



# Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



## New Members

Donna, Jesse, Joshua and Erika Wolfe  
Lydia Ritzman  
Randall Sundeen



May 20, 2017  
8AM

## 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 <http://www.simitrailblazers.com/index.php/calendar/> for event details and the most up-to-date schedule.

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

## 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



## RSTB CLUB MEETING

This month's RSTB meeting will be at:  
Sycamore Drive Community Center  
1692 Sycamore Drive – Room B-1  
**Wednesday: May 17, 2017 5:30PM**  
*Everyone Welcome to attend!*

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

## Upcoming Events

### May 6th Horn Canyon to Pines Trail Camp

- Option 1:** 5.2 MRT – Moderate to Strenuous (1,800' of elevation gain/loss)
- Option 2:** 8.2 MRT – Strenuous (3,200' of elevation gain/loss)
- Option 3:** 9.8 MRT – Strenuous (3,800' of elevation gain/loss) **8AM**

### May 13th Oak Flat Trail to Whitaker Peak

10 MRT – Moderate to Strenuous (2,200' elevation gain) **8AM**

### May 17th Club Board Meeting

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

### May 20th Work Party – Big Sky Ranch

### May 27th Wildwood Park

Loop 7 Mile loop – Moderate (~1,000' elevation gain) **7AM**

**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.**



## March 18th – Backbone Trail Part 5: Latigo Canyon Trailhead to Malibu Canyon Trailhead



Twenty-two hikers tackled the fifth section of the Santa Monica Mountains Backbone Trail on a pleasant cool, spring-like winter morning (perfect for hiking). After dropping off several shuttle vehicles along Malibu Canyon Road (at the Pioma Road intersection) we carpoled to the Latigo Canyon trailhead.

We began our hike along the trail as it headed northwest down into a heavily shaded canyon adorned by a variety of blooming wildflowers. We then headed northeast through a riparian woodland along a seasonal creek with running water (which we crossed at least ten times), passing



several meadows filled with bright green grass. The trail then rose and fell as it wound along chaparral-covered slopes on its way to Corral Canyon Road. After crossing the road, we soon found ourselves walking among (and on) a variety

of stunning sandstone rock formations. We decided to take our lunch break atop the highest such formation where we examined the ruins of an old dwelling and enjoyed the views afforded by our high perch. (unfortunately an offshore marine layer hid the ocean from view). After lunch, we headed east along the Mesa Peak Fire Road toward (but not to) Mesa Peak. This section of the hike provided excellent views of the mountains and valleys to the north. About seven miles into the hike we turned north and began a three-mile descent through an oak woodland into Malibu Canyon where we had left our shuttle vehicles, thus completing a 10.3-mile one-way hike with about 1,500' of elevation gain and a little over 3,000' of elevation loss. We retrieved the vehicles we had left along Malibu Canyon Road as well as the shuttle vehicles at the Latigo Canyon trailhead and headed home, looking forward to hiking the remaining three sections of the Backbone Trail.

## March 25th – Backbone Trail Part 6: Stunt Road Trailhead

Eighteen hikers met on another pleasant spring morning to tackle the sixth section of the Santa Monica Mountains Backbone Trail. After dropping off several shuttle vehicles along Saddle Peak Road (at the Stunt Road intersection) we carpoled to Malibu Canyon in search of parking near the Pioma Road trailhead.



After a couple of futile attempts, we finally parked in Tapia Park and hiked 0.5 mile to the signed trailhead along Pioma Road. As we began our hike, we crossed a creek where the destructive effects of the winter's rain was quite evident. However, we immediately entered a dense oak woodland (ferns were abundant and a variety of wildflowers were blooming) as the trail rose steadily upward for about 2.5 miles to a road crossing. After crossing Pioma Road the trail climbed noticeably more steeply through continuing shade (mostly provided by ceanothus) until we crossed a flowing stream and soon emerged into an open section of trail

bordered with thousands of blue dick wildflowers as well as smatterings of other wildflowers; also we had excellent views of the surrounding area. Eventually we stopped for lunch at a point where there was shade but also



a great distant view to the northwest. We continued our hike up the mountain to Saddle Peak where the view toward the ocean was blocked by the incoming fog. We climbed up on some beautiful rock formations near the peak and enjoyed spectacular inland views. We then descended past a large water tank to Stunt Road and our shuttle vehicles, thus completing an 8.0-mile one-way hike with about 2,700' of elevation gain and 900' of elevation loss.



# RSTB Calendar MAY



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Terry Simon	3	4 Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	5  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Hannah Kuhn Robert D. Lisenby	6 Horn Canyon to Pines Trail Camp <b>8AM</b>  See Schedule
7 Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b>  See Schedule	8	9 Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	10  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Jim Vandenberg	11 Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	12	13 Oak Flat Trail to Whitaker Peak <b>8AM</b>  See Schedule
14 Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b>  <i>Happy Mother's Day</i> See Schedule	15	16 Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	17 Club Meeting <b>5:30PM</b> <i>Everyone Welcome to attend!</i>  See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Alan Mann	18 Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	19          <i>Happy Birthday</i> Clifford Cameron	20 Work Party – Big Sky Ranch <b>8AM</b>  See Schedule
21 Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b>  See Schedule	22	23 Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	24	25 Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Jonathan Silva	26	27 Wildwood Park Loop <b>7AM</b>  See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Alan Cueba
28 Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b>  See Schedule	29 	30 Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Bonnie Bouley	31			

**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](http://www.fire.ca.gov/communications/communications_firesafety_redflagwarning.php) (Scroll down to map)

# 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@rsrpd.us
Work Parties Chair:	<b>VOLUNTEER NEEDED</b>		<b>Contact Mike Kuhn at: 805-583-2345</b>
Hiking Chair:	Mark Gilmore	HM (805) 990-1460	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:	<b>VOLUNTEER NEEDED</b>		<b>Contact Mike Kuhn at: 805-583-2345</b>
Newsletter Editor:	Linda Mann	Cell: 805-501-5229	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 1231, Simi Valley, CA 93062



U.S. Postage

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

## HAS THE MOUNTAIN LION POPULATION INCREASED IN CALIFORNIA?

Between 1907 and 1963 in California, mountain lions were a "bounty species" - that is a reward was paid to anyone who could prove that they had killed a mountain lion. During that period, between 200 and 450 mountain lions were killed each year in this state. During that 57-year period, bounty records indicate that 12,461 mountain lions were taken. It is reasonable to conclude that this predation had a negative impact on the lion population in most areas of the state.

The bounty program ended in 1963, however, mountain lions remained unprotected in any way until 1969, when they were classified as "game animals." Between 1969 and 1972 at least 118 cats were taken. In 1972 a legislative moratorium on the hunting of mountain lions was passed. Then in 1990 a state-wide initiative was passed which prohibited the killing of mountain lions except under a predation permit (a permit issued because of a cat killing livestock, pets, etc.) or immediate threat to personal safety. Between 1972 and 1999 inclusively, 1,401 mountain lions were killed under depredation permits, with 1994 and 1995 representing the peak years (121 and 117 respectively). During 1999 114 cats were killed under permit.

The end of bounty and sports hunting seems to have resulted in a rather sizable increase in the mountain lion population state wide. With this increase in population, mountain lions have pushed into areas not previously populated and into areas formerly populated. However, data suggest that the lion population increased in California until 1995, then declined slightly after that. Currently, it is estimated that between 4,000 and 6,000 of the big cats reside in California. It may simply be that a natural balance with habitat/food supplies has been reached following the end of their status as bounty/game animals.

Sightings of mountain lions have increased over the years. This seems to have occurred because there are more people in the state, outdoor activities such as camping, hiking and mountain biking, as well as the ever increasing ownership and use of four wheel drive vehicles, and urban development is pushing further and further into big cat habitat. Also, public recreation trails have proliferated throughout the state.

Fortunately for us, mountain lions don't seem to look on man as a prey animal.

[Source of data: *Outdoor California* (May/June 2000)]

Mike Kuhn  
11-17-04 (revised 12-15-07)

## ROCKY POINTE

As you go south on Kuehner Drive, past Katherine Road, there is a large prominent rock on the right hand side. Many times in the past I have noticed a series of well cut, deeply weathered, footholds going up the northern face of the rock at an angle. I had wondered who put them there and when. (The reason "why" is obvious - to get to the top!)

The answer came in a 1974 interview, conducted by Jan Hinkston, of Joseph W. Bannon in a nursing home in Jamestown, California. Joe Bannon's parents ran the sandstone quarry in what is now the Santa Susana (Knolls) Park for the Southern Pacific Railroad and had a 10-year lease on the Dillon Quarry, which was located east of Kuehner Drive and north of the railroad.

Joe relates that a family that lived on Smith Road, the Welches had a son named Lloyd, who used to run around with Joe's older brother, Larry. (Pat Havens, the City Historian, has indicated that a family, named "Whelchel," lived on Smith Road and "Whelchel" probably was the name of the family of Joe Bannon's memory.) They used to get into mischief. Indeed, they were good at it. One day, sometime after 1910, the boys decided that they wanted to get to the top of that large rock. So Larry got a hammer and a rock chisel from the quarry and proceeded to cut footholds as far up the rock as was necessary to gain access to the top. The lower portion of the north face of the rock is an overhang, so the footholds start where there is no overhang and proceed diagonally up the rock over the overhang.

Getting up proved to be easy, but getting down was another matter entirely. When trying to back down the rock, you can't see the footholds. Since they angled up the rock face, they are difficult to locate and you can't lean back enough to see where the next foothold is. They hollered for several hours. (Few people lived in that part of the valley in those days, and they were just too far from the quarry for anyone to hear them.) Eventually, they saw Larry's elder brother, Jim, and hollered their hearts out. Jim went back to the quarry and got a rope, a hammer and a star drill. He climbed up, drilled a hole in

the top of the rock, left the drill in place, tied the rope to the drill and everyone made it down safely. As the eldest brother, Jim whaled the daylights out of Larry - standard fare for the day. Both Lloyd and Larry, according to Joe, cut their names on top of the rock while they were up there.

On April 3, 1999, I visited the rock in order to photograph the footholds. While there, a young man of about 19 and his two younger sisters started up the north face of the rock. The young man scrambled to the top, while his youngest sister only made it up about 10 feet before backing down (platform shoes). The older sister got stuck about 20 feet up the rock and wouldn't go further and couldn't back down. The brother rushed down to help his sister, suddenly sliding down the steep rock face out of control for about three feet before arresting his slide. For a moment I thought that disaster would prevail, and he would be seriously injured. Fortunately, he caught a handhold and then found a foothold - but then, he too was stuck. Both had precarious positions and their legs were shaking - in no condition to wait around for a fire department rescue. It is now hard to comprehend that in 1999 most people, including myself, did not have cell phones. So summoning help would have required returning to my vehicle and driving to the Knolls fire station on Katherine Road - thus abandoning the victims for what would have seemed an eternity.

So, I talked both the older sister and the young man down the rock face, one at a time, by directing them where to put their foot to find the next footholds. They couldn't find the footholds on their own. The way down is problematic because in order to find the next foothold you must somehow cross your right leg over the back of your left leg extending far to the left, and reach down a foot or more. This maneuver requires you to lower your body beyond the point where you think you can recover if you don't feel your way to a good foothold. I had to direct them to the next foothold and assure them that it was there and that they had to trust me. To their credit, they complied and, much to my relief, neither sibling fell. Crisis management took at least 30 minutes.

Mike Kuhn  
3-16-06 (revised 11-1-12)

(Continued in June)



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



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

### Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak Fire Road

Meet at **5PM** 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 5PM during daylight saving 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.)

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## MAY HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

### May 6th Horn Canyon to Pines Trail Camp

Meet at **8AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water, lunch and sunscreen. Wear hiking boots. Watch Hiking: [Horn Canyon to 'the pines'](#) video of the hike.

**Option 1:** 5.2 MRT – Moderate to Strenuous (1,800' of elevation gain/loss)

**Option 2:** 8.2 MRT – Strenuous (3,200' of elevation gain/loss )

**Option 3:** 9.8 MRT – Strenuous (3,800' of elevation gain/loss)

**NOTE:** Both options 2 and 3 will reach Sisar Canyon Road.

**Option 3** – We'll continue hiking up the mountain via the Horn Canyon Trail to its intersection with Sisar Canyon Road (4,673'); then we'll cross the road and follow "a much less steep section of switchbacks" to its northern/upper end (5,269') where it meets the Nordhoff Ridge Road (5N08) [5,269']. We'll return to the parking area the way we came.

### May 13th Oak Flat Trail to Whitaker Peak

10 MRT – Moderate to Strenuous (2,200' elevation gain) Meet at **8AM** at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride. Bring your camera, water and lunch. Wear boots. After driving to the parking area (2,831') just outside the Verdugo Oaks boy-scout camp (adjacent to the Oak Flat Fire Station), we'll head up the well-maintained Oak Flat trail as it rises 1.5 miles through an oak woodland and then chaparral to the Whitaker Ridge dirt road (3,820'). There will be views of Pyramid Lake and Lake Piru during the hike. We'll return the way we came.

### May 17th Club Meeting *Everyone Welcome to attend!*

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

### May 20th Work Party – Big Sky Ranch

Meet 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. Bring your own water, snacks, gloves, hat, and wear sunscreen.


**DIRECTIONS TO THE TRAILHEAD:** Take Hwy 118 to the Erringer Road exit. Head north 0.2 mile on Erringer Road (passing Alamo Street) to Big Sky Place (just before the entrance to the Big Sky housing development). Turn right on Big Sky Place, park on the left (west) side of the street close to its junction on Erringer Road.

### May 27th Wildwood Park Loop

7 Mile loop – Moderate (~1,000' elevation gain)

Meet at **7AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots. We'll climb up to Mountclef Ridge via the Santa Rosa trail, then descend to the paved road, following the Box Canyon trail up to Lizard Rock. If it is cool enough, we'll go to Paradise Falls, then follow the stream back to the parking area.

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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/>**