



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



HIKING TIDBITS

Starting in September, Saturday morning hikes will start at **8am**.

No work party has been scheduled for September.

THE PORTOLA EXPEDITION OF 1769

The Spanish expedition of 1769, led by Captain Gaspar de Portola, may have been the first subjects of Spain to have contact with the Simi Valley area. The expedition spent several days in camp near the present day Camulos on the right bank of the Santa Clara River approximately two miles east of Piru. Portola's men explored the Santa Susana Mountains and may have stayed one night near the village of *Ta'apu*, near the present day Tapo Canyon Regional Park.

According to Patricia Havens, the City Historian, the legend about the visit of members of the Portola Expedition was told to the Gillibrands by the cowboys whom they employed. (This story indicates that those cowboys were Chumash Indians. This is not surprising, since Chumash Indians were the vaqueros that serviced the ranchos.) The legend is that the Chumash told the later settlers that the expedition had overnighted near the village under a specific grove of oak trees. In any case, the trail from Camulos to *Ta'apu* would have been an easily followed route into the Santa Susana Mountains and could have afforded the explorers their first view of Simi Valley.

Whether Portola or his men visited Simi Valley will probably never be known for sure.

MikeKuhn

AUGUST WORK PARTY

For our August 14th work party, we watered the oak trees that were planted earlier this year, and cut and used a herbicide on patches of Arundo grass, Castor Bean plants, and Trees of Heaven. In addition, two Mexican fan palms and an exotic yucca were removed.

All of these plants are non-natives and invasive by nature. They quickly displace native species and do not provide habitat for native animals. In other words, they are pests.

Those who participated in the work party were Louise Pomes, Arlene Altshuler, John Sabol and Mike Kuhn.

BEARS IN THE SANTA SUSANAS

Reports have come to our attention during August, about the tracks of several different bears in Las Lajas Canyon. Las Lajas normally has permanent water, at least at some locations along the creek. So, if there are bears in the Santa Susanas, this is one place where you would expect to find them.

Because of the dry weather and the shortage of forage, we may soon hear that bears are coming into town looking for garbage. Hopefully, this situation will not lead to any unusual bear/people conflicts.

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

Wednesday September 15, 2004



A NEW PUBLIC HIKE TUESDAY EVENINGS

Mark Gilmore is leading a new public hike on the Long Canyon Trail on Tuesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. The hikers should meet at the new parking lot at the southern end of Wood Ranch Parkway and Long Canyon Road. The route is up the Long Canyon Trail, then through open grasslands to the west and returns to the parking lot as a loop route.

This hike is about three miles (about 1 1/2 hours) and is classified as "moderate". Hiking boots are recommended. Also bring water and a flashlight (the end of the hike will be in darkness as we get into the fall and winter seasons).



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.

TRIPPING

On June 23 my wife and I returned from a two-week trip to Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Ontario and New York. I herein offer a few observations about the late spring of that world – offered by a long-term southern California resident.

Our 15-day trip began with a flight into Pittsburgh. As soon as we arrived, a particularly severe thunder and lightning storm developed. So, for the safety of the airline workers the rest of the luggage could not be off-loaded. I would guess that this rarely happens in California but is fairly common there. We picked up our luggage the next morning, along with a rental car.

What we encountered throughout much of the rest of the trip was mild, but humid, weather. It rained on part of all but the last day and was overcast much of the time. However, most days included some sunshine. Except where land had been cleared for crops or urban development, the land was densely forested – a dark, nearly impenetrable mixture of broadleaf and needle-leaf trees. Other than interstate highways and turnpikes, the roads do not have shoulders and few turnouts. (This is significant for anyone wanting to take pictures.) At the edge of the pavement is a rough gravel space of about a foot and then the grass dips sharply into a drainage “V” ditch. A major part of road maintenance is mowing the grass within the rights of way.

The world there is green and wet – at least when I was there. The lawns are expansive with no signs of sprinkler systems. The residents say they have just come off of a multi-year drought, but this winter and spring have been wet. I suspect that their concept of a drought isn’t anything that we in California would recognize. Some friends that we visited in central Michigan noted that water levels had been down at least a foot until this winter. There are streams and rivers everywhere. Rivers that we have never heard of would be considered major water resources in California. I’m sure that many cities have water supply problems at times, however, those problems are the type that can simply be resolved with money and technology. There is no water shortage. Water conservation is not part of their psyches’.

Some areas seem to have public trails, but most rural areas do not. Where they do occur, bridges over streams are necessary – otherwise you cannot get from one side to the other. Some trails stick to one side of a river – still bridges are needed in order to cross the creeks. One area around Ohio Pyle in western Pennsylvania contains a well-developed trail system, including bicycle trails. The same area is heavily used for whitewater rafting, canoeing and kayaking. An old railroad right-of-way, including the bridges, has been converted to a trail system. However, due to the weather, the trails include long, trail-wide puddles, which present challenges to hikers.

The main purpose for our trip was to re-photograph Frank Lloyd Wright’s “Fallingwater” for the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. (Fallingwater is generally recognized as the

most influential residential architecture in America). The Conservancy provided us with an 1859 two-storied log cabin to stay in. Located about 175 yards from the road at the top of a meadow in an otherwise densely forested part of the Allegheny Mountains, the site is peaceful with only the sounds of the forest. The cabin was completely rebuilt on the site, has plumbing, electricity, a telephone and beautiful hardwood floors.



The north side of the cabin does not have any windows, so when I stepped out on the porch after dark for the first time, I was overwhelmed by the light from thousands of fireflies. My first impression was that it was rather like a Fourth of July show, with white lights going off everywhere. Some emissions were intense impulses, while others were less so, but lasted for one to two seconds – leaving an apparent trail in my mind’s-eye.

My reaction was the pure delight of a small child. That night and the next, I spent a great deal of time returning to that porch. As the daylight dims in the evening, I could see only the fireflies close to the cabin. As the darkness grew, the flies could be seen further and further away and higher off the ground – often 50 to 75 feet above ground. Eventually, when fully dark, the bursts of light 450-500 feet away at the bottom of the meadow and well back into and up into the forest canopy seemed to have the same intensity as those quite near. During the days I enjoyed sitting on the porch and watching the birds and other critters of the forest and meadow, but at night it became a fairy landscape.

On this trip my wife and I visited Niagara Falls, two Frank Lloyd Wright complexes, the downtowns of Toronto and Pittsburgh with their marvelous high-rise buildings, the wine country of the Finger Lakes of New York and the wonderland landscapes throughout the whole trip, but it was the fireflies that I will most remember.

Mike Kuhn

THE SHOSHONEAN INVASION

It is clear from the archaeological record that the people we refer to as the Chumash have lived in this area for many thousands of years. The Indian occupation of the area began at least 11,000 years ago along the coast and possibly much earlier. By 7,000 years ago a specific unique tool kit had emerged. From that time on, the same tool kit was in use with a gradual addition of other tools and an elaboration of some of the tools. These characteristics suggest a continuous occupation by one people rather than sequential waves of different peoples. This stability, combined with a diverse environment, permitted the evolution of a complex social structure, and material goods and long distant trade. The Chumash were concerned with manufacturing, a monetized system of trade based on shell beads, and a complex class system with a pan-village social order. There were specialized craftsmen and traders with a strong work ethic, and a deep sea fishery along the coast. These people were the first trail blazers.

Coastal villages seemed to have been occupied year round, while interior areas were visited seasonally – at least up until about 1,000 years ago. Individual families had the rights to exploit resources in discrete areas. In a sense, they owned those resources.

All this began to change starting about 1,200 years ago, when the American southwest began to experience increased aridity. Reoccurring drought seems to have affected the desert areas most acutely. As a result, Numic speaking peoples (Shoshonean) began to make periodic incursions into Chumash territory – in some cases all the way to the coast. By 1,000 years ago, these semi-nomadic hunters and gatherers had pushed across the San Gabriel and San Fernando valleys into the Malibu area and along the coast southward. In the process, they displaced long term residents, including the Chumash. The success of the Numic speaking people was not based upon numerical superiority, but rather on the possession of a powerful new technology.

The Chumash were still using the spear thrower, i.e., the atlatl, for both hunting and as an offensive/defensive weapon. The Numic-speaking invaders possessed the bow and arrow. Arrows could be fired accurately over greater distances and with much greater rapidity than atlatl darts. And one person could carry much more ammunition in the form of arrows than could the atlatl user. For the Chumash, this must have been a period of extreme drama and crisis. Graves in great number have been excavated in the Malibu area where nearly every person seems to have died about 1,000 years ago with one or more arrowheads in their bodies or have experienced a bone crushing blow to the left front of their skulls – indicating a frontal attack by a right-handed person.

Chumash settlement in Simi Valley seems to have been seasonal at that time, with families making forays into Simi Valley in order to exploit specific resources, such as grass and sage seed and acorns. What must have been apparent to the

Chumash was that they either must occupy Simi Valley year round or lose it. After the initial shock, the Chumash established three permanent villages in the Simi and adapted the bow and arrow - thereby catching up in the arms race. Eventually, the Ferandenos (Numic speakers), as they were called by the Spanish, and the Chumash learned to live in relative peace. The village of Encino and the village at Stony Point had both Chumash and Ferandeno residents during the first decade after the establishment of the San Fernando Mission.

Mike Kuhn

CAMULOS

Camulos is a place on State Route 126 east of Piru. The name *camulo* is Ventureno Chumash and is translated into Spanish as "the place of the *guata*". Just what this meant is not clear. The English translation of *guata* is belly, paunch, warping or bulging.

Spanish Californians called it *camulo*, but the Chumash said *kamulus*. Historically, it was a Tataviam (Alliklik) (a tribe of Shoshonian stock) village. There must have been many Chumash living there, because the name is Chumash. *Piru* was also Tataviam, while *Ta'apu* to the south was Chumash.

Mike Kuhn



Mugu Peak Hike, Left to Right: Alan Cueba, Margarita Marsh, Chuck Portoghesi, Mark Scheele, and Gary Cremeans. Photo by John Sabol.



RSTB Calendar September 2004



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Doug Temple</i>	3	4 Marr Ranch 8am hike See Schedule
5 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule	6	7 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Sandra Fernandez- Achenbach</i>	8	9 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	10	11 Ray Miller / La Jolla Valley Loop 8am hike See Schedule
12 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Debbie DeGoey</i>	13	14 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	15 RSTB Meeting See Page 1	16 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Sandra Duarte</i>	17 Cottonwood Lakes Backpack	18 Cottonwood Lakes Backpack
19 Cottonwood Lakes Backpack	20 Cottonwood Lakes Backpack	21 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	22 <i>Happy Birthday Ray Johnson</i>	23 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	24	25 Serrano Valley 8am hike See Schedule
26 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Bruce Adams</i>	27 <i>Happy Birthday Cesar Fabros</i>	28 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	29	30 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule		



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Hiking Schedule



- September 2 **Thursday Evening Hike**
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 MRT)**
- September 4 **Marr Ranch Hike**
Easy 5 MRT hike through a beautiful canyon (in spite of last year's fire). Directions – take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right at Evening Sky Drive. Park on the street near the trailhead, shortly after Rising Star Avenue. We'll meet at the trailhead at 8am, on the north side of Evening Sky Drive. Bring a quart of water and snack, bug juice. Wear sturdy shoes.
- September 5 **Sunday Evening Hike**
Meet 5pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. **(Strenuous, 5 MRT)**
- September 7 **Tuesday Evening Hike**
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 MRT)**
- September 9 **Thursday Evening Hike**
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 MRT)**
- September 11 **Ray Miller / La Jolla Valley Loop**
Moderate 6 1/2 MRT hike with 1000' elevation gain/loss. We will start and finish at the Ray Miller Trailhead. This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. Meet 8am near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 - 3 qts. of water and snack, bug juice. Wear boots.
- September 12 **Sunday Evening Hike**
Meet 5pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. **(Strenuous, 5 MRT)**
- September 14 **Tuesday Evening Hike**
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 MRT)**
- September 16 **Thursday Evening Hike**
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 MRT)**
- September 17 – 20 **Cottonwood Lakes Backpack Trip**
- September 21 **Tuesday Evening Hike**
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 MRT)**
- September 23 **Thursday Evening Hike**
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 MRT)**
- September 25 **Serrano Valley Exploratory**
Moderate to strenuous 8 1/2 MRT with 1100' elevation gain and loss. This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park district. Meet 8am near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 - 3 qts. water and snack. Wear boots.
- September 26 **Sunday Evening Hike**
Meet 5pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. **(Strenuous, 5 MRT)**
- September 28 **Tuesday Evening Hike**
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 MRT)**
- September 30 **Thursday Evening Hike**
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 MRT)**

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://rstb.topcities.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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Name(s) _____ Birth Mo. ____ Day ____

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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” mail it to “RSTB, P.O. Box 630445, Simi Valley, Ca 93063

Please list any extra names and birthdays of more than one member (Month & Day Only)



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