock art and their environmental settings are a first step if

we are to have any meaningful discussion about interpretations.

Mike Kuhn
11-25-04 (revised 5-25-10)

ITINERANT SHEEP AND SHEEPHERDERS

In the days prior to about 1990 sheep and shepherders would arrive in Simi Valley each Spring and early Summer. The sheep were usually turned loose in the foothills where the land was not used for cattle. The owners of the sheep paid a modest price for the privilege of letting their stock graze the ruderal grasslands down to the ground – some revenue for the landowners. Then the sheep and their herders were gone - off to the high desert country I suppose. I remember sheep on the old Runkle, the Getty (Big Sky) and the Douglas ranches, to name a few.

One of the last flocks to graze the valley was turned loose on the Douglas Ranch. The sheep raised so much dust that it drifted over the east end of the valley and created a problem for residents there. At the time, the ranch was owned by the Casden Company. When contacted, their representative indicated that he knew nothing about any sheep and indicated that no one had permission to run sheep there. That incident occurred sometime in the 1980s.

Around the same time, someone shot and killed a shepherd in the Tierra Rejada Valley. The murder, as I recall, was never solved. Shortly afterward, a shepherd in Sand Canyon was encountered purportedly carrying a Thompson submachine gun. I am sure that the herder felt very alone and vulnerable. I wonder if the coyotes stayed away?

Mike Kuhn
12-24-04





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

Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak Fire Road

Meet at **4PM (5PM starting March 11th)** at the Rocky Peak Fire Road trailhead on the northern side of the Rocky Peak exit from State Route 118. 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) **(We Meet at 4PM during standard time.)**

Tuesday Evening - Mt. McCoy Trail

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)

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 north end of Flanagan Drive. (Moderate to Strenuous - 5.4 MRT - 1300' total elevation gain.)

MARCH HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

March 3rd Griffith Park: Ferndell Park to Mt. Hollywood and Mt. Lee

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 **8AM** at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride. 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).

March 10th Malibu Creek State Park

9 Mile Loop – Moderate to Strenuous (1,500' elevation gain) Meet at **8AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Our hike will start (and end) in Malibu Creek State Park at the point at which the Grasslands Trail crosses Mulholland Highway (just west of Las Virgenes Road).

March 17th Work Party – Lower Stagecoach Trail

Meeting time is **8AM**. The event will end at noon. All tools will be provided. We will do trail grooming and widening, and cutting back some brush from below the wildlife tunnel to the Creek bed heading East. Bring your own water, snacks, gloves, hat, and wear sunscreen. Boots are recommended. Directions: From Kuehner Drive and the 118 Freeway, head south to the intersection of Kuehner Drive and Smith Road, where you turn right (east). Meet at the eastern end of the dirt parking lot.

March 21st Club Meeting - **Everyone Welcome to attend!**

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


March 24th Conejo Mountain

6 MRT – Moderate to Strenuous (1,600' elevation gain/loss)

Hiking poles are strongly recommended. Meet at **8AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots.

March 31st Mentryville Park and Pico Canyon

7 3/4 MRT – Moderate to Strenuous (1,350' elevation gain) 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. From the **LA Times**: “Even people who know Los Angeles well (or think they do, like me) may be surprised to learn there is a well preserved ghost town, the site of Southern California’s first commercial oil well, freeway-close in nearby Valencia. But Mentryville is all that and more — including a movie set and a great spot for walking, hiking and picnicking.”

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/index.php/calendar/>