



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



JUNE 4TH - NATIONAL TRAIL DAY LOWER STAGECOACH TRAIL WORK PARTY

National Trail Day is coming up quickly. This year, we will be working on the Lower Stagecoach Trail.

Directions: Take Kuehner Dr. south, turn left onto Smith Rd, and follow it to the end of the street. Parking lot is on the left.

Meet in Corriganville parking lot at 8 AM. We will be working until noon. Tools will be provided. Bring 2 - 3 quarts of water, hat, sunscreen, and gloves to work on the trail.

WORK PARTY CHAIR NEEDED

The Simi Trail Blazers need a Work Party leader. Duties involve planning and leading one trail work party a month including picking up and returning needed tools from our tool shed at the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District Sycamore Drive maintenance yard.

No experience is necessary. We have several knowledgeable, experienced work party leaders who will provide training and work along with you until you are comfortable with the duties.

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.



Paul Nemeth

EVENTS IN MAY

May 14th - Street Fair 2005

From 9 am - 4 pm, on Cochran Street, between Galena & Sequoia. There will be over 250 booths. The Emergency Expo and The Art Walk will again be a part of this year's event. The new "Bike Rodeo" will add bicycle safety classes and Extreme Sport biking demonstrations. No charge to the public. 805-520-8222 for more info.

May 21st - Arroyo Simi Clean-Up

From 9 a.m. to noon, cleanup the Arroyo in Simi Valley and have fun doing it. Recommended for all family members. The Arroyo Clean-up 2005 will take place at the south end of Tapo Canyon Rd., south of Royal Ave. Meet in "The Shopper" parking lot. Bring gloves, boots and expect to get dirty. Barbecue for participants. (805) 583-6756 for more info.

For more information on upcoming hikes and events, check out

<http://www.simitrailblazers.com>

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
May 18, 2005

UPCOMING HIKES

June 11th - Strawberry Meadows

6.4 MRT - Moderate (approx 1300' elevation gain) The trail begins along Big Tujunga Canyon creek and ascends up into a dense pine forest with breathtaking views of the San Gabriel high country to the north, before heading southeast towards the highlight of the trip at Strawberry Potrero.

June 18th - Santa Cruz Island - Scorpion Anchorage to Smuggler's Cove

9 MRT - Moderate
We will be traveling to Santa Cruz Island aboard an Island Packers boat. To confirm your place, \$42 must be received no later than May 16th. We'll meet at the Island Packers dock at 8:30 AM and the boat will be back for us at 4 PM. The boat trip takes about an hour. On the way, we will see dolphin pods and possibly some whales.

July 23rd - Big Sycamore Canyon - Hike to the Ocean

This eight mile, one-way shuttle hike to the ocean is all down hill. When we get to the beach, we'll have lunch. We'll plan the logistics of the shuttle once the event draws near.

August 6th & 7th - Mt. San Antonio Ski Hut

6 MRT - Strenuous overnigher. (2,200' elevation gain) It doesn't get much better than this! The hut is at the base of Mt. San Antonio (Mt. Baldy) at 8,200'. Even the view from the outhouse is spectacular. We'll spend the night in the hut. All you need to bring is some food and your sleeping bag. We can cook our food on the hut's wood burning stove. Sign up soon. Space is limited. More details will be available soon.

APRIL TRAIL WORK PARTY

We had a small work party on the Lower Stagecoach Trail on April 23. We used our gasoline powered weed whip to clear the growth over the trail. Progress was made, past the Wildlife Corridor turnoff almost to the area above the train tunnel. Severe erosion caused by the heavy rains slowed trail tread repair because of the large ruts that needed to be filled. It will take many hours to bring the trails back into good condition.

Many thanks to the following workers: Phil Ankrom, Mike Kuhn, John Sabol.

There will be no work party in May. The next work party will be held on the Lower Stagecoach Trail in conjunction with National Trail Day on June 4th. See article on Page 1 for more information.

Hope to see you there.

John Sabol



Wildwood – Santa Rosa Trail hike, left to right: Farra Harless, Suzanne, Ellswoth Owen, Carol Tucker, Mark Gilmore, Arlene Altshuler. John Sabol took the photo.

THE SHAMAN'S VISION QUEST

A Siberian term, *shaman*, is used for an individual who served as an Amerindian group's spiritual leader or medicine man. That role seems to have been widespread and generally universal among North American Indians and certainly came to the Americas from Asia. Indeed, the role of the shaman may have originally been common to all peoples of the world, only to have survived into historic times in sub-Saharan Africa, Siberia, Australia and the Americas. The rock art from Ice Age European caves is thought by some to be evidence of European shamanism. In the western United States, the shaman served to guide the group in all matters relating to the welfare of the group, such as how to live, when to move, health practices, i.e., maintaining a balance in one's life and in all spiritual concerns. According to Debra Sherman, in an article in the January/February (2000) issue of California Geology, the role of the shaman could be equated to that of priest, doctor, and statesman.

The shaman sought spiritual guidance through a "vision quest". Ms. Sherman describes a vision quest as an "... *inner search for answers to difficult questions. It is a personal ceremony to find strength and to renew a sense of direction and well being. A shaman (always a man) goes alone on his vision quest to a sacred site, often on a hill, or high rock. The shaman fasts and smokes tobacco to induce a hallucinatory state that brings him a vision.*" She goes on to quote Dr. David Whitley, a leading expert on ethnography relating to shamanistic practices and their relationship to rock art - "*Native Americans have a certain expectation of their vision quests. They expect to be guided by some supernatural being, a link to their tribe, to their family, or to themselves. Their visions may appear as a past relative or animal deity. The shaman then interprets the meaning of the visitation in terms of what is happening in the lives of his people...*"

Many sites that have been interpreted as "vision quest" places have been identified throughout the historic range of the Chumash Indians. Some have been suggested within the Simi Valley area. These sites are usually isolated small caves in which the only archaeological evidence consists of shamanistic paraphernalia and, sometimes, rock art. Dr. Whitley believes that most rock art, i.e., pictographs (paintings) and petroglyphs (inscribed or pecked pictures), is the result of shamans' vision quests.

A shaman's hallucinations, like our own dreams, are affected by enzymes that obliterate short term memories when we are awakened. That is why one cannot remember dreams for very long as hard as one tries. Indeed, if you want to remember your dreams, you must write them down. The shaman recorded his dreams in the form of rock art. That art was usually symbolic - hence nearly impossible to interpret. The shaman knew and the symbols helped him remember. The "writings" of shamans and the places where they remained were sacred to his people. These places still exist and are a part of our collective heritage of a people and their struggle to exist. They and their times are now largely gone from this earth. We are the less for it.

Mike Kuhn



Mark Gilmore at Gorman, the day of the Antelope Valley trip. It was a little cold that morning! Arlene Altshuler took the photo.

JOAO RODRIQUES CABRILLO

Joao, i.e., Juan, Rodriques Cabrillo (“Cabrillo” is a Spanish corruption of the original Portuguese spelling “Cabrillo.”) was commissioned in 1542 by Viceroy of New Spain to seek out the Straits Anian, the mythical passage through North America between the Pacific and the Atlantic oceans. The straits were the equivalent to the English “Northwest Passage.” The rumor, no doubt fostered by the wish for a passage, vexed Europeans for about 200 years. There had to be an easier route to the orient than around Tierra del Fuego. Since his commission was to find the passage, his whole voyage was considered a bust as far as the Spanish were concerned. In essence, the Spanish failed to recognize what was found – instead focusing only on what was not discovered. This was a common theme in the age of “discovery”.

Cabrillo, sailing in an undecked boat, explored the coast of Upper California, discovering in the process San Diego Bay, San Pedro Bay, Santa Monica Bay, Point Conception, Catalina and San Miguel islands, and finally, Monterey Bay (*La Baya de Los Pinos*). During his winter layover at San Miguel Island, Cabrillo suffered a compound fracture of his leg - the infection from which he later died. His leg was broken when crossing rock rubble along the shore when trying to come to the aid of his men who were attacked by Indians while collecting water at a spring. The rock rubble and spring are still there. During the following spring and summer, Cabrillo’s men continued to explore north along the coast as far as the southern coast of Oregon before returning to New Spain.

The expedition had been a major effort. However, no Straits of Anian were found, nor had the expedition found a land rich in gold and silver. Instead, another Baja California was discovered with only one harbor of note – that of San Diego. The land was devoid of riches and inhabited by hostile Indians. There would be no further exploration of Upper California for another 40 years. We remember and celebrate Cabrillo for what came later.

What came later was a disaster for the indigenous people of California, but it laid the foundation for the Anglo-American settlement of California.

Mike Kuhn



Mark Gilmore caught this beautiful King Snake on the Santa Rosa Trail. The King Snake was safely released just minutes after his capture.



A WELL MEANING HAND

In 1987 a young, six month old mountain lion was hit by a vehicle on the 118 Freeway near Kuehner Drive. A Good Samaritan motorist stopped when he saw the downed cat. It was unconscious but still breathing. He loaded the animal onto the passenger seat of his car and drove to the Rancho Sequoia Veterinary Clinic. Having explained the situation to Dr. Stan Kunin, the gentleman stated that he wanted the mountain lion “fixed up” so that he could keep it as a pet. Dr. Kunin pointed out the obvious. The big cat was a wild animal and could never be trusted, and it belonged to the State of California.

The two proceeded to the parking lot - Stan with a syringe containing a tranquilizer suitable to the task - where they discovered that the mountain lions had regained consciousness and was apparently very upset. In fact, it had thoroughly trashed the interior of the Good Samaritan’s automobile - having shredded the upholstery, the headliner, etc. It had been hit by a vehicle and locked in an automobile in the middle of the city. At this point the Good Samaritan no longer wanted the mountain lion, and had begun to think about just what he was going to say to his insurance agent. (I have always imagined that he would begin by saying, “Well, there was this mountain lion.”)

Fortunately, the Good Samaritan had the key. However, one could not simply open the door and let it out. There was the safety of pets, small children and just about everyone else to worry about. In the end, the door was opened, and the cat was tranquilized by the hand of Dr. Kunin. Unfortunately, the mountain lion succumbed a few days later to its vehicle-inflicted injuries. Mountain lions are not good judges of traffic and tend to cross freeway lanes at a dead run, hoping for the best.

I have often wondered what would have been the outcome if the cat had awakened while being driven down Los Angeles Avenue by the Good Samaritan. Would the driver have stopped before exiting?

The next day developer Brian Catalde of Paragon Homes encountered what must have been the cat’s litter mate wandering along Kuehner Drive north of the freeway at about 1:00 p.m. - alone in the world. A few minutes later, when City planner Wolf Ascher and I met Brian, he was somewhat excited.

(This story is repeated and somewhat modified from one which was included in *Simi Valley: A Journey Through Time* (1997), page 327. It is my favorite mountain lion story - I retell it often.)

Mike Kuhn



RSTB Calendar May 2005



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Julie Szende</i>	2	3 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Myrna Steinman</i>	4	5 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Robert Lisenby</i> <i>Hannah Kuhn</i>	6	7 Trail Cyn – Tom Lucas Camp See Schedule
8 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule	9	10 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Jim Vandenberg</i>	11	12 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	13	14 Sage Ranch See Schedule
15 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule	16	17 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	18 RSTB Meeting See Page 1	19 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	20 Sespe – Bear Creek Backpack See Schedule	21 Sespe – Bear Creek Backpack See Schedule
22 Sespe – Bear Creek Backpack Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Autumn Hilton</i>	23	24 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	25	26 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	27 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Alan Cueba</i>	28 Marr Ranch See Schedule
29 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule	30	31 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule				



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Hiking Schedule



REGULARLY SCHEDULED HIKES

Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak

Meet 5pm 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)

MAY HIKES

May 7th Trail Canyon - Tom Lucas Camp

Moderate 7 MRT. Hikers on this San Gabriel Mountains hike are treated to a most beautiful waterfall. Be sure and bring some bug juice! (This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District.) Meet at 8 AM near Donut Delight at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2-4 quarts of water and lunch. Wear boots.

May 14th Sage Ranch

Easy to moderate 2.6 MRT loop. Check out the local plant life and scenery. (This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District.) Meet 8 AM near Donut Delight at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 1-2 quarts of water and a snack. Wear boots.

May 20th - 22nd Sespe - Bear Creek Backpack

Leave Friday morning for a backpack trip in the Sespe Wild & Scenic River Area in the Las Padres National Forest. As usual we will carpool to the trailhead. It is a short 4 mile pack into camp at Bear Creek. Stream crossings could be knee to waist deep, so bring river sandals. The backpack group is limited to 15 people. To reserve your spot, email Mark at marlintheparl@sbcglobal.net. Reservations are made on a first-come, first-served basis.

For those who want a long hike, on Saturday morning we will do a 12-mile round trip hike downstream to Willett Hot Springs. There may be numerous river crossings and some boulder hopping.

Pack out Sunday morning.

May 28th Marr Ranch

Easy 5 MRT through a beautiful canyon. Directions - take 118 freeway to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite and turn right on Evening Sky Dr. Park on the street near the trailhead, shortly after Rising Star Ave. We'll meet at 8 AM on the north side of Evening Star Dr. Bring a quart of water and a snack. Wear sturdy shoes and bring bug juice.

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. Hikes will be cancelled if it rains.

<http://www.simitrailblazers.com>

RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

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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

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

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