August 2007 Volume 13 Issue 8

Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

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.

CAROL LOESSIN-MAGGART

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
August 15, 2007

UPCOMING EVENTS

AUGUST 8th, 7pm
Dinkey Lakes Pre-Trip Meeting
Please see our web site for more information.

AUGUST 16th – 19th
Dinkey Lakes Backpack Trip
6 MRT - Moderate (924' elevation gain). The trailhead is at 8,590'. Our base camp will be at First Dinkey Lake (9,514'). ***Trailblazer members only.*** Space is limited. To reserve your place, send email to Mark Gilmore.

SEPTEMBER 8th
Sycamore Canyon Shuttle
Send email to Mark Gilmore no later than Sept. 5th.

SEPTEMBER 15th, 9am – Noon
2007 Coastal Cleanup – Arroyo Simi
Please see our web site for more information.

OCTOBER 27th
Mt. San Antonio Ski Hut
Space is limited. The cost is $10 if you are a Sierra Club Member, and $15 for non-members. To reserve your place, send email to Mark Gilmore.

More information on these events can be found at
http://simitrailblazers.com

To make reservations, please email Mark Gilmore at
markinthepark@sbcglobal.net

AUTO BURGLARY WARNING

On one of our Sunday evening Trail Blazer hikes last month, two autos were broken into in the parking area on Santa Susanna Pass Road at the south end of the Rocky Peak overpass.

One car with a female driver unknown to us had her passenger side window smashed and a cell phone taken.

The second car belonged to an individual in our hiking party. While our group was on the hike, a large piece of asphalt was thrown through her auto's side window, smashing the window and heavily damaging the interior of the driver's side door. Her wallet, with driver's license, credit cards and bankcards was taken from the car. Shortly before discovering the break in, she received a cell phone call asking if she had authorized a charge of $900 on her credit card at K-Mart.

The Simi Valley Police were called and a police report was made. In talking to the police, it was learned that these "smash and grab" incidents are a weekly occurrence in areas of light traffic. Some of our regular hiking parking areas are in these types of locations. The Rocky Peak and Hummingbird trailheads are especially vulnerable due to their proximity to the 118 Freeway, which affords thieves a quick getaway.

Keep your auto's windows rolled up and lock the car. Never leave valuables in your car, especially not wallets, purses, cell phones, jewelry, etc. Your best defense is to have absolutely no items visible in the interior of your auto. Covering up items with a blanket or jacket doesn't work as thieves realize these coverings are frequently used to conceal valuables. In the past at Rocky Peak we've seen a $200 pickup truck window broken for a small handful of pocket change that was in a visible change tray. Keep all items in the trunk or if your auto doesn't have a trunk, leave them at home.

John Sabol

COLD DRINKS IN EARLY CALIFORNIA

[Some of the information contained in this piece is drawn from "The Ice Harvest," in Alton Pryor, *Little Known Tales in California History* (1997), pp. 161-165.]

The sleepy town of San Francisco quickly emptied in 1849 with the onset of the California gold rush. Gold was there for the picking. There were alluvium-choked streams. All one had to do was find alluvial deposits with gold and then use the water to separate the gold from the sand and gravel. Some of the gold miners got rich, and many merchants got rich too. Before long, San Francisco became a boom-town and a major port. Incoming miners from the east coast, Californios, Mexicans, Chileans, Australians and even Chinese nationals flooded in. Miners from the gold fields, flush with new wealth, also flooded to what quickly became the premier city on the west coast. Demand for many products and services outstripped supply.

Eggs of the Common Murre were harvested from the Farallon Islands, which lay off the coast of San Francisco. To get them, one or more harvesters would be put ashore on the rock coast. Their first act would be to crush all of the Murre eggs they could find. From that point on any egg that they found would be considered "fresh" and would be collected. About a week later their harvest would be picked up and they would be re-supplied. The chicken eventually saved the Murre from extinction.

Yankees demanded ice for their drinks (by and large other nationalities were not so particular) in both San Francisco and Sacramento. The first ice came in by ship from Portland, Maine, via the Cape Horn route by sailing ships, with Boston-based carriers. The ice was harvested in Maine rivers during the winter and stored in below-ground ice houses. The ice was expensive – stored without refrigeration, the long journey and double crossing of the Equator took its toll in reduced volume. As much as 60 percent of the load was lost during shipment. By 1853 the American-Russian Commercial Company, whose ice source was Sitka and Kodiak, Alaska, had forced the Bostonian merchants out of the California market. Ice became a competitive commodity. Ice was harvested at Lake Angela on Donner Summit. Then warehouses and ice ponds were established at Serene Lake. Eventually all ice suppliers operated ponds in the Truckee River Basin. Some ice companies used their ponds for lumber production during the summer and for ice during the winter. In 1875 the Boca Brewing Company got into the very competitive ice market. By the late-1890s it became clear that ice could be used to ship fruit from California to eastern markets via iced railroad cars.

Horses were used to scrape the snow off of the ice to expose clear ice. Blocks of 22 inches square and 22x32 inches were standard. Once the surface was cleared, the ice was scored into a checkerboard pattern. The ice was harvested to a depth of two thirds of the thickness of the ice. The ice was floated in long open channels through the ice to elevator conveyor systems to lift the ice into warehouses. In some years the Truckee ice harvests stored 300,000 tons of ice. Bad weather was the detriment to the ice harvest, and rainfall sometimes softened the ice and ruined the harvest. Snow was also bad. The weight of the snow could submerge the ice and allow the pond water to flood on top of the ice.

In 1882 the Union Ice Company was formed out of six companies – five of which were located in the Truckee area. "The Union" was essentially a marketing firm, but soon acquired its own production facilities. Eventually only the National Ice and the Union Ice companies remained. The Truckee Basin dominated ice production in the west between 1868 and 1927. It was the ready supply of ice, harvested from winter ponds that made the Pacific Fruit Express possible and permitted the mass plantings of fruit trees, including citrus.

While refrigeration killed the Truckee Basin ice pond production, at least Union Ice is still in business. Block ice continued to preserve a market for home delivery to "ice boxes" until well after the end of World War II. I can still remember the iceman delivering block ice to my grandmother's home in Spokane, Washington during the war. When my family moved to the Santa Clara Valley in 1943, we spent the first week in a motel with an ice box. I can remember the early morning deliveries, with the iceman having to step over me and my sister while we tried to sleep on the floor of the motel room. Even the first refrigerators included tiny freezers to make cube ice. Now ice simply drops into your glass from the front of some refrigerators. Block ice and bags of ice cubes are still big commodities sold at the supermarket, the mini-market and at gas stations. Those of us who car camp or picnic know this well.

Ice from rivers and ponds was loaded with bacteria. It doesn't take much to imagine what those horses and workers were doing out on the ice while it was being harvested. However, the fact of the matter is that most water supplies throughout the United States were also loaded with bacteria until the late-1950s and early 1960s. A major health problem emerged in this country when baby formula was introduced in a big way during World War II, when many mothers went to work in factories. The practice of mixing tap water with baby formula resulted in a dramatic increase in the infant death rate. The problem was solved when it became standard practice to put the formula in bottles into boiling water for a while before giving it to babies. Having grown up in that period, in later years I was alarmed to see that new mothers from the late-1960s on were not heating the baby formula but mixing it with water straight from the tap. I had not realized that our nation had made a major advance in public health during the late-1950s through the 1960s by cleaning up our public water supplies. This is not the case in many parts of the world today, where it is unwise to consume ice in non-alcoholic drinks.

Mike Kuhn

PROBABLE IMPACT OF GLOBAL WARMING ON CHAPARRAL

(taken from Ronald D. Quinn and Sterling C. Keely, Introduction to California Chaparral, U. C. Press (2006), pp. 278-279)

The following excerpt from the above source is what noted experts on chaparral vegetation think will happen as a result of global warming to chaparral plant communities throughout the state. In their own words:

"The changes in global climate predicted by the overwhelming majority of scientists will surely alter the distribution and condition of chaparral, other ecosystems in California, and the economy and life of people everywhere. It is difficult to predict with accuracy the exact nature and magnitude of these changes, but a number of general trends seems clear. During this century California is expected to become somewhat drier, much hotter in summer, and warmer in winter. A greater fraction of precipitation will probably be delivered by intense winter storms. Extreme summer heat and aridity could foster more frequent large and destructive chaparral wildfires. These fires could be followed by serious flooding if winter storms do indeed become more severe.

The combination of less precipitation and higher temperatures would favor the spread of drought-tolerant grasses, especially invasive alien species that carry frequent fires …Under this scenario a large fraction of chaparral and other shrub lands across the state would be converted to grass. There could be a general shift in the range of remaining chaparral to higher elevations, moving into mountainous areas now occupied by forests and woodlands. The assemblage of populations of plants and animals in chaparral and many other ecosystems would be disrupted and rearranged, because different species would have varying abilities and opportunities to migrate to new areas quickly. The complex mosaic of vegetation types that has remained relatively stable in California for thousands of years would be disrupted. Isolated patches of chaparral now containing narrow endemic species, such as maritime chaparral in the south and serpentine chaparral in central and northern California, could easily vanish because of the lack of a nearby suitable habitat. In general a minority of species of chaparral plants and animals that are most adaptable and mobile would be expected to become more numerous and widespread, while the majority of species less able to respond to rapid change could become less common or extinct."

The affect of more frequent fires on crown-sprouting chaparral species will be their being eliminated from the local chaparral. This effect, it seems to me, can already be observed on the northern side of the valley where the chaparral, especially where it interfaces with coastal sage scrub, has become thinner over the last several decades of brushfires reoccurring more frequently than every 20 years. One might have predicted that the lower edges of chaparral would be converted to coastal sage scrub; however, the coastal sage scrub also has been affected by more frequent fires. It seems that we have been too successful as a species.

Mike Kuhn

POLE SOUP

Many years ago, before the Sycamore Canyon Regional Stormwater Detention Dam was constructed across the confluence of Oak Canyon Creek and Sycamore Canyon Creek upstream from the Sinaloa Golf Course, the Madera Road corridor to the north would flood every few years. I can remember one time, during the early 1980s I think, when water borne-debris was caught up on street signs as much as five feet above the curb. Yes, there was a flood hazard problem. The flood control channel simple was inadequate to handle even small floods. At the same time, the whole western third of Simi Valley had, and still has, a high water table problem. The land north of the golf course on the eastern side of Madera Road as far north as Los Angeles Avenue remained largely undeveloped. The groundwater level often was at the bottom of the shallow drainage ditches in the area.

One day a utility supervisor for either Pacific Bell or Southern California Edison appeared at the City's Department of Environmental Services counter in the Development Services Building, west of City Hall. He commented that his crew had planned to erect a new utility pole near the southeastern corner of Royal Avenue and Madera Road. They had bored a five-foot deep hole, placed the pole upright in the hole, and then let it go. He said that the pole sunk an additional five or six feet into the ground with a gurgling sound. They had to go back and get a longer pole. Some people find out about the high ground water the hard way.

Since that time, the Sycamore Canyon Detention Basin has been constructed and the outfall from the permanent open outlet during the 100-year flood has been reduced to approximately 500 cubic-feet per second. Nearly all of the flow down the corridor has been placed in a covered box culvert under the eastern half of Madera Road. When that channel was constructed, a perforated subdrain was installed along the bottom of the outside wall of the eastern side of the channel. The pipe was packed in gravel and it outlets into the flood control channel. This arrangement helps maintain the water table near the flood control channel and Madera Road at a much lower lever. So, the flood hazard is greatly reduced in the area and the water table has been lowered a modest amount. All of this has rendered feasible the development of the abutting vacant parcels, including where Donut Delite, a meeting place for Saturday Trail Blazer hikes, is located.

If my memory is correct, when the channel work was going on, a metal-banded redwood pipe was discovered. It seems that even the farmer had trouble with the high water table.

Mike Kuhn

CALIFORNIA BUCKWHEAT

California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) is one the most common plants of the Venturan coastal sage scrub vegetation association. It has "fascicled" (bunched together) gray-green leaves. Flowers are small and lack petals, but there are six showy sepals. Color of the flowers varies from white to pinkish.

RSTB Calendar
August 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	**2** **Chumash Trail** **6pm hike** **See Schedule** *Happy Birthday* *Elfriede Cespedes*	**3** *Happy Birthday* *Linda Barry*	**4** **Mt. Islip** **See Schedule** *Happy Birthday* *Betty Cameron*
5 **Rocky Peak** **5pm hike** **See Schedule**	**6**	**7** **Long Canyon** **6:30pm hike** **See Schedule**	**8** **Dinkey Lakes** **Pre-Trip Meeting** **7pm** **See Schedule**	**9** **Chumash Trail** **6pm hike** **See Schedule**	**10** *Happy Birthday* *Bob Altieri*	**11** **Mt. Baden-Powell** **See Schedule**
12 **Rocky Peak** **5pm hike** **See Schedule** *Happy Birthday* *Kevin Gallagher*	**13**	**14** **Long Canyon** **6:30pm hike** **See Schedule**	**15** **RSTB Meeting** **See Page 1** *Happy Birthday* *Steve Geldman*	**16** **Dinkey Lakes** **Backpack Trip** **See Schedule**	**17** **Dinkey Lakes** **Backpack Trip** **See Schedule** *Happy Birthday* *Kendall Winfield* *Halle Michaelson*	**18** **Dinkey Lakes** **Backpack Trip** **See Schedule**
19 **Dinkey Lakes** **Backpack Trip** **See Schedule**	**20** *Happy Birthday* *Mark Scheele*	**21** **Long Canyon** **6:30pm hike** **See Schedule** *Happy Birthday* *Al Richards*	**22**	**23** **Chumash Trail** **6pm hike** **See Schedule**	**24**	**25** **Jalama Beach** **See Schedule**
26 **Rocky Peak** **5pm hike** **See Schedule** *Happy Birthday* *Laura Altieri*	**27**	**28** **Long Canyon** **6:30pm hike** **See Schedule** *Happy Birthday* *Jean Whittle*	**29**	**30** **Chumash Trail** **6pm hike** **See Schedule**	**31**	

Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

Hiking Schedule

REGULARLY SCHEDULED HIKES

(Rain cancels – No hikes on holidays)

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)

AUGUST HIKES

August 4th - ***Mt. Islip*****
5 MRT - Moderate (1100' elevation gain)
Hike through pine and fir forests with panoramic views of the Mojave Desert and the LA metropolis. An **Adventure Pass** is required at the trailhead parking lot. Meet at 8 AM near Donut Delight at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 - 4 quarts of water and lunch. Wear boots.

August 11th - ***Mt. Baden-Powell*****
8 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (2800' elevation gain)
This is the second highest point in the San Gabriel Mountains and named in honor of Lord Baden-Powell, the British Army officer who started the Boy Scout movement in 1907. The trailhead is located at Vincent Gap on the Angeles Crest Highway. An **Adventure Pass** is required at the trailhead parking lot. The drive is 1 1/2 hours each way. Meet at 8 AM near Donut Delight at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 - 4 quarts of water and lunch. Wear boots.

August 8th - ***Dinkey Lakes Backpack Pre-Trip Meeting***
7 PM - Varsity Park Villas Clubhouse #1 in Moorpark. Contact Mark Gilmore for directions.

August 15th - ***Club Meeting***
7 PM - The Community Center - 1692 Sycamore Drive - Room B-1

August 16th - 19th - ***Dinkey Lakes Backpack Trip*****
6 MRT - Moderate (924' elevation gain)
Space is limited, so make your reservation early. This very special event is limited to Trailblazer members only. The Dinkey Lakes area has some of the most beautiful lakes and meadows in the whole Southwestern Sierra. The trailhead is at 8,590'. The cost is $5 per person.

August 25th - ***Jalama Beach to Point Conception*****
10 MRT (easy to moderate - 100' elevation gain)
Possibly the best beach hike on one of the longest, most natural beaches in California. On most days, after the first mile or two, don't expect to see another human. Meet at 7 AM, near Donut Delite on the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 -3 quarts of water and good beach shoes. **This is an ALL DAY event.**

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

No dogs allowed on trail(s).

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.

http://www.simitrailblazers.com

RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

Executive Chair:	Mike Kuhn	HM (805) 583-2345	hannahmike@roadrunner.com
Treasurer:	Peter Ely		
Park District Liaison:	Colleen Janssen	WK (805) 584-4453	volunteers@rsrpd.us
Work Parties Chair:		*** OPEN ***	
Hiking Chair:	Mark Gilmore	HM (805) 529-5581	markinthepark@sbcglobal.net
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————————————————————-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)_____Birth Mo._____Day_____

Address _____

Email Address_____Phone wk/hm_____

How did you find out about the RSTB_____

Please make out tax deductible member dues check for the year to:
"Rancho Simi Foundation" mail it to "RSTB, P.O. Box 630445, Simi Valley,Ca 93063-0399
Please list any extra names and birthdays of more than one member (Month & Day Only)

U.S. Postage

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