



# Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of 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



## 2012 COASTAL CLEAN UP DAY

*Help Clean the Arroyo Simi*

The Trail Blazers will be supporting Inland Waterway Cleanup in conjunction with Coastal Cleanup Day. Join us Saturday, September 15 from 9:00 a.m. to Noon. Come and support Simi Valley's Inland Waterway Cleanup.

**Join the fun and make a difference!** Simi Valley's Inland Waterway Cleanup site is Rancho Simi Community Park at the corner of Royal Avenue and Erringer Road. Meet at the northeast corner of the park near where the Arroyo passes under Erringer Road.

**Directions:** From the 118 Freeway, exit at Erringer Road; go south to just past the arroyo bridge and turn right into the parking lot. If the Erringer lot is full, continue south, turn right on Royal Ave. and turn right into a larger parking lot. Be sure to wear gloves, long pants, old shoes, sunscreen and a hat. For more information call the City of Simi Valley at 583-6462



## Welcome New Members

Ann M. Parquette



## August 18th - Mugu Peak La Jolla Valley Loop


In this latest installment of the new RSTB Network's reality show "Beat the Heat", eleven happy contestants met at the La Jolla Canyon trailhead, in Pt. Mugu State Park. The object of this week's show was to beat the mid-nineties heat in Simi Valley, while hiking the 9.2 mile (1.685' elevation gain) loop. All contestants won the grand prize of 76 degrees when they returned back to the trailhead later that morning. Eight lucky contestants won the bonus round, also completing the trek to the top of Mugu Peak. Stay tuned for next week's "Beat the Heat" show, when more contestants will to complete the Westwood Beach to Paradise Cove out and back.

## RSTB CLUB MEETING

This month's RSTB meeting will be at:  
Sycamore Drive Community Center  
1692 Sycamore Drive – Room B-1  
**September 19, 2012**

## Upcoming Events

**September 1st**  
**Big Sky Trail Loop**  
4.5 miles - Easy to Moderate (850' elevation gain) - Meet at **8AM**

**September 8th**  
**Sycamore Canyon Shuttle\***   
8.6 Miles - Moderate one way (1200' elevation loss) - Meet at **8AM**

**September 15th**  
**Work Party - Coastal Cleanup Day -**  
9 am – noon

**September 19th**  
**Club Meeting - 7PM**

**September 22nd**  
**Bicycle Ride: Ventura to Ojai\***   
Meet at **8AM**

**September 29th**  
**Mt. Pinos to the Lockwood Valley Shuttle – Meet at 7AM**

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.

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

## WILLOWBROOK SITE

Sometime during the late-1970s I had occasion to conduct an archaeological walkover on a ranch on the northern side of Royal Avenue, east of First Street, where Willowbrook Lane is today. The parcel contained a late-19<sup>th</sup> Century farmhouse and outbuildings near Royal Avenue. The remainder of the land, extending north to the Arroyo Simi, was vacant. The "Phase I" archaeological survey was required because an application for residential development had been filed with the city. What I found midway on the long narrow parcel was what appeared to be a very puzzling Native American archaeological site from the historic period. Some traditional debitage from stone working and tools were present along with bits of broken glass, pieces of metal and other cultural debris from the first third of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The site seemed to be contained within the subject property, was roughly circular, and all of the cultural material seemed to have been the product of one type of activity. What did it all mean?

After discovering the site, I was able to talk to the elderly owner of the property who still lived in the farmhouse. I discussed with her what I had found. She indicated that she had memories from the 1920s of her father giving permission to a group of Indians to camp on their property while gathering acorns in the surrounding hills. She said that they camped about half way to the Arroyo Simi from Royal Avenue – "down there somewhere." She thought that they had come about three years in a row.

All of this made a lot of sense. They had found a rancher who was willing to let them stay on his land. Either they were told where to stay on the property, or they set up camp far enough away from the farmhouse to respect the privacy of their host and still be close enough to the well for water. It is also possible that they were

next to a distributary of the arroyo which still had water in it during the fall season – although that seems unlikely. The distributary was there, but the water table would have been significantly drawn down by that time. Interestingly, during the 1920s they were still pursuing the one part of their traditional gathering strategy that was possible and did not conflict with the resource needs of land owners, who had no interest in gathering the acorns on their own property. These Chumash people, at least I assume that they were Chumash, were still employing some stone-tool technologies.

Did any of these Indians, whom she indicated came from Ventura, have roots in Simi Valley? We do know that a band of Chumash lived in a refuge state in the upper reaches of Meier Canyon until 1878, at which time they quit the canyon and moved to Ventura. It is interesting that as late as the 1920s some families from Ventura were still pursuing a part of their traditional subsistence regime with an annual trip to Simi Valley. Is it possible that they were somehow related to the band which left in 1878? It is sad that this was but a shadow of what once had been.

Mike Kuhn  
3-1-06 (revised 7-14-10)

## WATER IN THE WEST

John Steinbeck, in *East of Eden*, writing about the Salinas Valley, wonderfully expressed the whole story of water in the American West. In his word:

I have spoken of the rich years when the rainfall was plentiful. But there were dry years too, and they put a terror on the valley. The water came in a thirty-year cycle. There would be five or six wet and wonderful years when there might be nineteen to twenty-five inches of rain, and the land would shout with grass. Then would come six or seven pretty good years of twelve to sixteen inches of rain. And then the dry

years would come, and sometimes there would be only seven or eight inches of rain. The land dried up and the grass headed out miserably a few inches high and great bare scabby places appeared in the valley. The live oaks got a crusty look and the sagebrush was gray. The land cracked and the springs dried up and the cattle listlessly nibbled dry twigs. Then the farmers and the ranchers would be filled with disgust for the Salinas Valley. The cows would grow thin and sometimes starve to death. People would have to haul water in barrels to their farms just for drinking. Some families would sell out for nearly nothing and move away. And it never failed that during the dry years the people forgot about the rich years, and during wet years they lost all memory of the dry years. It was always that way.

Mike Kuhn  
3-18-03

## WILD CUCUMBER OR MAN-ROOT

Marah macrocarpus

The wild cucumber is a vine that grows within many other plants. It usually grows where it is well shaded. Depending upon its age, the plant has a large woody root that sends up new shoot rapidly during the winter and spring. The flowers are white, with both male and female on the same plant. The seedpods are green with pointed, but somewhat soft spines, which protect the young seeds from being eaten by animals. During the mid to late summer the pods, along with the above ground runners, die and dry up. The pods split open from the lower end and scatters large shiny brown seed. The massive root of the plant may weigh as much as 100 pounds. Where one has eroded out of the ground due to torrential runoff, the root has been known to be mistaken as a desiccated or burned human body – hence the name "man-root."

## July 28th 2012 - The Hummingbird Trail and Rocky Peak



12 hikers met in the dirt parking area (1,120') on the east side of Kuehner Avenue just north of Hwy 118 in Simi Valley to hike to Rocky Peak via the Hummingbird Trail. It was an already warm morning as we began our eastward climb to the Rocky Peak Fire Road. The trail passed through (and on) a variety of imposing rock formations along the way including very large boulders and giant slabs of sandstone rock, many with small "caves." By the time we had reached the fire road (2,100') the day had turned hot. As we followed the road northward along with a variety of bikers, runners, and other hikers, there were sweeping views of eastern Simi Valley, the Santa Susana Mountains, and the Simi Hills (including the Boeing/Rocketdyne facility). After reaching the customary viewpoint near Rocky Peak, we carefully followed a steep narrow trail over to the actual peak (2,715') nearby. After admiring the view, we retraced our route and reached the trailhead having completed an 8.4-mile hike with about 1,750' of elevation gain/loss. NOTE: Several hikers cut their hikes short due to the intense heat.

## August 4th 2012 - Solstice Canyon



13 hikers gathered at the parking lot near the mouth of Solstice Canyon in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area on a fairly cool overcast morning. The out-and-back hike began by

following barely flowing Solstice Creek along the easy well-shaded Solstice Canyon Trail (a dirt road), taking advantage of two short trails paralleling the dirt road along the way, and reaching the Sostomo Trail after about one mile. We

followed the Sostomo Trail as it climbed steadily toward a junction with the Deer Valley Loop Trail. As the trail rose we had good views of Solstice Canyon and the Rising Sun Trail across the canyon. Our shirts were soon soaked due to the high humidity, but the marine layer shielded us from direct sunlight (making the hike more pleasant). The well-maintained trail crossed Solstice Creek twice; both crossing areas were quite lovely and peaceful. After reaching Deer Valley, we followed the loop trail in a clockwise direction as it ascended the mountainside to an overlook of the Pacific Ocean. After enjoying the view, we completed the loop and then returned along the Sostomo Trail to the Solstice Canyon Trail. Turning left we walked a short distance to Tropical Terrace, the ruins of the Roberts house built in the 1950s and destroyed by wildfire in 1982. At one time there were giraffes, camels, buffalo, African deer, and exotic birds in the canyon. We took a break at Tropical Terrace, read the signs describing it, and enjoyed the ambiance of palm trees and waterfalls in the adjacent Solstice Creek. We then returned to the parking lot via the Solstice Canyon Trail – stopping along the way to view the ruins of the Keller House built in 1865 – having completed a 6.5-mile hike with over 1,400' of elevation gain.

## August 11th - Carpinteria Bluffs and Seal Sanctuary



10 hikers met in the parking lot at Rincon Park a little south of Carpinteria to escape the triple-digit heat forecast for the inland valleys. Our hike began along the Carpinteria Bluffs overlooking









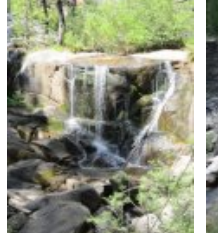


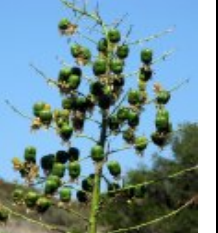
Bates Beach and the Pacific Ocean. The trail ran parallel to the railroad tracks for about a mile and a half and then led through a grove of eucalyptus trees over to the Carpinteria Harbor Seal Preserve which is home to almost 100 adult seals who give birth to their pups on the Carpinteria shoreline; it's one of the four harbor seal rookeries remaining along the southern California coast. Alas there were no seals in the sanctuary. However, we did spot several seals in the ocean during the hike (their heads were visible). After reaching Tar Pits Park with its naturally occurring asphaltum, we took a break nearby and enjoyed the mild temperature and the ocean and beach views. As we returned, we descended to Bates Beach for a leisurely sandy stroll beside the ocean back to the picnic area at Rincon Park. We then returned to a very hot Simi Valley, having completed a refreshing 4.8-mile hike with about 150' of elevation gain/loss.





# RSTB Calendar September



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<p>1</p> <p><i>Big Sky Trail Loop</i></p> <p>See Schedule</p>
<p>2</p> <p>Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b></p> <p>See Schedule</p>	3	<p>4</p> <p>Las Lajas Canyon <b>6:30PM</b></p> <p>See Schedule</p> <p><i>Happy Birthday</i> Kai Gillespie</p>	5	<p>6</p> <p>Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b></p> <p>See Schedule</p>	7	<p>8</p> <p><i>Sycamore Canyon Shuttle*</i> </p> <p>See Schedule</p> <p><i>Happy Birthday</i> Tom Gnad</p>
<p>9</p> <p>Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b></p> <p>See Schedule</p>	10	<p>11</p> <p>Las Lajas Canyon <b>6:30PM</b></p> <p>See Schedule</p>	<p>12</p> <p><i>Happy Birthday</i> Debbie DeGoey</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b></p> <p>See Schedule</p>	14	<p>15</p> <p><i>Work Party - Coastal Cleanup Day</i></p> <p>See Schedule</p>
<p>16</p> <p>Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b></p> <p>See Schedule</p>	17	<p>18</p> <p>Las Lajas Canyon <b>6:30PM</b></p> <p>See Schedule</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Club Meeting <b>7PM</b></p> <p>See Schedule</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b></p> <p>See Schedule</p> <p><i>Happy Birthday</i> Brian Steffen Julie Warner</p>	21	<p>22</p> <p><i>Bicycle Ride: Ventura to Ojai*</i> </p> <p>See Schedule</p> <p><i>Happy Birthday</i> Ray Johnson</p>
<p>23</p> <p>Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b></p> <p>See Schedule</p> <p><i>Happy Birthday</i> Les Wilson Michele Sumandra</p>	<p>24</p> <p><i>Happy Birthday</i> Margaret Marasco</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Las Lajas Canyon <b>6:30PM</b></p> <p>See Schedule</p> <p><i>Happy Birthday</i> Jay Gray</p>	<p>26</p> <p><i>Happy Birthday</i> Mary Rogers</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b></p> <p>See Schedule</p> <p><i>Happy Birthday</i> Cesar Fabros</p>	28	<p>29</p> <p><i>Mt. Pinos to the Lockwood Valley Shuttle</i></p>
30						



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 HIKES

*(Rain cancels – No hikes on holidays)*

### **Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak Fire Road**

Meet at **5 PM** at the Rocky Peak Fire Road trailhead. 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)

### **Tuesday Evening - Las Lajas Canyon**

Meet at **6:30 PM** at the Evening Sky Drive trailhead. Take the 118 to the Yosemite Ave exit. Head north 1/3 mile (passing McDonald's) to the stop sign at Alamo Street. Continue 0.85 mile north on Yosemite Ave to the stop sign at Evening Sky Drive. Turn right (east) and drive 0.5 mile to the trailhead. Park on either side of the street. (Easy - 3.75 MRT - 348' total elevation gain)

### **Thursday Evening - The Chumash Trail**

Meet at **6 PM** 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 end of Flanagan Drive. (Moderate to Strenuous - 5.4 MRT - 1,210' total elevation gain)

## SEPTEMBER HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

### **September 1st**

#### ***Big Sky Trail Loop***

4.5 miles - Easy to Moderate (850' elevation gain)

The route back follows a stream and traverses some beautiful oak groves. Meet at **8 AM** at the trailhead. Directions to Trailhead: From the 118 freeway, take Erringer Road north. Turn right on to Big Sky Place. Park along the west side of Big Sky Place.

### **September 8th**

#### ***Sycamore Canyon Shuttle\****

8.6 Miles - Moderate one way (1200' elevation loss)

This 8.6 mile, one-way shuttle hike to the ocean is all downhill. You can find more information about this hike by clicking [hikes](#). You must send email [Mark Gilmore](mailto:Mark Gilmore) to reserve your space on the shuttle. Reservations must be made and confirmed no later than September 7th. Meet at **8 AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. There is a \$12 per car parking fee for shuttle cars, to be shared among those in attendance. For more information: <http://www.simitrailblazers.com/activities/index.html>

### **September 15th**

#### ***Work Party - Coastal Cleanup Day***

Saturday, September 15, **9 am – noon**

Rancho Simi Community Park, On Erringer Road, near corner of Royal Avenue

Bring your own bags, bucket, and bottle of water to the event. Finally, you can use those used plastic bags you've been saving! Please wear long pants, sturdy shoes, gloves, hat, insect repellent, and sunscreen. For more information call 583-6424 visit: [SimiValley](#)

### **September 19th**

#### ***Club Meeting***

**7 PM** - The Sycamore Drive Community Center - 1692 Sycamore Drive - Room B-1

### **September 22nd**

#### ***Bicycle Ride: Ventura to Ojai\****

What? Again? Trailblazers on bicycles? Meet at **8 AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water. If you have a multiple bicycle carrier, please bring it along. We'll eat lunch in Ojai, before returning to Ventura.

### **September 29th**

#### ***Mt. Pinos to the Lockwood Valley Shuttle***

10 Miles one-way - Moderate to Strenuous (800' elevation gain and 3,700' elevation loss)

Bring 2 -3 quarts of water and lunch. Wear boots. This is an all day event. Meet at **7 AM** at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride.

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



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.** <http://www.simitrailblazers.com>

## RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS

*A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation*

Executive Chair:	Mike Kuhn	HM (805) 583-2345	hannahmike@me.com
Treasurer:	Craig Malin		
Park District Liaison:	Colleen Janssen	WK (805) 584-4453	volunteers@rsrpd.us
Work Parties Chair:	<b><i>VOLUNTEER NEEDED</i></b>		
Hiking Chair:	Mark Gilmore	HM (805) 529-5581	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><i>VOLUNTEER NEEDED</i></b>		
Newsletter Editor:	Linda Mann		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 630445, Simi Valley, CA 93063-0399



U.S. Postage

**RSTB**  
P.O. Box 630445  
Simi Valley, CA 93063-0399