



# Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



Starting on March 16 the Sunday hikes will be at 5PM.



## HUENEME

The name "Hueneme" comes from the *Ventureño* Chumash words *wen-mu wnemu*, which means "sleeping place." For trips to the Channel Islands, *tomols*, i.e., plank canoes, would be launched during the early morning hours from Hueneme. This was necessary to take advantage of an east to west current which ran north of the islands until mid-day. After that the westerly winds reversed the current, which was taken advantage of for their return trips. Boat crews would gather at Hueneme the evening before the launchings and sleep there.

Mike Kuhn  
19-06 (revised 8-25-12)

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.**

### February Work Party

The February work party was conducted on the lower Chumash Trail. Martin DeGoey, Mike Kuhn, and Bart Hibbs. Well done guys!



### 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 [www.simitrailblazers.com/activities](http://www.simitrailblazers.com/activities) for event details and the most up-to-date schedule.

**NO RSTB CLUB MEETING THIS MONTH DUE TO MOJAVE NATIONAL PRESERVE DESERT TRIP**

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

### Upcoming Events

- March 5th Horn Canyon to \* Pines Trail Camp **8AM**
- March 12th Conejo Mountain\* Meet at **8AM**
- March 16th – 20th Mojave \* National Preserve Camping and Hiking Trip **8AM**
- March 26th Work Party Work Party on upper Chumash Trail. Meet at **8AM**

### 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



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

## January 23rd - Sunset Hills Open Space to Oakbrook Regional Park Hike (Shuttle)



20 hikers met at the carpool point on a cool overcast morning. Since it was to be a one-way hike, we took eight vehicles to the hike's end-point at the northwest end of Falling Star Avenue in Oak Park. After dropping off four vehicles there, we carpooled to the hike's starting point in a dirt parking lot along Erbes Road. After the obligatory group photo was taken, we hiked up to a fine overlook of the Bard Reservoir in Simi Valley. As we then followed a trail eastward along the north side of the gated community in Sunset Hills there was enough very light rain to warrant donning rain jackets. Next we headed south into the Lang Ranch Open Space where we experienced a bit of route-finding confusion which was soon resolved as we followed the Autumn Ridge Trail to Lang Ranch Parkway where a neighborhood park provided a convenient rest stop. Our hike continued as we climbed steeply up the Oakbrook Vista Trail to a high peak which provided a 360-degree panoramic view of the surrounding areas. We then followed the Hidden Meadows Trail to Falling Star Avenue. We retrieved our other vehicles and returned home having completed a pleasant 7.5-mile hike with 1,500' of elevation gain on a cool crisp winter morning.

## January 30th - Oak Flat Trail to Whitaker Peak to Old Highway 99

10 hikers met at the carpool point on a cool overcast morning. Since it was to be a one-way hike, we took three vehicles to the hike's end-point at the east (lower) end of Whitaker Peak Road (6N53). After dropping off one vehicle there, we carpooled to the hike's starting point in a large dirt parking area just outside the Verdugo Oaks boy-scout camp (2,831') where we were met by three additional hikers who live in the area. As we began our hike, we headed southward up the well-maintained Oak Flat trail as it rose 1.5 miles through an oak woodland and then chaparral to the Whitaker Ridge dirt road (3,820'), enjoying scenic views to the east and north including

Pyramid Lake. We followed the Whitaker Ridge Road southeastward down to its junction with Whitaker Peak Road which we then followed southwestward up to its end (4,119'), enjoying "ever-widening vistas



of fault-tortured canyon country" and a growing "ocean" of low-lying white clouds which blocked a view of Lake Piru to the south. After a rest stop, we returned down Whitaker Peak Road all the way to Old Hwy 99 [aka Golden State Highway] where our shuttle vehicle awaited. After retrieving our remaining vehicles we returned home having completed a pleasant 9.7-mile hike with 1,900' of elevation gain and 1,785' of elevation loss on another cool crisp winter morning.

## February 6th - Franklin Trail to the Los Padres National Forest Boundary

9 hikers carpooled to Carpinteria on a mild winter morning where we were met by two additional hikers. Our hike began near the Carpinteria High School as the trail began climbing through agricultural property (mostly avacados), dense chaparral, and rock outcroppings. We were soon rewarded with expansive views of the ocean/coastline, the valley floor, a salt marsh, and three of the Channel Islands including Anacapa Island, Santa Cruz Island, and Santa Rosa Island (vaguely). At the top of

the Horton Ranch the single-track trail met the dirt Edison Road which we followed from then on. After stopping briefly at Frank's Bench,





we continued upward, passing through several oak woodlands with bright green grass, ferns, and a few wildflowers. Soon there were excellent views of the Santa Ynez Mountains to the north and we were treated to a gentle ocean breeze during the remainder of the hike. We turned back near the boundary of the Los Padres National Forest after hiking a little over 5 miles. Eventually the restored Franklin Trail will again reach East Camino Cielo (aka Divide Peak OHV Road) and will join the Alder Creek Trail which leads down to Jameson Lake/Reservoir to the north. We returned to our vehicles having completed a 10.5-mile hike with nearly 2,400' of elevation gain/loss.





# RSTB Calendar MARCH



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<b>1</b> Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	<b>2</b>  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Martin De Goey	<b>3</b> Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	<b>4</b>  <i>Happy Birthday</i> William James	<b>5</b> Horn Canyon to Pines Trail Camp * <b>8AM</b>  See Schedule
<b>6</b> Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>4PM</b>  See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Lise Eskridge	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Colleen Janssen	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> Conejo Mountain * Meet at <b>8AM</b>  See Schedule
<b>13</b> Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b>   See Schedule	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	<b>16</b>  Mojave National Preserve Camping and Hiking Trip * <b>8AM</b>	<b>17</b> Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b>  See Schedule MNPCH Trip * <b>8AM</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	<b>23</b>  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Judy Cohen Goldie Parazoo	<b>24</b> Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> Work Party <b>8AM</b> See Schedule
<b>27</b> Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b> See Schedule 	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Kristine Coyle	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	 	

**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
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Park District Liaison:	Jeannie Liss	WK (805) 584-4453	volunteers@rsrpd.us
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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 1231, Simi Valley, CA 93062**



U.S. Postage

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

## TWO RELATIVELY RARE PLANTS ON MT. MCCOY

Two relatively rare plant species were identified on the upland area southwest of Mt. McCoy in the spring of 1998. Both species prefer clay soils in open grassland areas. One is the white-flowered filaree (*Erodium macrophyllum*), which is our only native *Erodium*. It is an annual with round leaves. You can look for it whenever herbaceous plant material is emerging. This usually occurs in the spring, however, in 2004, I noticed the plant well formed on December 4 – as a result of a wet October.

The other unusual plant does not have a common name. It is a member of the morning glory family and is known as *Convolvulus simulans*. It is generally found in grasslands and coastal sage scrub. It is tiny by comparison to other species and is probably a native. It has pinkish to bluish flowers.

These unusual finds on Mt. McCoy join the federal and state endangered Lyon's pentachaeta (*Pentachaeta lyonii*) and the federally threatened Conejo liveforever (*Dudleya abramsii* ssp. *parva*). It will be worth a trip to the Mt. McCoy uplands just to look for these beauties.

Mike Kuhn  
11-7-04

## THE WINTER SOLSTICE

The winter solstice is an astronomical event that occurs once a year in the orbit of the Earth around the Sun in the Northern Hemisphere. The winter solstice represents the shortest daylight period and the longest period of darkness of the year. Prehistorically around the world, for most middle and high latitude societies, the winter solstice played a part in religious beliefs. Christmas is celebrated on December 25, because that date was chosen in an effort to displace the pagan religions of northern Europe. They have passed, but we are left with the

Christmas tree, yule tides, and other vestiges of the past. (Yulemen wore rabbit costumes and ran around communities in hedonistic revelries during winter solstice celebrations. The Easter bunny is a vestige of the yuleman.)

As the winter solstice drew near, the daylight period was getting shorter and shorter; food was getting more and more scarce; and the world was getting colder and colder. For the Chumash, the winter solstice ceremony was the most important event of the year. If the ceremony was not performed, the world would be plunged into darkness, and the creatures of the night would rule the earth. The ceremony marked the birth of a new child - the Sun - the chief deity of the Chumash. Many such ceremonial sites have been identified around Simi Valley. They include devices, associated with the rising sun, which enabled the Chumash to predict when the solstice would occur so that the right people could be gathered together for the performance of the right ceremony at sunrise.

Mike Kuhn  
12-23-04

## THE SIMI HOTEL

Janet Scott Cameron, in her book, *Simi Grows Up* (1963), describes the Simi Hotel. Following the formation of the Simi Land and Water Company in 1887, "The company immediately built a small but pretentious looking hotel on a knoll in the eastern end of the valley. (The hotel was located on a small knoll on the western side of what is today the Simi High School campus. The knoll was leveled in order to build the campus. The purpose of the hotel was to house prospective buyers of agricultural parcels.) Water was piped down from a spring on Mr. Hoar's Humming Bird's Nest. The first story of the hotel contained seven rooms: a huge kitchen and butler's pantry, a forty by twenty foot dining room, a reception room and office, a hall and stairway leading upstairs. On the second floor were nine bedrooms and a very inadequate bathroom. The

third story was used for storage and also as quarters for the men who worked on the ranch. There was a separate cellar for food storage just back of the kitchen. The grounds were nicely landscaped with palm trees along the circular driveway and the entrance from Los Angeles Avenue."

"Mr. Bard made Charles B. McCoy local manager of the 96,000 acres of the Simi Land and Water Company with headquarters in the hotel. Besides being the local sales manager and running the hotel, Mr. McCoy was also foreman of the company's farming operations on the land which remained unsold. This took in practically the whole of El Roblaro - the valley oak woodland that occupied the valley east of present-day Stearns Street. Mr. McCoy would not allow any of the oak trees to be felled. If a tree died it was cut up for use in the hotel stoves and fireplace or given to a settler to be so used. Grain was planted among the trees."

The real estate business is not much different today. You had to house prospective buyers because travel was slow and arduous. Even getting to Simi from Los Angeles was an adventure, with the last phase by stagecoach from San Fernando over Santa Susana Pass via Devil's Slide and Des Ravina.

Here we have confirmation that water for the hotel came from the Humming Bird's Nest (ranch) and we also find that C. B. McCoy attempted to stem the tide of the cutting of the oak trees on the land that he managed. Unfortunately, the act of running livestock and growing grain amongst the oak precluded any regeneration of the valley oak forest. At least one later land owner boasted that he made more money cutting down his oak trees and selling firewood than he made on farming. Only a couple of dozen of the oaks remain and a few of those are lost each each decade or so.

Mike Kuhn  
12-24-04



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 **4PM** at the Rocky Peak Fire Road trailhead and on **March 6th** at **5PM** and thereafter. 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.

**(We Meet at 5PM during daylight saving time.)** (Strenuous - 4.8 MRT - 1,200' elevation gain)

### 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 - 4.0 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 end of Flanagan Drive.

(Moderate to Strenuous - 5.4 MRT - 1300' total elevation gain.)

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## MARCH HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

### March 5th 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 and lunch/snacks. Wear boots. **Option 1:** 5.2 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,800' elevation gain/loss) | **Option 2:** 8.2 MRT - Strenuous (3,200' elevation gain/loss) | **Option 3:** 9.8 MRT - Strenuous (3,800' elevation gain/loss) Our hike to Pines Trail Camp (3,273') will begin east of Ojai from the Thacher School parking area (1,459') as we hike along Horn Creek and follow the single-track Horn Canyon Trail (22W08) up to the trail camp with its grove of Coulter pines; we'll enjoy views of the Ojai Valley and the surrounding mountains as we gain elevation. NOTE: All three (3) options will reach the Pines Trail Camp. **AFTER THAT: Option 1** (5.2 miles) - - - We'll return to the parking area the way we came. **Option 2** (8.2 miles) - - - We'll continue hiking up the mountain via the Horn Canyon Trail to its intersection with Sisar Canyon Road (4,673'). "This is the steepest part of the ascent, and switchbacks are for the most part mercilessly absent - you'll find yourself climbing some long, steep stretches of straight, rock-strewn trail." The reward for this effort is the "fantastic views of the Ojai Valley from this vantage point." After reaching Sisar Canyon Road we'll return to the parking area the way we came. NOTE: Both options 2 and 3 will reach Sisar Canyon Road. **Option 3** (9.8 miles) - - - 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 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. Wear boots

### March 12th Conejo Mountain \*

6 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,600' elevation gain/loss)


Meet at **8AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Our hike will begin in Newbury Park from the Via Ricardo trailhead as we follow the Powerline Trail up to the Edison Road which we'll follow northward to a spur road which will then take us up to a pair of transmission towers on Conejo Mountain. The landscape up to this point is littered with volcanic detritus and there are nice views along the way. Next we'll follow a "use" trail as it climbs steeply to the west, eventually taking us to the Conejo Mountain "peak" where there are spectacular 360-degree views of both near and distant mountains, the Pacific Ocean and two Channel Islands, and parts of several cities. Hiking poles are strongly recommended. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots.

### March 16th – 20th Mojave National Preserve Camping and Hiking Trip \*

### March 26th Work Party

Work Party on upper Chumash Trail. Meet at **8AM** near the north end of Flanagan Drive (first right north of Alamo Street off of Yosemite Avenue. Tools will be provided. Bring two quarts of water, a snack, gloves and sun glasses. Wear a hat, long pants, and hiking shoes or boots.

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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/activities/index.html>**